

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 1899

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER, 1899.

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

QUESTION.

CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAYS BY SYNDICATES.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*) asked the Premier—

Has the Government received any offer by syndicates to construct railways?—If so, will the Government lay upon the table of the House such proposals?

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*) replied—

Government have received proposals for construction of certain lines of railway in the Northern portion of the colony, based approximately on the conditions of the Marceba-Chillagoe Act; but negotiations have not yet assumed definite shape, and consequently the proposals cannot yet be laid before Parliament.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was agreed—

That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cowley, Mr. Drake, Mr. Leahy, Mr. Jackson, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Macdonald-Paterson, and the mover; with leave to sit during any adjournment, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.

DAYS OF SITTING.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*), in moving—

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at three o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week—

said: I had expected that this motion would have passed as formal, because I think the matter which the leader of the Opposition desires to discuss is embraced in notice of motion No. 2—namely, the time set apart for private members' business. I may, however, take advantage of this motion being called "Not formal" to state that while at the commencement of the session, for obvious reasons, the business of the House may proceed on the ordinary days allotted for business—that is, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays—as soon as we get to the active business of the session, especially, I may say, commencing with the Federal Address to Her Majesty, I think it will be incumbent upon the Government to ask for four days a week. At present I believe three days a week will be sufficient to discuss what we are now engaged on, but if hon. members desire to add a fourth day the Government have no objection. With regard to the time allowed for Government business and for private business, that can be more conveniently discussed on motion No. 2.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I called "Not formal" to this motion, because I wanted the Premier to give the House some idea when he would sit four days a week. The other matter about private members' business I am well aware comes up on the next motion, and I shall give my reasons on that subject when that motion is before the House. I should have been glad if the Premier had been a little more explicit in his explanation as to when he would agree to sit four days a week. We have not done anything in the way of domestic legislation at all this year, and the sooner we get into harness the better for the country.

Mr. STEWART (*Rockhampton North*): I fully expected that the Premier would have had the courtesy to give us some indication as to when he intended to sit four days a week.

The PREMIER: I have already stated so.
Mr. STEWART: The hon. gentleman has not given any definite date. I suppose he means we cannot sit four days a week until the Address to the Queen has been adopted.

The PREMIER: That will commence it.

Mr. STEWART: That Address cannot be adopted until about a month from the present date, and that means that we are going to lose a month out of the very short time we have between now and Christmas. When I look at this enormous programme—this fatted calf—which the hon. gentleman has submitted to this Chamber I am lost in astonishment. I am lost in—

Mr. HIGGS: In admiration.

Mr. STEWART: I must say that I am not lost in admiration of the hon. gentleman, for the hon. gentleman knows, as well as I do, that there is not the slightest possibility of passing this programme during the present session of Parliament. He is simply trying to deceive Parliament and the people, trying to mislead them, in bringing forward a programme of this kind at this period of the year. If the hon. gentleman means to get one tithe of the subjects mentioned in this Speech from the Throne dealt with during the present session, the sooner he sits five days a week, or six days a week, if that were possible, the better.

The TREASURER: Why not seven days a week?
Mr. STEWART: I have not the slightest objection. If the hon. gentleman does not care to go to church, he can take the seven days a week, but some of us—

The HOME SECRETARY: Some of us!

Mr. STEWART: Have a little respect for religion and that sort of thing. Seriously, I think that if the hon. gentleman means to do any business at all he should let us have four days a week at the earliest possible date. Is the House to understand that no business is to be done until the Address to the Queen has been adopted? Is that the hon. gentleman's position? If it is, then I say this is an absolute waste of members' time. We should not have been called here until the result of the referendum had been made known. Why does not the hon. gentleman go on with some of the business on this programme, or why does he not put the whole of it off?

Mr. McDONALD: It is not ready.

Mr. STEWART: The same old dilatoriness, the same old slipshod fashion of conducting the business of the country! We will be perfectly overwhelmed with business during the last few weeks of the session, just as we have been hitherto. We have had to complain of this sort of thing every year since I entered this Parliament, and I believe if I sat in this House for 100 years and the hon. gentleman, or some of those who are with him, continued to sit upon that bench, we would continue to have the same kind of complaint. How long is this to continue? Is the business of the country going to receive that consideration which it deserves from the hon. gentleman? Why are we not allowed to attend to our own affairs in our constituencies instead of being dragged to Brisbane to do nothing but sit and look at the hon. gentleman and wait until the result of the referendum is made known? Why cannot the hon. gentleman bring on his one man one vote Bill? I am very glad to see that at last he has become a convert to one man one vote. I thought hon. members opposite were prepared to die fighting against one man one vote, but, lo and behold, they have suddenly been converted! Why do they not bring along this precious Bill of theirs, and let us see what it is like, instead of holding it back until the middle of October? I certainly cannot congratulate the Government on the beginning

of this session. It appears to me that we are in for another wasted session—a great deal of cry and very little wool—a long programme and very little accomplished.

Question put and passed.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson *Bulimba*), in moving—

That on Tuesday and Wednesday, and after 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, Government business do take precedence of all other business—

said: This is the usual apportionment of time allowed for Government and private business on three days in the week. Of course the House will understand from the last remarks I made that when the necessity arises the fourth sitting day will immediately be added for the work of the session. There is no desire whatever to delay the business of the session, and the leader of the Opposition knows perfectly well that I communicated with him on this matter, and he expressed approval of it until the necessity arose for sitting on four days a week. I anticipate that time will arrive very shortly, and I have also no hesitation in saying that when that time arrives, if it is found that there is a large amount of private business on the paper, it will be considered whether a certain portion of the fourth day should not be given to private members. In the meantime I think we may very well postpone the discussion of that subject until the fourth day is asked for.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): This motion gives rise to a discussion every session, and private members complain year after year that they have not had that liberal allowance of time which the Government could very well afford to give them. There are a large number of private members in this Chamber who have a lot of private business to do which the Government will not attempt to do, and the only chance they have is to put their particular motions or Bills on the business paper, and they want sufficient time in order that they may have a fair discussion of the matters that they put before the members of this Chamber. In the early portion of the session even the two hours are taken away, and when the end of the session comes along there are twenty or thirty items of private business to be finished off in about four hours. This has rendered private members' day a perfect farce, and the time has now arrived when we should come to a better understanding, and when private members should have a little more time than they have had in the past. I called "Not formal" to this motion in order to warn the Premier that when he does ask the House to sit a fourth day, private members are going to make a claim for the whole of Thursday for the discussion of private business. If, on general principles, the Premier does not see his way clear to give us the whole of Thursday for private business, for this short session he should do so, because he should remember that we have had a special session this year, and members on both sides—billites and anti-billites—worked together to get the referendum placed before the people of this colony, and with that object in view they restrained themselves from bringing forward their private business and placing it on the paper. Now they have only something like two months to do what in ordinary sessions would be done in about six months, and the Premier, recognising that fact, should give them the whole of Thursday, when we sit four days a week.

Question put and passed.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER moved—

1. That, in compliance with Standing Order 304, a select committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed

by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting, and arranging for printing, returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Glassey, Mr. Higgs, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Stephenson, and the mover.

Mr. LEAHY (*Bulloo*), said: Last session I called "Not formal" to a similar motion for the purpose of calling attention to certain alterations which I considered should be made in *Hansard* and "Votes and Proceedings."

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LEAHY: I understand that those alterations are about to be made, and what I rose particularly now for was this—that, when replying to my statement last session, you, Mr. Speaker, gave me a kind of mild sitting-on, as much as to say that I did not exactly understand the matter I was speaking about. I had not an opportunity of replying at that time, so I take this opportunity of saying a few words on the subject. I have looked over the authorities and precedents in connection with this matter, and have come to the conclusion that the position which I took up two months ago was a perfectly correct one. There are three forms under which authority is given in this Chamber—one is statutory authority, another is the authority of the Standing Orders, and the other is by resolution or order of the House. There is certainly no provision made by statute with regard to the power of the Speaker over the printing of *Hansard*. There is certainly no power under the Standing Orders, but several years ago there was a resolution passed in relation to the matter which, however, has no effect beyond the session in which it was passed. With all respect to you, Sir, I would say that I am not cavilling at any power which the House may give to you—and I am perfectly prepared to give you any power that may be necessary—but I know that on several occasions I have found my speeches revised. I went to the chief of the *Hansard* staff and had one corrected, and someone came and revised that speech over me again. The chief of the *Hansard* staff admitted to me that I said the words I claimed to have said, but I could never get at the reason why the speech was revised.

Mr. JACKSON: Was it an improvement?

Mr. LEAHY: No, it was not, and it was not my speech as revised. I do not know the reason why this was done. At all events, I take up this position: that the *Hansard* staff are the servants of the House, and I think they should be under the direct control of the House, much in the same way as the Auditor-General is. If the Auditor-General wanted authority for something he would not go to you, Sir, or the Premier, or anyone else, but he would come to this Chamber. I think this Chamber should deal directly with the *Hansard* staff, that the chief should be placed in a position somewhat similar to the position of the Auditor-General. I can see no authority except a printing committee's report issued in 1880, nineteen years ago, for giving the Speaker control of *Hansard*. I contend that the power then conferred was only the power of a sessional order, that it lapsed at the end of the session, and does not exist now. I have taken the opportunity of making myself perfectly clear on the matter, the position I took up a few months ago being the position I take up now; but at the same time I do not reflect upon you or wish to take from you any power you may have. On the contrary, I think I would be prepared to grant you any power that might be necessary. I want to know what our position is either from you or the Chief Secretary in regard to this matter. It is just as well that we should understand it.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): I was not prepared that this matter

should be brought up this afternoon, and I can only inform the hon. gentleman that a report sent by the President and yourself, Sir, upon the working of *Hansard* has been, I understand, forwarded to the Home Secretary and will be laid on the table of the House. Possibly that will supply the information, or a portion of it, which the hon. gentleman desires as to the manner in which *Hansard* will be conducted.

Mr. LEAHY: No; it is the authority for what is now done that I want. Who gave the Speaker and the President of the Upper Chamber control over *Hansard*? Where did they derive the power from?

The PREMIER: I understand that authority has been given to the President and Speaker by the House. They give instructions. The Government do not interfere in any way with *Hansard*. The report to which I refer came to the Government under the hands of the President and Speaker, and will be laid on the table; but any directions in regard to *Hansard*, I can assure the hon. member, do not come from the Government.

Mr. LEAHY: There was an order giving certain power to the Speaker, but that was only for one session.

The PREMIER: That, of course, has become obsolete. Last session, when a request was made by hon. members for a very extensive additional issue of *Hansard*, the request was made through the Speaker. At any rate, I deprecate very much any interference with the Executive in connection with *Hansard* reporting.

The SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. member for Bulloo, Mr. Leahy, I would like to say that the question of the control and management of *Hansard* does not arise in connection with the appointment of the Printing Committee. It is perhaps well, however, that the hon. member has raised the question just now, because it affords me an opportunity of saying—and I think I may speak for the President of the Legislative Council in this connection—that both he and I would be extremely glad that the question of the control and management of *Hansard* and the reporting staff should be settled on a definite basis. Of course it can only be settled by the consent of this House, but it must be obvious that the chief of the *Hansard* staff cannot look to the House for specific instructions in cases which may arise on an emergency; and, therefore, there must be somebody who can speak for the House and convey to the chief of the staff the wishes of the two Chambers. The matter, as the Chief Secretary has stated, has engaged the attention of the President and myself. We have communicated to the Government certain rules that have been tentatively laid down in relation to the publication of *Hansard*. These temporary rules were made after conference with the chief of the *Hansard* staff. I understand from the Chief Secretary that these rules, which have been embodied in a brief report, are to be submitted to the House, and the House will then have an opportunity of expressing its views upon the whole matter, and of saying how members wish their desires to be given effect to. I think it is well that I should state this for the information of the House, and make hon. members aware that they will have an early opportunity of discussing the whole question and settling it in accordance with their wishes.

Question put and passed.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council nominating certain members of that Chamber to act on the joint library, refreshment room, and buildings

committees, and requesting the nomination of a similar number from the Assembly, in order to give effect to the 8th Joint Standing Order.

Message ordered to be taken into consideration to-morrow.

PAPER.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*) laid upon the table the annual report of the Commissioner of Railways to 30th June, 1899, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on the [4 p.m.] Address in Reply,

* Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) said: In addressing myself to this subject, I propose to make a very frank confession at the very outset. I do not know exactly where I am—whether I am leader of the Labour party or whether the Hon. the Premier is. After reading over this programme three or four times I did not know myself. In fact I was in a much greater state of doubt and uncertainty the fourth time than the first time I read it; but I have no doubt that before we get through the session we will know where we are—that both parties will find themselves in their proper positions. We are now in the position we were in recently. Both parties were in exceedingly bad company for a brief period of time. This, the opening of the session, is the time, I believe, of slaughter, when the men on this side of the House are supposed to wield their little tomahawks and go for the scalps of the men who sit on the other side. It is the time when the Government have to answer for all the sins they have committed during the recess—sins of omission and commission. I may say at the very outset that I do not intend to indulge very largely in the general practice that has sprung up of late years in this House of occupying the time of members and wasting my own time by debating or complaining of things which occurred in the different departments during the recess. I have come to the conclusion that it is a much better plan, instead of the leaders of any particular political party going right through the whole gamut, and raking up the whole of the grievances, and making the statement of the leader of the Opposition as an indictment against the Government, that a much better plan is that each individual member who may be sitting on this side of the House should ventilate his own grievances, because he knows most about them. Further, it is a much better plan to wait until a more fitting opportunity to properly and thoroughly ventilate whatever grievances we have when the Estimates of the particular Minister concerned come up for discussion. I may say I have a large budget of grievances against several of the Ministers sitting there smiling at me this afternoon, and when their particular Estimates come along, they will have something to answer for, and I hope, in their own interests, in the interests of the departments they are called upon to administer, and in the interests of the country, they will be able satisfactorily to answer them. At the same time there are matters of general policy it would be a wrong thing indeed to pass by entirely without any comment, and I will refer particularly to general matters—to matters that appertain to the Premier as Premier of the colony. I only say this in this connection—that I believe that during the conduct of the last general election in Queensland there was a line of conduct pursued by the present Premier that is not to be commended; to use stronger terms, a line of conduct was pursued that has not been pursued by any Premier

we have had in Queensland. There was an amount of intimidation; there was an amount of attempted bribery and corruption—

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: Used at the last general election that does not reflect credit on the head of the Government. I am not going to make a sweeping or a general charge of this description unless I am prepared to indicate instances of what I mean. I will point out one thing in particular. I hope hon. members, as well as myself, distinctly understand what tremendous power a Premier can wield if he likes, when we find him going about the country on the eve of a general election, from constituency to constituency, making all kinds of promises—saying what he is going to do for that particular constituency if it will only be kind enough to send in a man to support the Ministry.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No one believed them.

Mr. DAWSON: They did believe them. I am under the impression that if there is a time when men believe what they should not believe from a Minister it is on the eve of a general election. They think they are going to get something for their support. Let me remind hon. members that I think this is the first time in the history of this colony that ever a Premier, only a few months in office, has gone from electorate to electorate and promised them railways if they would only support the Government, and, in other electorates, where the feeling was so strong against the Government, making veiled threats that if they did not support the Government they would not receive assistance from any one of the departments.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I know one particular member of this Chamber who was a most enthusiastic supporter of the hon. gentleman, who has been as loyal to the Ministry as one man could be to his party, and I know he complains bitterly, and says, "After all my fighting, after all my loyalty, after all the ability and energy I have put into the work in my constituency to keep it safe for the Government, the Premier has gone into another constituency and promised a railway against mine. That is the gratitude I receive." The hon. gentleman and many of his colleagues have gone into other electorates. Take the electorate of Cambooya, for instance. What occurred there? Will any hon. gentleman say the people of Cambooya did not put any credence on the promises then made? What about the promises for railways? What about the land promises? What about the promises of advances to farmers? All those things that were likely to influence the electors of Cambooya were promised to them if they would support the Ministerial candidate.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. DAWSON: Leaving the clear deduction that if they did not support the Ministerial candidate they would not receive any one of those benefits whether they were entitled to them or not.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. KROGH: I hope they will get them.

Mr. DAWSON: I believe the hon. gentleman promised—notwithstanding the fact that he had already promised a line from Warwick to St. George—that the railway should start from Pittsworth.

The PREMIER: You are quite wrong in your geography.

Mr. DAWSON: He also promised a new post office. What did the late Minister for Lands promise—I don't mean the present Minister for Lands—when he was there? I would like in this connection to point out that in addition to all these promises that were made on the authority

of the Government on the eve of a general election, and in addition to the threats that were used in order to induce electors to change their honest convictions—in addition to all this, the ordinary electoral law was juggled with prior to the election. There is not the slightest doubt in the wide world that if the terms and conditions of the present electoral law, as it stands to-day in Queensland, were fairly and honestly administered, the member for Cambooya in this House at the present time would be Mr. Daniels. This fact has been drawn attention to—that quite a large number of people in this electorate returned Mr. Macintosh at the last election who never owned an acre or a perch or an inch of ground in the electorate of Cambooya. Quite a number of those were in this position, and if the electoral law had been fairly and honestly administered quite a different member would now represent Cambooya in this House. The *bonâ fide* electors of this district have not given their opinion at all in the matter, notwithstanding the fact that the hon. member now representing that electorate is now sitting in this Assembly. There is a most peculiar thing which I will mention to justify my statement regarding the undue influence exercised during the last election by those in authority. Let us look at what has happened since. The late member for Cambooya, Mr. Daniels, has been plucky enough and energetic enough—he is a thorough Australian, he is not going to be beaten until he is thoroughly thrashed—to go on with legal proceedings in this matter. He has been refused assistance point blank all through by the authorities, and the Home Secretary knows that. He has been refused assistance by the police, and when he went on and asked for certain documents, the very documents that he wanted to prove the criminality of those persons, it was said that they had been stolen and cannot be found now. I shall not pursue that farther, but I think hon. members should keep these things in mind when they come to exercise their own judgment. Let them know that what I state is true; that undue influence has been exercised both before and since the last election. I may say, in this connection, that I have got a personal grievance as a Northern man. It has been the practice for some years past that the Northern portion of the colony was considered to be a portion of Queensland, notwithstanding that the *Daily Telegraph* said that the North had no right to vote on the referendum. Notwithstanding all that, we gave a vote in favour of the Federal Bill. The North, before the last election, has always been taken into consideration in connection with fixing the date of the election. It is well known that during a certain portion of the year—the wet season—it is utterly impossible in the North for anybody to travel; and it is also well known that the sitting members for certain electorates in the North have got all the best of it. The only conclusion is that the date was fixed on this occasion in order to give extra opportunities for the sitting members to get returned again. And in addition to that, steps were taken to prevent a large number of legitimate and *bonâ fide* voters from getting their names printed on the rolls, so that when the election came along they would not be able to vote. There were hundreds of these people in the North. There were two or three hundred voters in this position in Charters Towers. They were stopped from recording their votes because they were not long enough confirmed by the court, to get their names printed in Brisbane and returned to the returning officer. The delay of a fortnight would have been sufficient, but that delay was not forthcoming. Why? Because the hon. gentleman felt that nine-tenths of these men were not

Ministerial supporters, but supporters of the Labour party. This is no new thing; it was pointed out at the time. Many papers wrote indignant leading articles on the matter, and numbers of people have complained very bitterly about it. If you look up the records you will find numbers of indignant letters sent to the Government, pointing out that they had not got a fair deal from those in authority. And, further than this, I have a personal grievance with reference to Charters Towers. I have pointed out what Ministers have done in other electorates, what they have promised, and what they have threatened. Now, let me tell you this: On the Friday night before the polling day in Charters Towers, the Ministerial candidate, Mr. Paull, read a telegram from a Minister of the Crown to the Charters Towers electors to the purport that if they did not return Mr. Paull Charters Towers could not expect any assistance from the Government.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I say if that is not a distinct threat; if that is not attempted bribery and corruption, I cannot understand the meaning of words. That is to be found published in the *Northern Miner*—a Ministerialist organ.

Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*): What is the date of the *Northern Miner* containing that?

Mr. DAWSON: The date of the poll, I think.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What was the name of the Minister who sent the telegram?

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Who was the forger?

Mr. DAWSON: I am asked two questions. The first is, "Who was the Minister?" I am also asked by the hon. member for Brisbane North, "Who was the forger?" In reply to the first, I will say that Mr. Paull no sooner read the telegram than its contents were conveyed to our meeting. I sent a man to challenge Mr. Paull to produce the telegram, and give the name of the Minister. Mr. Paull said: "I am an honourable man; this telegram has been sent to me in confidence, and consequently I cannot tell you who the Minister is."

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That's very cheap.

Mr. DAWSON: Mr. Paull absolutely refused to disclose the name of the Minister; but I want to point out this fact—that if the Premier or the Secretary for Lands, with that well-known ingenuity and ability of theirs, are particularly anxious to know whether such a wire was sent, and, if it was, who sent it, it is easy for them, as Ministers, to go down to the telegraph office and they will find out.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It would have been all over Charters Towers if it had been sent.

Mr. DAWSON: I took precious good care that it was all over Charters Towers, and I believe it helped to give us a larger majority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The name of the Minister would be, too.

Mr. TURLEY: How could they get it?

Mr. DAWSON: The name of the Minister would not be disclosed by Mr. Paull because the wire was sent "private and confidential" to him. I have got a pretty shrewd idea as to who the Minister was.

Mr. TURLEY: No one else would dare disclose it.

Mr. DAWSON: Then as to who was the forger, I say that if it was not sent by a Minister, Mr. Paull must be the forger.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: An electoral dodge, probably.

Mr. DAWSON: It was either a Minister or a Ministerial supporter. At any rate it was done, and done deliberately, to prejudice the Charters Towers election.

Mr. GIVENS: Mr. Paull is too pious to do a thing like that.

Mr. DAWSON: Another telegram sent by a private member I do not take any notice of. What I am complaining about is what a Minister does, because a Minister is in charge of a department, and if he interferes in that manner he is exercising undue influence. If an ordinary man exercises undue influence, we have a penalty under our Elections Act, and can punish him, but a Minister can escape scot-free, though after all he is the greatest sinner of the two. I mention these facts—just a few of them. There are scores and scores of them, and I want hon. members to distinctly understand what I pointed out when I started—that I am not going to run over the whole gamut, but each individual member of the party sitting here will state his own grievances, and state what he has suffered at the hands of the Ministry.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They are dreadful people.

Mr. DAWSON: After the undue influence used in the last election I say they are. So far as I am concerned as a Queenslander, notwithstanding the fact that I am on this side of the House, I am ashamed that anything of that kind should be done by any Ministry in the colony of Queensland.

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Hear, hear! If it is true.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is not proved.

Mr. DAWSON: I say it is true, and the very few hairs the hon. member for Lockyer has got will stand on end when Mr. Hamilton stands up to sing his tale of woe. (Laughter.)

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I said it was not proved.

Mr. DAWSON: I beg your pardon. There are quite a number of members here who know very well what has been done, and I say that by the exercise of this undue influence we have sitting in this House a number of members who have no right to sit in this House, if a fair and honest deal had been dealt out at the last general election.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is always a reason for not accounting for a majority.

Mr. DAWSON: I can very well understand that the Secretary for Lands may feel a little sore himself about this matter. Though I believe it does not apply particularly this time to the Mackay election, I can remember a time when at the Mackay election things looked very doubtful for the hon. gentleman, and he was trembling in his shoes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That he never did.

Mr. DAWSON: Or in his boots, for I do not believe he wears shoes. His nervous timidity was such that he could not read his notes, and the hon. gentleman was indebted for his election—and that is perhaps why he has such a sympathetic feeling now—to a certain commissioner for railways who promised Mackay a railway if the electors returned Messrs. Dalrymple and Chataway, and told them they would not get it if they did not return those gentlemen.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Perfectly incorrect.

Mr. DAWSON: It is not. The railway commissioner I refer to was Mr. Mathieson, and the matter was brought under notice by Mr. McDonald, the hon. member for Flinders. Probably therefore the hon. gentleman has a sympathetic feeling for this kind of thing, but we have not, because we were the victims of it. Then there is another matter which, of course, is only a small

matter, but it is still of a piece with the whole of the deliberate policy of the Government to win the last general election. They intended to win either by fair means or foul. The one thing in front of them was: "We must win." Among other things was the simple little thing that occurred in connection with the election for Balonne, but did it ever happen in the colony of Queensland before? A polling-booth was gazetted at a place called Bonna Vonna, and a man was appointed presiding officer. He did not attend to his duty, and no votes were taken on the day set aside for the poll.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Perhaps there were none there.

Mr. DAWSON: The Government got their heads together, and they delayed the taking of the votes at Bonna Vonna in order that there might be sufficient time to drag in votes from Sydney and Melbourne to vote for the good Government of this colony of Queensland.

The HOME SECRETARY: Quite wrong.

Mr. DAWSON: In order that some special coaches of Cobb and Co. should come in, and with what result? It is unmistakable that the result of that little bit of ingenuity and manoeuvring is that the hon. member, Mr. Story, is now sitting in this House as member for Balonne, when otherwise and under the usual conditions of conducting elections in Queensland Mr. Clowes, the Labour candidate, would be sitting here as the member for Balonne.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And there would never have been any Government or any Opposition according to you.

Mr. DAWSON: There would have been no evil Government. There would have been a pure Government and a conscientious Government that would only ask for itself what it would be fair to give to everybody else. They would have a clear conscience when they left office; they would be able to show that their hands were clean, and did not want washing particularly. But I am afraid that the gentlemen on the other side will want a large tank to wash their hands in when they retire.

Mr. DUNSFORD: They will want an ocean.

Mr. DAWSON: Now I come to the Address. This document not only astonished myself but the members of our party, the people of the country, and I believe it even astonished the *Telegraph*. When I read over this document I found myself, as I said before, in the position of the gentleman who bewailed his woe in that classic song, "E dunno where 'e are." I took the trouble to look up the Labour platform, and I find the Premier has committed a gross act of burglary; he has stolen the whole of the Labour platform. I would not be very much surprised—unless he checks his evil tendencies in this direction—to find the Premier walking into the *Worker* office and stealing "Socialism in our time"—if he has not already stolen it.

Mr. LEAHY: Can't you get some more timber?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It will be a dwelling-house by that time.

Mr. DAWSON: I am not sure it would be safe in a dwelling house from the depredations of the Premier. I suppose that after all we will have to turn out the "barn-door fowl" and take refuge in the fowl-house. I am not going to find fault with this document, except in one or two particulars. At the very commence-

[4.30 p.m.] ment I should like to point out that certain gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House, together with certain newspapers, and certain penny-a-liner scribes who have had the good fortune to occupy a seat in this House—on that side—have been very jubilant since this Address was read to us by His Excellency, because they believed there

was a split in the Labour party; that this party, with its great solidity, was burst, and that the prospects were that it would never come together again. I want at once to disappoint the hopes of those who feel and think that way, and to inform them that to-day the Labour party is as solid as ever it was—it is certainly much more solid than it has been during the last two years.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is a confession at any rate.

Mr. DAWSON: It is.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That it was not solid.

Mr. DAWSON: That it is more solid now. The first item on the Government programme is federation. I suppose hon. members distinctly understand what my position in the matter is—that the will of the people, as expressed on the 2nd of September, must be obeyed. Whether we voted for or against the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill on the 2nd of September, we have to obey the decision so emphatically expressed by the people by their great majority in favour of the Bill. I have every reason to believe that every member of the Labour party who voted against the Bill, and who fought all they knew how, throwing all their ability and energy into the fight to defeat the Bill, are willing to obey the will of the people of Queensland as expressed on the 2nd of September, and to vote for the Address when it comes along.

Mr. KEOGH: No, no!

Mr. DAWSON: I say it is the bounden duty of every man, whatever side of the House he may sit on, if he believes in the referendum, if he believes in the expressed will of the people, to bow to that will when it is expressed, and not set his own petty miserable opinions against theirs. I say it is a miserable opinion if one man is going to go against thousands. What else is it but that?

Mr. JACKSON: What about the thousands who are against the Bill?

Mr. DAWSON: The thousands who are against the Bill must submit to the many more thousands who are in favour of the Bill. I venture to say that if any member of this Chamber is not prepared to accept the verdict of the people as expressed on the 2nd of September, and vote for the Address to the Queen, it is that member's duty as an honest and conscientious man to vote against the referendum every time it comes along. The next item in the Speech is the question of electoral reform; and I should like to remind our anti-billite friends, who have been predicting blue ruin and disaster to the Labour party in connection with this matter, that the very first result of the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill is that in the Speech from the Throne we have for the first time in the history of the colony of Queensland a recognition of the principle of one man one vote. That is the very first result we have from the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill. We have electoral reform, which we have been fighting for for many years, and I notice that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government has gone further in the matter of electoral reform than recognising the principle of one man one vote, for he also indicates—and I give him every credit for it, and hope he will push it along as fast as he can—that he intends to amend the existing law, which I presume means he will amend it as regards registration, and so as to give greater facility for men keeping on the roll once they have got on, which is a very important item; and I presume it also means the recognition of the nomad vote. On the 2nd of September we had, for the

1899—D*

first time in this colony, a recognition of the fact that men who are travelling about from one portion of the colony to another are citizens of Queensland, and have a right to vote, and the value of the recognition of that principle is proved by the fact that on the 2nd of September nearly 5,000 votes were recorded in envelopes.

Mr. KIDSTON: Which could not have been recorded unless that had been done.

Mr. DAWSON: No, they could not have been recorded unless that had been done. I take it that the Premier means that he will go further than one man one vote, and that, as far as Queensland is concerned as a State in the United States of Australia, we shall recognise that the travelling vote shall be acknowledged in our legislation. For that reason I am very strong in my support of that clause in the Speech. One of the items that I am opposed to is the immigration proposal. When the proper time comes, I will give my reasons for opposing it; but I think it is just as well now to let the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government know that there will be some objections raised to it. I absolutely object to State-aided immigration. I am under the impression that if the hon. gentleman and those who administer the different departments of the State and consult with him were to spend a little more money in making this colony more attractive to our fellow-colonists in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, so as to encourage them to come and settle in Queensland, they would do a great deal more good than they are doing by wasting money in paying lecturers to go to England to send out a class of immigrants five-sixths of whom will probably have to accept relief from the Labour Bureau shortly after they arrive. Instead of spending money on immigration lecturers in England, we should offer encouragement to people who understand the conditions of our climate and soil to settle on our lands.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Brotherly love in federation—trying to take away their people.

Mr. DAWSON: They can get on more rapidly here than they can in any other colony, and we have not the slightest feeling of fear in regard to people coming from the other colonies to settle in Queensland, but we object to pauper immigration. We object to having the dregs of Europe brought here, and to having to pay their passages, and to pay for their keep when they get here. I know that at the time there was land thrown open for selection in the Western part of the colony about Richmond—which I understand is some of the finest country there is for close settlement in this colony or Australia—if a little more encouragement had been given by the Government to the people who came from Victoria to settle in Queensland we should have had a large number of those people now settled at Richmond. One or two of them remained, but I think they were sorry that they did so. If they had been accorded more liberal conditions they would have got hundreds of their fellow-colonists to come here and settle on our soil. The Secretary for Lands may not know this, but the hon. member for Flinders—who is the representative of that district—does know it. And I think the hon. member for Kennedy will bear me out that we had a very long and interesting conversation with those Victorian selectors, and that the burden of their cry was that they had not received sufficient encouragement from the Government. When a deputation from South Australia came here to see what conditions they could get, and what was the nature of our soil and climate, they were hampered and humbugged so much by the Lands Department that they gave it up in despair, and went back to South Australia, and reported that the people

there had better remain where they were until we had better land laws and more liberal land administration in Queensland.

The TREASURER: Our land laws are the most liberal in Australia.

Mr. DAWSON: It is the administration.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is why so many people are coming.

Mr. DAWSON: They were that petty and mean about the matter they would not even give these men a free railway pass.

Mr. KEOGH: Would federation give them anything better than they have now?

Mr. McDONALD: Certainly.

Mr. KEOGH: Not one single bit.

Mr. DAWSON: I would like to remind the hon. member for Rosewood that the man who does not believe in federation ought to go home and tell his wife that he believes marriage is a failure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Most of your party are against it.

Mr. GLASSEY: What is the opinion of the Secretary for Lands?

Mr. McDONALD: He is opposed to it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The ballot-box.

Mr. GLASSEY: Or the Secretary for Agriculture or the Home Secretary?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am a federationist, if you would like to know. I have voted for it several times.

Mr. McDONALD: The Secretary for Agriculture wrote it down in his own paper.

Mr. DAWSON: There is another matter in the Governor's Speech to which I wish to direct particular attention. I can assure the Premier that he will get all the assistance possible from members sitting on this side of the House in his determination to use all the forces of the Government to do away with the coloured alien.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: We many a time brought this matter under the notice of this Chamber. More particularly my hon. friend, the hon. member for Croydon, has made a special study of this question. It is high time that the Government realised the necessity of at once grappling with this very great question. Here in the South people do not thoroughly understand—they do not thoroughly appreciate what this coloured curse means to the people of Queensland. Were they residing in the North of Queensland; were they in different portions of the North where they had to compete against all kinds of aliens for their daily bread, they would know what the unfair competition of these coloured aliens meant. If they were small shopkeepers in our coastal towns, they would know. If they were carrying on any industry as artisans in Thursday Island, they would know what the presence of large numbers of these coloured aliens meant, and they would very soon awake to the urgent necessity of dealing with this question. If it is found necessary to sit six days a week during the remainder of the session, I hope the hon. gentleman will sit six days a week until he gets this particular Bill through, and does his level best, with the assistance of hon. members on this side, to do away with this alien curse, and not have it a stigma that this colony is to be called Mongrelia and Leperland. There is one other matter I wish to direct particular attention to, and I tell the hon. gentleman at once that, so far as I am concerned, on this question of the Transvaal I am absolutely opposed to his proposal.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I regard this as a piece of unadulterated jingoism, and I have no admira-

tion, I have no respect, for the men who volunteer to go to the Transvaal to help to shoot the Boers.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I could easily understand the man who has got the warm blood of a soldier running through his veins, who has got the martial ardour to cause him to tramp at the quick step behind the big drum and the trumpet—I could understand him wanting to go and show his valour and his ability as a marksman if the British Empire was in any serious danger from a foe that was a fair match. Where it was a fair fight between the two, I could understand his desire to assist, but I cannot understand his desiring to volunteer on the side of 36,000,000 or 40,000,000 of people who are trying to suppress about 70,000. I can admire the man of twelve stone who stands up to the man of twelve stone, and takes his licking—if a licking is coming; but I cannot admire the man who wants to assist a man of fifteen stone to punch a little fellow of six stone. That is exactly what this is. Before the hon. gentleman committed the colony to such a statement as this, he should have consulted Parliament.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I absolutely repudiate the suggestion, on behalf of the people of Queensland, that 250 mounted troops should go to war with the Transvaal—if war does eventuate.

Mr. JACKSON: Members of the Council even are against it.

Mr. DAWSON: I can tell the hon. gentleman now that if there is any sum of money on the Estimates to provide for the expenses of these 250 troops who are going over there it will be resolutely resisted by members sitting on this side of the House.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A very good federal spirit that.

Mr. DAWSON: I do not see any federal spirit in it. I do not like to use strong terms, but I always feel a deep indignation when I think of it—especially when I think that any man in Australia could bring his heart to go to the Transvaal to assist Great Britain.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: To assist other Australians, also.

Mr. DAWSON: "Assist other Australians!" That is all humbug.

Mr. LEAHY: Surely those men should get the franchise?

Mr. KERR: There are men in our own colony who have not got the franchise.

Mr. LEAHY: They are getting it now.

Mr. KERR: They have not got it yet.

Mr. DAWSON: I may say that I have another objection apart from that—that is a personal objection I have; but I have another objection, and it is this: The people of Queensland have been pretty hard put to it in the past to raise sufficient revenue to carry on the expenses of government, and among other things that they have to pay for is this Defence Force. Up to the present it has been merely an ornament.

Mr. KIDSTON: What?

Mr. STEWART: Has it been an ornament?

Mr. DAWSON: We have kept the force in existence; we have tried to the very best of our ability to make it efficient for one particular reason—because the day may come when we shall have to defend our own shores.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: When that day did come we would have the nucleus of a force that would enable us to defend ourselves against a foreign enemy; and I object to any of our trained men,

that we have paid for so long and made efficient, going out of this colony to fight the Boers, or anybody else.

The PREMIER: We want to provide them with a school of instruction.

Mr. DAWSON: I want to save them from destruction, for there is not the slightest doubt the Boer will "pot" them.

Mr. STEWART: Hear, hear! And serve them right, too.

Mr. DAWSON: I am very glad to find in this connection that when the Commandant of New South Wales was asked about the matter he objected on this very ground. He said that Australia could not afford—not one colony in the whole of this continent could afford—to let any of her troops leave her shores at the present time.

The PREMIER: Who said that?

Mr. DAWSON: Commandant French. He said, "You never know, once war breaks out, what foreign complications may arise, and Australia would be such a great prize that a foreign nation would make for it directly, and we want every able-bodied soldier to be here to defend it."

Mr. LEAHY: Perhaps he was afraid he would have to go himself.

Mr. DAWSON: Very likely. So far as the Secretary for Lands and I are concerned, it does not matter whether we go to Boerland or not, because if we stood end on, I defy any Boer to hit either of us. The Premier should distinctly understand, therefore, that I intend to resolutely resist anything in the shape of payment for those troops who volunteer for the Transvaal.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We might want assistance ourselves some day.

Mr. DAWSON: We might want assistance, but there is one thing about Australians—they are very fleet.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You don't mean to say you are going to bolt?

Mr. DAWSON: While I am very gratified indeed with many of the very liberal measures that the hon. gentleman has forecast in the Governor's Speech, still I think he might have gone a little further. There are many matters of very great urgency which have been omitted from the list. First and foremost of these—in fact it is a question which is of more urgency than some of the matters included in the Speech—is a Bill providing for a redistribution of seats. That is essentially necessary in Queensland at the present time. There are some very big anomalies. For instance, Charters Towers electorate returns two members. The defeated candidate at last election polled over 1,100 votes, and actually represents more electors, though not entitled to a seat in this House, than seven members on the other side.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Or eight members on yours.

Mr. DAWSON: I say that condition of affairs should not exist. We should endeavour to keep up with the times, and as population increases in one centre the representation of that centre should be increased. Where population decreases, then the representation should decrease. I say that the electorate of Charters Towers is entitled, at the very least, to one or two more members, and there are some of the electorates which are not entitled to a member at all—which should be absorbed by other electorates. I say that members sitting here should represent a respectable number of people.

Mr. KIDSTON: Respectable people.

Mr. DAWSON: I mean a fairly large number. When the hon. member for Normanby goes home to bed does his conscience not prick him? Is he not ashamed when he contemplates the fact that I represent five times as many electors as he does? And should he not as a loyal Queenslander and an ardent federalist use his best

endeavours to get his leader to at once bring in a Redistribution of Seats Bill in order that Charters Towers should have additional representation and the electorate of Normanby be absorbed by Rockhampton North?

Mr. KIDSTON: Where would he come in?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He will come in at Rockhampton.

Mr. DAWSON: There is another matter that I hope the Government will find time to deal with; that is a Workmen's Lien Bill, which has passed this House twice, and been defeated by the other Chamber. It is of importance, and of great urgency. Another matter is the abolition of the garnishee order. Hon. gentlemen who are in receipt of a comfortable salary do not know what a cruel thing this garnishee order is, when it can be taken out in the small debts court. While it was confined to the District Court the hardship was not so great, but to men who are overcome with temporary misfortune it is a great hardship. We have been promised for several years past that an amendment would be made in this direction, and that the Government would do their level best to have it abolished at an early date. I commend this matter to the Premier, and ask him to fulfil the promise made to members in times past. Then there is a Wages Protection Act, and a Compensation for Injuries Act required. The Attorney-General and Secretary for Mines may know something about the latter matter. It is of great urgency on mining fields. A miner never knows the minute that a lump of rock is coming down upon him, or the minute when the engine-driver is going to make a mistake and overwind. He never knows when he may be ordered to a dangerous place by the manager and be injured for life. The law is so worded that it is very hard for an injured man to get compensation, and much more difficult, if he is killed, for his wife and family to get any compensation. It must be obvious to the Secretary for Mines that such an Act should be passed, so that the relations between employer and employed should be put upon a sounder basis than they are at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The last Mining Act provided fully for it, and you were quite satisfied.

Mr. DAWSON: No, it does not. An accident occurred some time ago in this way. A party of men got into a bucket to go below; the engine-driver turned the lever the wrong way and pulled them up to the popper-heads. One man had his arm taken off at the shoulder, and the other hand crippled. He was a young man of twenty-one; he was crippled for life, and the company made him the miserable offer of £100 compensation, which he refused. Under the present Employers Liability Act he could only apply for three years' wages, and it is so difficult for an injured man to prove his case that even under that Act a man very seldom gets three years' wages.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is the other way about.

Mr. DAWSON: No! Contributory negligence has been held by the judges to prevent a man getting compensation. The first case was tried at Gympie, and the judges have followed out that rule. In the case I mention the claimant did not come under that Act at all, but got a verdict of £750, which probably cost £500 to obtain. Another matter I direct attention to, and it is something upon which the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Turley, will have more to say, is the need of a Seaman's Protection Act. I only noticed the other day that the "Gabo" steamer, leaving a Melbourne wharf with passengers and cargo for Western Australia, was reported to have a hole in her plates. The examiners went down and found that the hole

had been newly stuffed up with cement, through which the water was oozing. They knocked away this fresh cement, and the water gushed in, and they had to take the ship into dock to prevent her sinking at the wharf.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That was in Victoria.

Mr. DAWSON: Yes, but what shipping companies will do in Victoria they will do in Queensland, and a man who goes to sea risking his life is at least entitled to know that the Government which he is paying to keep in existence will have sufficient interest in his welfare to see that the ship he sails in is sound.

The PREMIER: Do you expect all these measures passed this session?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That ought to be a federal matter.

Mr. McDONALD: Put everything you can on the back of the Federal Parliament.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. gentleman can pass it here, and recommend it to the Federal Parliament, and when we all go down there we will back it up. I am not saying anything now about the minimum wage, or conciliation and arbitration. But before closing I wish to say that we are gratified as a party to know, that notwithstanding the fact that we have been abused and vilified, that we have been laughed to scorn and ridiculed, and torn into shreds and tatters by the critical members of the Government and by the Press, our platform, which was at one time said to be calculated to bring ruin and destruction on this colony and its people, has at last been adopted. We have succeeded in forcing the Government to the recognition of the principles which we have been advocating, and now, for the first time in the history of the colony, we have got the essential principles of the parliamentary Labour platform put into the mouth of His Excellency the Governor in his Speech from the Throne. I say we are gratified with that result. At any rate, if we have not convinced the Government, we have forced them to recognise that the people of the colony believe in these principles and because of that the Government are bound to give effect to them.

[5 p.m.] If they are sincere, and will make an honest endeavour to carry out the liberal provisions of this Address, they will get the cheerful and energetic support of every member on this side of the House. But directly we find a faltering hand, bowed head, or bended knee, we will find it incumbent on us to do our duty—to do our level best to straighten those who are bending their backs; and, if possible, hurl them out of power, and put somebody else in their place who will obey the people's will.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!
The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): Parliamentary etiquette demands that I should reply to the leader of the Opposition. At the same time, I should have liked to have heard a little solid argument to combat in his speech, which has occupied a very considerable time, and which, I admit, was an eloquent speech. But I think it is one I may commend more on the line of vivid imagination than of any solid criticism of the Speech which is now before the Chamber. While that hon. gentleman was speaking I was alternately cheered by thinking he highly approved of the policy of the Government as announced in the Governor's Speech. But suddenly my hopes were sadly depressed by hearing him saying something about what I had done that I should not have done, or what I had not done that I should have done, which deserved the severest condemnation. The hon. gentleman—to whose speeches we all willingly listen—must recognise the fact that abuse is no argument, and that

romance is not evidence; and certainly he has favoured us with a great deal of romance. I cannot discern the slightest scintilla of fact in the charges he has brought against the Government. I really was amused that the hon. gentleman, who is a veteran politician, should introduce in this Chamber the fact of an electioneering hoax having been perpetrated—some telegram having appeared in some paper about something the Government intended to do. If he had been a tyro in politics he might have been excused; but for any veteran politician like the hon. gentleman occupying our time in telling us about a telegram—supposing a telegram did exist, although I believe it was entirely a political engineering hoax—I cannot understand. I certainly regret that his facts were not a little more tangible—that he could grasp and really trace home this discreditable rumour to some member of the Cabinet. Of course we know that the object of the hon. gentleman was and is—and very properly so—to discredit the Government by all the means in his power. But now that he has sat down, I think he has bestowed upon us the strongest commendation; that the criticism he has directed against us has only revealed us in the light of an honest, straightforward Government deserving the fullest confidence of the country. If hon. gentlemen opposite were to express their true feelings, they would agree that what I have said is entertained by the great majority of the people of the colony, and more particularly by the leader of the Opposition. I really do not think it is necessary I should follow the hon. gentleman in rebutting the nebulous charges which he has made against the Government. I say "nebulous" distinctly, because there is not the slightest foundation for them, except in his own fervid imagination. I take great credit to myself that, at considerable physical exertion, I have traversed the length and breadth of this great country, not only during the parliamentary campaign, but also during the referendum campaign. I take it that it is the duty of any statesman occupying the position of Premier, to make himself acquainted with the different conditions existing throughout the colony, and with what the constituencies require. As to interpreting my visits as bribes, I have too high an opinion of the intelligence and independence of the electors to dream for one moment they would consider—or that I should consider—what I said was intended to influence them whether they would support this Government or a Government coming from the other side of the House. With regard to Cambooya, there was no promise whatever that I am aware of made there. With regard to the post-office—if I may descend to these local matters—we know the vote was on the Estimates long before. It was on the Estimates two years ago, and only delayed on account of having to alter the site. I went out specially to Pittsworth to see the site.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The plans were finished eighteen months ago.

The PREMIER: There was a difficulty inasmuch as it was discovered that if the building had been put on the site it was intended to be put on, it would have been recessed from the public road, and it was deemed advisable to bring it into line with the public road; and as this certain portion of the public road had been dedicated to the public, it had to be resumed by the Lands Department. So far as the Post Office is concerned, it is entirely a matter outside the department I have the honour to administer. There has been no promise given to Cambooya or any other place, but I have no hesitation in informing the House that plans of certain railways will be submitted in due time to a committee appointed by this House to consider them.

Mr. GLASSEY: What about the promise to the Gayndah people about a railway from Maryborough to Gayndah—from Kilkivan to Gayndah?

The PREMIER: Subject to the approval of Parliament.

Mr. KERR: There are so many, he does not remember.

The PREMIER: I hope the hon. member for Bundaberg read what I said. He will find that I said that whatever railways were made will be made with the approval of this House, and of a committee the appointment of which it is intended to submit to you.

Mr. GLASSEY: It is the Degilbo-Gayndah line.

The PREMIER: I do not feel disposed to enter into the discussion of that at the present time. I am satisfied that the voting at Cambooya was carried out strictly and correctly, and without any interference by the Government. That I am sure of. The Government never interfered.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You had nothing to do with the burglary?

The PREMIER: I think one statement is quite as truthful as the other.

Mr. GLASSEY: Will you grant a committee of inquiry as to the papers that have been surreptitiously taken away?

The PREMIER: These are matters that may receive consideration; but in the meantime I allege that the gentleman who represents Cambooya, and who now sits as one of the supporters of the Government, was justly returned to represent that constituency.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We don't know yet.

The PREMIER: I know; but I do not want to prejudge what may occur in connection with that case. It was hardly wise, and certainly not in good taste, for the hon. gentleman who has just addressed us to lead the House to infer that the Government had been instrumental in securing the return of the sitting member over the gentleman who formerly represented Cambooya.

Mr. GLASSEY: What about a man voting who had no right to a vote?

The PREMIER: The matter is still *sub judice*, and I do not think it is a matter that I should go into.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about the names improperly on the roll for property votes?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Any one of the public can object at any time.

Mr. DAWSON: They can, but have to pay a search fee.

The PREMIER: It seems to me quite a revelation that the rolls which have been accepted as representing the electors, and that some names appearing therein, are those of persons who are disqualified, but I don't wish to pursue that question any further now. I prefer to turn to the Speech itself, and I think I may express my satisfaction at the very able and masterly speeches which the proposer and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech made yesterday afternoon. They are not neophytes in politics, so they hardly need to receive the congratulations, which are accorded to younger members. Nevertheless, I must testify to the manner in which they made their speeches; to the wide and able grasp they took of the various subjects in the Speech. That the Speech is a long one, I admit, but at the same time the subjects enumerated therein could hardly be dealt with in a more condensed manner. If the views of the leader of the Opposition had been followed the Speech would have been double the length it is—to contain all the measures which he would wish introduced.

I admit that the difficulty was to deal with matters of the most pressing importance. I do not regret the length of the Speech for this reason: It is a complete and overwhelming answer to critics, especially to those who hold anti-federal views, and who have been telling the country at length that when federation is accomplished this Parliament will degenerate into a parochial vestry.

Mr. GLASSEY: That Parliament will be reduced to a divisional board.

The PREMIER: If two or three clauses of this Speech were eliminated, the whole of the other matter is local, and pertains to the State of Queensland, and as such will command the full attention of members throughout a very long session.

Mr. KEOGH: Land will be the only great matter we will have to legislate on.

The PREMIER: I think the Speech affords sufficient food for a much longer session than we can hold this year. I think—and this is the view I have taken when considering the question of federation—that federation opens up a very large vista of useful political reforms, which, I think, whoever may lead the Government hereafter, will recognise as being the true lines on which he should proceed, that is, to assimilate as far as is practicable our legislation with that of the other colonies. And I think that the very first outcome of this will be to abolish plural voting, which appears to have met with commendation. I am very gratified to hear from the leader of Opposition that all the gentlemen on his side who were opposed to the Bill, intend now to support the Address to Her Majesty. There is a united front to be shown. I was doubtful about this, as I recognised gentlemen opposite present who were opposed to federation.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: No; opposed to the Bill.

Mr. JENKINSON: The Leader of the Opposition only speaks for the Labour party.

The PREMIER: I thought the leader of the Opposition said that the gentlemen opposite were one consolidated body, that they would present one consolidated phalanx in favour of federation. I was gratified at that announcement, and I am surprised that the hon. member for Wide Bay now interjects that he does not intend to follow his leader on this subject.

Mr. JENKINSON: Who is my leader?

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition.

Mr. JENKINSON: I beg to differ. He is the leader of the Labour Opposition.

The PREMIER: I am gratified that the leader of the Opposition is not here to listen to these remarks, because I understood the unanimity was wonderful.

Mr. JENKINSON: He has no authority to speak for our party—for the Independent party.

The PREMIER: One thing is very clear. It pains me more than I can express to find that the party opposite, which, according to the leader of the Opposition, was so united, such a happy family, is falling into disunion; each a party to himself—

Mr. GIVENS: What about the disunion in your own party?

Mr. HARDACRE: The leader of the Opposition spoke for the Labour party.

Mr. KEOGH: He did not speak for me on this question. I can tell you that.

The PREMIER: With regard to electoral reform, I wish it to be distinctly understood that the adoption of the principle of one man one vote is not a concession wrung from me through any attitude taken up by the hon. members on the other side.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Oh, oh!

The PREMIER: I can verify that by the words used by the leader of the Opposition in

his address at the Exhibition Building some nights ago, when he said that the Labour party had been clamouring for years for one man one vote and could not get it, but that under federation the measure was sure to come. I give it as a corollary to the Commonwealth Bill, as showing an honest intention to assimilate our legislation to the federal legislation. I believe this is the right course to adopt, and I assure hon. gentlemen that I am perfectly sincere in this matter. Previously I considered there were objections to the measure, and possibly if the Commonwealth Bill had not been accepted, I would not have placed this subject in the programme. The Bill declares emphatically that an elector shall vote once and once only in the election of members to the House of Representatives and the Senate. We should follow on that line, and adapt our legislation to the principles laid down in the Commonwealth Bill. I shall not take up time in dilating on the advantages of federation. The position now is that the voice of the country has spoken emphatically on the matter; and the voice of the country—which was so eagerly asked for in the instrument known as the referendum—having asserted itself, it is the duty of us all to submit to that voice and proceed to the Address to Her Majesty, under which federation will be accomplished.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I trust hon. members on both sides will consider now that the time has passed for discussing the Commonwealth Bill, and that our duty is to obey the voice of the country, whether it has come from north, south, east, or west. (Applause.) We have to look at the aggregate of votes; and, in that light I distinctly decline to consider whether the South has been weak-hearted in the matter, or whether there has been a preponderance of votes in the North. All the electors of Queensland have spoken, and their voice must be obeyed. I trust to have the assistance of both sides to carry the Address to Her Majesty as early as practicable, and thereby secure the union of the States of Australia. I cannot understand the strictures passed by the hon. gentleman on the clause in the Speech relating to immigration. It is a very carefully worded clause, and relates solely to a class of immigrants demanded at the present time by the employers of labour in this country—agricultural labourers and domestic servants. The hon. gentleman spoke, I am quite convinced, under a misconception of the system under which immigration is now conducted. Many of the immigrants brought out lately paid their own passages in full, and others paid as much as they could afford towards the cost of their passage. They were distributed along the coast, and the moment they arrived were eagerly taken up and placed in good employment. They are not displacing anyone. That is what I wish to emphasise. The system under which immigration is now being conducted is such that no person seeking employment is displaced. The men and women who came out by the "Duke of Portland" were a remarkably good class, and were eagerly absorbed as they came down the coast, a very small number in fact being left for Brisbane, and those were engaged within a very few hours.

Mr. KEOGH: Two hours.

The PREMIER: I should be very sorry that the hon. gentleman should imagine that we were rushing into a large State-aided system of immigration, or that anything was being done which would lead to immigrants being introduced who would not be absorbed immediately on arrival in the colony.

Hon. G. THORN: How many went south afterwards—in two or three days?

The PREMIER: None, so far as I know. I cannot answer conundrums. I investigated most severely the destination of all the people who came out by the Duke of Portland, and I have a list of all their employers. I am confident that not one of them has gone south at the present time. If any have they must have broken their engagements.

Mr. ANNEAR: They could all have been employed in the Wide Bay district, where they were supposed to come.

Mr. McDONALD: Did the Government employ any?

The PREMIER: No, not any. They have all been employed by private employers.

Mr. BROWNE: Only a few weeks since there was a Government advertisement in the *Courier* and *Telegraph* advertising a clerk, a tutor, and two agricultural labourers for hire at the immigration depot.

The PREMIER: Those are not the people to whom I refer. They are not immigrants who came out by the "Duke of Portland." I can assure the House—and I watched the experiment from the first—I have satisfied myself that every one of them, men and women, made engagements with private employers.

Mr. KEOGH: I came down to get farm labourers and could not get one three hours after they arrived.

The PREMIER: The difficulty is to get good people of that class to come from the old country, and they are not by any means to be obtained in shiploads. The greatest care is exercised in their selection. With regard to sending lecturers home, I can assure the House that the hon. gentleman in making that statement was entirely mistaken, as not a single immigration lecturer has been sent from Queensland since I have had anything to do with the Government of Queensland. But I think there were two appointments made by Sir Horace Tozer, and one—the appointment of Mr. Benjamin Tillet—was, as hon. members know, the subject of a discussion in this House last session. There were one or two appointed at home, but no such appointments are being made at present, nor do I think there is any necessity for them. We will, I think, obtain a sufficient stream of immigrants of the class I have mentioned, and which I certainly expect the House will support the Government in getting, as by that means we will be able to provide the labour required by our agricultural class for increased production. I certainly have no sympathy with the hon. gentleman in saying that we should get the unemployed from the South up here. We have no wish to detract from the populations of the sister colonies, and it was well interjected by some hon. member that that did not show a federal spirit. I consider the classes I have referred to as quite as experienced in the agricultural industry and in domestic service as if they had served in the southern colonies. I think the hon. gentleman has taken a very narrow view of the benefits of immigration, and seeing how well the experiment has answered in the past I have no hesitation in advocating the system now adopted. I believe the monthly steamers are bringing out a few, and in a short time yet another shipload will arrive similar in numbers to immigrants who came by the Duke of Portland. The hon. gentleman stated that he did not want to see a pauper population landed on our shores, and I quite agree with him in that. I have explained that immigration now is conducted on quite a different system to what it was in the past. Many of the immigrants now introduced paid their own passages in full, and some paid a portion of their passage money, and some few had a few pounds in their pockets. I

believe those brought out by the "Duke of Portland" were a most respectable class of agricultural labourers and domestic servants.

Mr. RYLAND: Where is the necessity to legislate for those who can pay their own passages?

The PREMIER: They can come out without any restrictions. £13, I think, is the cost of the passage, and if they have not the whole of that, they are assisted.

Mr. RYLAND: What about the desire to get rid of the 250 men we are to send over to the Boers?

The PREMIER: I am coming to that presently, but it does not affect the question of immigration.

Mr. DAWSON: We tried a system before, but the conditions here were so hard that the immigrants went into New South Wales, and we had to bring them back and punish them.

The PREMIER: There is no occasion to do that now. The whole system is entirely altered, and except that special arrangements are made for them, and they are invited to come to Queensland, they now virtually pay their own passages, and come out willing and ready to enter into engagement with employers in this colony. The hon. gentleman further said something about our land laws and their illiberal administration. I will leave my colleague, the Secretary for Lands, to answer that more fully, but I know that whenever people have come from the south—and there have been several from Adelaide, Victoria, and elsewhere—every facility has been placed at their disposal, and I would give an emphatic contradiction to the statement that they cannot get railway passes to the lands they wish to take up.

Mr. DAWSON: The South Australian delegates were refused.

The PREMIER: I am not in a position to traverse that statement, and I will leave it to my hon. friend, but I know that those coming from the southern colonies to Queensland and selecting land here, have their wagons, ploughs, and husbandry implements carried free over our railways to their destination, and in every respect the fullest facilities are given to people who want to make their homes here. I mention this because I do not wish the remarks of the leader of the Opposition to go forth to show that Queensland is at all stingy in its assistance to intending settlers.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is only in cases where they have made application before they go to select.

The PREMIER: If they apply to the Lands Department facilities are given them to proceed to the area open for selection, and if they select, then, as I have said, their wagons and implements are carried free for them on our railways.

Mr. HARDACRE: If they happen to overlook that when they come here they cannot get freight free on the railways.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman, I know, takes an interest in land administration, and he should be aware that recently there has been an inquiry department opened in the Lands Department, where the fullest information is given to anyone who asks for it. I have never heard of any case of hardship, and I know that any case which has been brought before the Government has been dealt with liberally, with the view of

inducing settlement and facilitating selection. Of course, I am not prepared for one moment to say that every man coming to the department and saying that he wants to go to Winton, or some other place, to look at the land shall have a free railway pass. That would lead to indiscriminate abuse, and I do not think any hon. member,

however ardent he may be in the matter, would say that we should descend to that sort of thing, and run the risk of gross abuse.

Mr. HARDACRE: We will bring the matter before you privately.

The PREMIER: Now with regard to the Transvaal, I think it was only due to the force that the expressions made use of by His Excellency should be laid before Parliament. Parliament last session made much more liberal provision than it has hitherto done for defence, and I may say that the money has been judiciously expended, and that the force is, as I am informed, in a very satisfactory condition at the present time. Of course, if there are any grievances to mention hon. members will have an opportunity of thrashing them out on the Defence Estimates. But I may say that I view this offer of a contingent for the Transvaal in a very different light from that in which it is viewed by the leader of the Opposition. It is not the 250 men who will form a contingent to the British army in South Africa that we have alone to consider, but we have to remember that the offer of service is some evidence that these colonies wish to bind themselves more and more to the British Empire—to build a pillar of the British Empire in the southern hemisphere. That is a desire which should guide all statesmen in Australia, and in that light I think the offer of this comparatively small force of 250 men does credit to the colony, and it is certainly very gratifying to the Government to learn that their services will be gladly accepted if circumstances render it necessary. The men showed an admirable spirit in offering their services, and I believe that instead of 250 there would be 500 ready to volunteer to-morrow morning. At the same time I think they also showed a desire to enter upon a larger field of instruction than they can possibly obtain at our six days' encampment in Queensland. On that ground alone the offer would be gratifying, but is much more so as indicating a desire to maintain the connection and solidarity of the British Empire, to which I believe the Commonwealth Bill will materially contribute. I believe that the Commonwealth, when established, will bind together the States as part of the British Empire, and that the croakings of several who think that Australia, by being federated, will necessarily become a republic and "cut the painter," will prove to be baseless. I have no sympathy with such a view, nor do I believe that the good sense of Australians will ever lead them in that direction. They will, I am sure, rejoice to be connected with that empire on which the sun never sets. The school of instruction which this service would afford for a small body of our force is a by no means unimportant element in the matter.

Mr. GLASSEY: It may also be a school of destruction.

The PREMIER: It may be a school of destruction, but men have to endure discipline and hardship if they wish to achieve greatness in any avocation of life. I do not think the good sense of this House can reasonably object to advantage being taken of this opportunity to announce to the Great British Empire, not only our sympathy with Australians in South Africa, but also our willingness to assist the mother country in a case of emergency. I must distinctly contradict my hon. friend in what he stated with regard to the Commandant of the New South Wales forces. I have received a letter from that officer, in which he states that he is extremely anxious that the other colonies should go and do likewise, and he has intimated to me that he would be only too proud to have the Queensland contingent—of which he entertains the most affectionate remembrance—under his control. That shows distinctly the spirit in which General

French views the matter. He has congratulated the Government most sincerely on their patriotism, and I may say that the expressions of commendation that we have just received from Johannesburg, and also from a large number of Australians in England, testify to the fact that the action is one which has won for Queensland the respect of a very large number of people.

Mr. STEWART: What are the Boers struggling for?

The PREMIER: What are the Uitlanders struggling for?

Mr. STEWART: The Boers are struggling for liberty.

The PREMIER: And the Uitlanders are struggling for those privileges and rights which we all so dearly cherish—for such a measure of reform as is so gladly accepted by hon. members in this House. I am not, however, going into a discussion of the Transvaal question beyond saying that the sympathy of all British people is attracted to the Uitlanders in the Transvaal.

Mr. STEWART: No.

The PREMIER: I am sorry that the hon. member for North Rockhampton does not participate in that sympathy.

Mr. STEWART: I should be ashamed of myself if I did.

The PREMIER: I do not think the hon. member can have a clear perception of the feeling of Australians in regard to a crisis such as that which is occurring in the Transvaal.

Mr. McDONALD: None of the other colonies have offered assistance.

The PREMIER: Some of the other colonies offered assistance on a previous occasion.

Mr. McDONALD: Not on this question.

The PREMIER: That is no reason why we should not offer the services of a contingent of our men now.

Mr. McDONALD: What you want is a title.

The PREMIER: Why should Queensland be the last to make the offer? Why should we not take the lead? I hope we shall always be ready to take the lead in any good matter. Queensland would occupy a second-rate position if she waited for New South Wales, or one of the other colonies, to do a thing before she attempted it. I see no reason why we should not endeavour to show that the Empire is one, and I think that on fuller consideration the House will endorse the action which the Government have taken in that direction. The leader of the Opposition mentioned a lot of measures which he intimated should be considered at the present time, such, for instance, as a Redistribution Bill, a Minimum Wage Bill, and various other measures. I am sure that hon. members on both sides will admit that if we can place upon the statute-book the measures which are enumerated in this Speech this session Parliament will do very well.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: And it is no use putting another feather on the camel's back. I have a desire that these measures should be passed, but hon. members will understand that it will rest with themselves what progress will be made with them. There is a limit to human endurance, and if hon. members will occupy two or three hours with speeches in connection with this Address in Reply, and with other measures, there is not the slightest hope that we shall accomplish much in the way of legislation. I hope that hon. members will exercise forbearance, considering that we have arrived at a late period of the year. I do not wish to sit after Christmas if it can be avoided. We have had a very arduous time, having already had one session this year, and the referendum campaign, and I should be very reluctant to unduly prolong this session. I hope that we shall be able to deal with a great deal of this

business, and do something in the direction of putting useful legislation on the statute-book. Therefore, while a Redistribution Bill and other matters may be considered hereafter, I could not honestly see that it would be any use placing them in this list without giving the House an idea that there was no sincerity on the part of the Government. The measures placed here are such as we hope to accomplish if there is not an undue amount of verbiage indulged in, and in that light I hope hon. members will consider the time and the circumstances under which we are met, and will proceed with such business as will be most conducive to the interests of the colony.

Mr. BROWNE: Have you anything to go on with to-morrow if we close this debate to-night?

The PREMIER: I am very glad the hon. member has made that interjection, because I want hon. members on both sides to clearly understand my position. I am quite prepared to go on with business if this debate closed to-night, but, out of consideration to the leader of the Opposition and to other hon. members with whom I have spoken, I have deemed it only proper that the Address to Her Majesty should follow immediately on the acceptance of the Address in Reply, and that no contentious business should be introduced till that is done. My own desire is—and I would be very glad if hon. members would consent to it—that if I cannot get the certificate from the returning officer before the 30th of this month we might proceed, say, with the Financial Statement, without debating it.

Mr. STEWART: Bring in your one man one vote Bill and discuss it.

The PREMIER: I will bring it in as early as I possibly can, but I am not going to bring in any contentious legislation until the Address to Her Majesty has been disposed of. The hon. member for Rockhampton North, who accuses me of dilatoriness, should attribute to his own leader the position. I have no desire to introduce contentious matters until the federal question is fairly out of this Chamber.

Mr. STEWART: You have not my consent in that, anyhow.

The PREMIER: It shows a want of discipline on the part of hon. members on the other side in not recognising that when their leader speaks they must accept his dictum as the voice of the party. I have had recently to refer to the want of cohesion in the party.

Mr. STEWART: I think you had better take our leader over with you, if that is the case—absorb him.

Mr. KIDSTON: Does the leader of this party ask for consideration in that matter?

The PREMIER: What party are you connected with? (Laughter.)

Mr. KIDSTON: The party that sits here. The leader of this party will call you to account for making that statement.

The PREMIER: I do not think it necessary to deal with every question mentioned in the Speech. The criticism of the leader of the Opposition has not been directed to the whole of the matters mentioned here, and we may hear later the views of other members concerning them. The leader of the Opposition, in fact, has not criticised the Speech. He has commended certain portions of the Speech, while he objects to others, but, on the whole, I think the balance of his criticism is in favour of the Speech. In that light I think it will be accepted by hon. members as a whole. I am very anxious that the session should not only provide for useful legislation, but that it should also provide for the construction of public works and railways. As the Speech very properly mentions, owing to the financial condition of the colony in previous years, these works have been considerably restricted,

but now we are emerging from our financial difficulties the public works alluded to should be proceeded with as early as possible after the Address to Her Majesty has been passed. I wish as early as possible, therefore, to submit the Government proposals for the constitution of the parliamentary railways committee to hon. members. We know the benefits of extending our railways, and proceeding with public works on a more comprehensive basis than they have been up to the present time. I hope that hon. members on both sides will assist the Government in passing the Address to Her Majesty without unnecessary delay. Before resuming my seat, I desire to congratulate the colony as a whole on having shown such patriotism and good sense in accepting the Commonwealth Bill at the referendum, thereby enabling federation to be consummated. I have already stated that if four days a week are desired immediately I shall have no hesitation in seeing that they are provided; but, in the meantime, I fancy that the Address in Reply may legitimately occupy some time, because no doubt the views of hon. members on some of the measures mentioned will be of value in the consideration of our future legislation. I do not think that I need occupy any more time with my remarks, as the leader of the Opposition did not deal with any of the measures in a critical spirit. I deprecate very much the tone in which he insinuated that the Government had been corrupt in its administration, or had been trying by underhand influences to induce the constituencies to vote otherwise than they did. From my observation, I think no general election has ever been held under purer influences than that which occurred in March. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. JENKINSON: How must preceding elections have been conducted then?

The PREMIER: If the elections resulted in favour of the Government it was simply owing to the fact that the manifesto then submitted by the Government commanded the respect, esteem, and intelligent approval of the electors of the colony. It was also unfair of the hon. member to say that the time fixed for the elections was necessarily intended to preclude gentlemen who were endeavouring to obtain constituencies from travelling through their respective districts. I believe in the Cairns electorate the weather was rather adverse, but throughout the colony as a whole the weather was remarkably good.

Mr. GIVENS: Fully sixty electors could not record their votes in the Cairns electorate owing to the floods.

The PREMIER: I admit that, but the hon. member has no reason to complain because it was to his advantage. It should meet with his warmest approbation in regard to this matter. However, I distinctly deny that there was any intention or desire on the part of the Government to act otherwise than fairly and test the feeling of the constituencies with regard to who should hold the reins of power; and, in that light, I contend that the constituencies spoke out fairly and strongly, and that their verdict on that occasion was one which may be accepted as the true voice of the country. Since that time additional names had been placed on the rolls for the purpose of deciding on the Commonwealth Bill, and it is a matter of satisfaction that so many voted. I consider that the affirmative vote given up to the present time—and which, I imagine, will not be disturbed, except to increase the affirmation—is an exceedingly gratifying result. I believe when the Address to Her Majesty is passed many of those who object to federation will see that their vision was rather short and that the benefits to the whole of Australia will be almost immediately apparent. I am gratified to think that the criticism directed towards the

Speech has not been of a very destructive character, but I shall nevertheless be glad to hear what other hon. gentlemen have to say. Now that the leader of the Opposition is present, I think I may be permitted to remark that he should be very careful in speaking for all hon. gentlemen on his side, because during his temporary absence we have had an exhibition of independence which must be rather disheartening and tends to some confusion, in my mind, as to whether I am to recognise the hon. gentleman as the general of the opposite party, or of only a section of it.

Mr. JENKINSON: It is only when you want to be funny that you say that.

The PREMIER: I leave that to the hon. member for Wide Bay, who was one of the gentlemen who asserted his independence in the absence of his chief. I trust that the debate will proceed upon fair and reasonable lines. The hon. gentleman commenced his speech, in the language of the proverb, coming in like a lion and going out like a lamb, and I hope that those who follow him will divest their minds of the formidable accusations of corruption which the hon. gentleman launched at the Government in connection with their administration of the affairs of the colony.

Mr. DAWSON: May I make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I understand that in my temporary absence the Premier gave it to be understood that there was some compact between him and myself in reference to the conduct of business.

The PREMIER: I did not use the word "compact."

Mr. DAWSON: Well, then, agreement or arrangement. If the Premier made that statement, I give it a most emphatic denial. There is no arrangement, compact, or anything else between the Premier and myself as an act of consideration towards myself.

Mr. KIDSTON: You did not ask for any consideration.

Mr. DAWSON: No, I did not.

The PREMIER: May I say a word in reply?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I do not think the hon. gentleman understands what I said. I alluded to the fact that no contentious business should be introduced before the Address to the Queen was passed. Last night I was waited upon by the hon. gentleman, who was accompanied by Messrs. McDonald and Kidston, and in their presence I plainly stated the same thing.

Mr. KIDSTON: But not with our consent.

The PREMIER: I said before them that no contentious business—in fact, no business will be introduced before the Address to Her Majesty, and that, as I previously mentioned, was arranged with the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. DAWSON: There was no arrangement. Do you say there was any?

The PREMIER: It was mentioned to the hon. member distinctly, and I understood that he assented to it.

Mr. STORY (*Balonne*): I crave the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation. In the speech made by the leader of the Opposition he made further reference to the vote at Bonna Vonna. That is in my electorate, and—

The SPEAKER: As far as my recollection serves me, in what the leader of the Opposition said in reference to the Balonne election, there was no personal reference whatever to the hon. member.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSEY: There is no necessity for a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: I do not see that any necessity has arisen for a personal explanation by the hon. member.

Mr. STORY: If you will allow me to say so, he said that if the Government had not interfered, my opponent would have been sitting here instead of me. I want to make an explanation as far as that is concerned.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is not a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman cannot make that the subject of a personal explanation. It really does not apply to him personally.

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*): I did not intend to take any part in this discussion at all, but I should just like to say a word in reply to the Premier. In speaking just now he informed the House and country that it was out of consideration for the leader of the Opposition—

The PREMIER: I did not say so.

Mr. KIDSTON: That he had decided not to bring on any business before the Address to the Queen had been disposed of. I challenged that statement at the time he made it, and he got out of it by a quibble. It was a very unfair statement to make. The hon. gentleman refers to an interview that took place yesterday, and he has brought in my name and that of Mr. McDonald. I know what took place at that interview. The hon. gentleman told us that he had no intention of bringing on any business until the Address to the Queen had been disposed of, and I distinctly told him that I did not see the slightest necessity for any such course being adopted; that I believed the Address to Her Majesty would not be a very contentious matter in this House—that even those of us who had worked most earnestly against the acceptance of the Commonwealth Bill recognised as democrats that the verdict of the majority of electors who had voted should be respected by the House, and that I did not see any reason whatever under those circumstances for allowing the Address to interfere with the domestic legislation of the colony. So that it is altogether unfair for the hon. gentleman to hint or indicate to the House that it was in deference to the wishes of gentlemen sitting on this side that he had decided to adopt the course indicated. It is not our wish at all. When I asked him to go on with legislation that had been promised he distinctly refused—he would not be dictated to by the *Telegraph*; he would not pass this or the other thing.

The PREMIER: What did you want passed? You wanted one man one vote.

Mr. KIDSTON: Yes, I wanted one man one vote.

The PREMIER: Which I declined to promise before the Address.

Mr. KIDSTON: It was with that object that we waited on the hon. gentleman; that we should get his assurance that the one man one vote Bill which he had promised would be gone on with at once.

Mr. STEWART: Hear, hear!

Mr. KIDSTON: I would not have referred to this matter had not the hon. gentleman taken shelter under this interview that we had yesterday to justify his statement that it was out of consideration for the leader of the Opposition that he had done this thing.

The PREMIER: I never used those words.

Mr. KIDSTON: Now, I declare that nothing that took place at that interview yesterday justified him in making that statement. As far as we are concerned, the hon. gentleman can bring down his legislation to-morrow, and the sooner the better.

* HON. G. THORN (*Fassifern*): I wish, in the remarks I have to make, like the

[7 p.m.] other members who have preceded me, to be very brief. I am going to speak from an anti-billite point of view. I am anxious to get on with the business, not to see it merely placed on the paper to be gazed at, and not carried out. I want it to be carried through, and I will assist the Government in every shape and form to carry out most of the measures mentioned in the Speech. What I wish to speak more particularly about is the referendum. I am one of those who vehemently resisted the passing of the Enabling Bill, and I have no reason to regret my former action. I was afraid the people in the Northern part of the colony were not so well educated on this question as the people in the South.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Oh, oh! and laughter.

HON. G. THORN: I was afraid of the vote in the Northern part of the colony, because there was a lot of squaring went on in different places. I am not prepared to say where it was, but I know all about it. The Hon. the Premier went into my electorate and promised all sorts of things. I believe he even bolstered me up; but said that on this particular question I was astray. But on this question above all, I say I am correct, and time will tell I am correct. I am getting an old fellow now, and the young people everywhere, I noticed, were the ones who voted not in unison with my views; but as I stand here to-night I am certain time will tell who is right and who is wrong. I should like to ask the Premier where all this money came from to carry this infernal vote. If I am out of order I apologise for using that word. The hon. member for Bundaberg talked about home rule. I know what home rulers are; I have dined with them in the old colony.

Mr. GLASSEY: What is the use of talking about them. I am one of them.

HON. G. THORN: You are Scotch. What do you know about home rule? I know more about it than any member of this House. I believe that the hon. gentleman when he was in Ireland has simply "hunted with the hare and run with the hounds."

Mr. GLASSEY: No fear; he never did that.

HON. G. THORN: I say that the hon. member is always trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Under federation we shall lose the control of our Customs, and that is a thing I will never give up. That is what the Irish home rulers want, so as to build up industries, bring the agricultural land under cultivation again, and bring back the big population they had years ago. Did the hon. member for Bundaberg ever read the Local Government Bill for Ireland, which gives the people there as much power as we shall have when we lose our home rule, and when this Address to the Queen passes this Chamber? I suppose it will pass, that we cannot help it. I am surprised that the Premier should go on with it when the Bill was passed by such a small majority. The people in the North were not educated up to it, and I have no doubt that if I had gone up North I should have turned the tables entirely against federation.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Oh, oh! and laughter.

HON. G. THORN: I should have shown them the errors of their ways. The member for Oxley went to Fassifern. The Premier also went there, and if he did no good there he did no harm. He did harm to the cause. So did the Attorney-General, who went to my electorate. The hon. member for Oxley brought an ex-officer of the German army there with him. He was asked if he would go to church on the Sunday, and he

said he would sooner have a game of cards. Instead of preaching the gospel, he wanted to teach the people how to play cards. No doubt he was paid, and paid handsomely. I wish to tell members on this side of the House that it seems an extraordinary thing to me where all this money came from. How much of it came from the South? How much of it came from Victoria? It was not done for nothing; Mr. Trenwith did not come up for nothing.

MR. GLASSEY: What did you subscribe?

HON. G. THORN: I did not go to Bundaberg. If I had gone there I should have made the vote heavier. (Laughter.) I expected all along the Northern part of the colony would have given a solid vote in favour of it.

MR. GLASSEY: What did you subscribe to the Anti-Bill League?

HON. G. THORN: I gave my mite.

MR. GLASSEY: I saw the list.

HON. G. THORN: I was the president of the league in my own district, and it was nearly three to one against it. In my district there was no pay. Everything was done for love; from pure patriotism. They knew that their manufactures would be wiped out if they passed a Bill on the lines of the Commonwealth Bill. They knew very well that for a long time they had been endeavouring to establish manufacturing industries and the farming industry. And I am afraid that the farmers on the Darling Downs will be wiped out, and that it will become a great sheepwalk again. Hon. members must be aware that in my district our seasons are not regular like they are in the other colonies; that our rainfall cannot be depended on; that it does not fall regularly at the right time.

THE PREMIER: That is not the fault of federation.

HON. G. THORN: I know that, but that is one reason why I oppose the Bill. I want to see this colony a prosperous community. I don't want to say anything disrespectful of the people in the Northern part of the colony, but the majority of them are newchums, and if a new goldfield broke out in New Guinea or South Africa—I don't mean the Transvaal, but British South Africa—they would be off there to-morrow. Therefore, I do not think we can regard the people of the North with the same unalloyed satisfaction as the settlers of the Southern part of the colony. I know they have done wonders in the North in the way of mining, but mining is not everything, and I believe that under this Bill, the coalminers will be wiped out, and the agriculturists will be wiped out also. The Premier talked about this colony being prepared to trust the southern colonies, but he is going to give different representation to the North than he gives to the South. I say the first thing we ought to do is to carve the colony into electoral divisions. South Queensland has forty-five members, the Central eleven, and the North sixteen. Taken *in globo* like that, the South gave a vote adverse to the Bill. I don't say that all the forty-five Southern members voted for federation themselves, but I say that, dividing the colony as I have suggested, would show that the South had a majority over the other two parts on the matter of federation, and I contend that the Premier has no right to allow an Address to go to Her Majesty without having a larger majority than he has now. I say, as I have said before, that the Premier would never have voted for this Federation Bill unless some promise had been made to him. Of course, I don't wish to accuse him of anything. Perhaps he has been promised a portfolio in the Federal Parliament. I say that he did not vote for this iniquitous Bill without some promise—some bait—being held out to him. He will become one of the Federal members, sitting in

Melbourne. I am anxious for the one man one vote matter to be settled at once to see where I am. I shall probably record my vote on this matter to suit my own district. We ought to get experts to carve out the colony into electorates, and let us go to the country again on this matter of one man one vote. As the Premier has said, this House does not represent the country, otherwise this provision would not be in the Speech. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that he should get three or four members for his large and important electorate. I shall support him in trying to get an extra member for his district. That's only fair.

MR. DAWSON: Thanks.

HON. G. THORN: I trust the Premier will come down at once with the one man one vote matter. I could carve out the electorates myself on a fair basis, according to the number of people, which I could get from the Census Office. I am going for one man one vote. I don't even object to women's suffrage; but I am afraid that it would injure the North, because there are not as many females in the North as in the Southern parts of the colony. I want to see the billites or federalists get their reward. I also want to see the pastoralists get their reward. I want to see the extended leases handed over, and I want to see the freeholders handed over. They will get their reward too, when they are handed over to the Philistines. They will then be taxed by the Federal Parliament as well as by the local Parliament. They will put on a land tax, as in Victoria. I don't doubt they will go bald-headed for any extravagance in Victoria. That's the reason they are going for federation there. They will have the capital in Victoria.

THE PREMIER: It must be in New South Wales.

HON. G. THORN: I know that; but it will be just on the other side of the Murray, and the Victorians will reap the benefit of the city. The fashionable part of it will be in Victoria. The other day the Victorians gave a solid vote for federation—a better vote than the North of this colony gave the other day. Victorians are wide-awake. In Hawthorne, a place not unknown to the Premier, there are 3,500 empty houses. Is it any wonder they voted solidly for the Commonwealth Bill? I got that information from a Victorian two months ago. They know very well that with federation they will get their houses let again at a high rental. I do think that the Premier should not forget that the Southern part of the colony, where all the industries are—I have heard he said that he never intended the Bill to go through unless he got a majority of 10,000.

THE PREMIER: Who said that?

HON. G. THORN: I did not hear it said, but I was told that he did say so and that it was in the newspapers. I was told it and I dare say the hon. member for Rosewood heard it also. I think myself that a majority of 10,000 would be a fair thing, and if there was a majority of 10,000 in favour of it I would cease any further opposition to it. But if it is to go on as it is, and I am left alone in this House, I shall be compelled to give my vote in opposition to the Address to the Queen in favour of carrying this Commonwealth Bill, because I wish to place it on record that I am one of those who knew their business in this House. I have no wish to be shot, and, as I said before, I fear that the leaders in this business here will be shot before many years. I pity the hon. members for Brisbane North that they could not see through the intention of the people of the North to wipe out the port of Brisbane. It will to all intents and purposes be wiped out under this federal proposal. It is all very well to talk about deepening the river, but it will be

too late when we shall have lost the trade, and when the trade will be done entirely by Sydney and Melbourne. It is all a conspiracy between the shipping rings and the North, to put this Commonwealth Bill through. I am satisfied that is the case, and I thought of writing a letter to the papers two days before the polling, asking the members for Brisbane to reconsider the matter. They appear to me to be the two most innocent people in the world. I do not know whether they are green, or whether they have been innocent intentionally, but they must see that this proposal will wipe out the port of Brisbane and they have assisted it. They talk about deepening the river to allow large vessels to come up here, but it will only be clearing the bed of the river to allow large colliers to bring coal here from Newcastle to be used by the steamers on the trip from here to the North. The hon. member for Bundaberg went up to Bundamba to gull the miners, but he did not tell the coalminers of Bundamba that the Bundamba coal was—I will not say inferior—but softer than the Newcastle coal, and will not stand so much handling and knocking about as the Newcastle coal. The coal for the bunkers of the steamers coasting to the Northern ports will be brought here from Newcastle by vessels in their spare time when they have nothing else to do.

MR. GLASSEY: No.

HON. G. THORN: I am as certain of it as that I am standing here. I was amused to hear that the Premier had been talking about doing what he could to increase the output of coal in Queensland when this Bill means the wiping out the coal industries of the Burrum and Ipswich districts. What did George Reid tell the miners of Newcastle when he went there for their votes? He told them that they had nothing to fear, and that they would have the markets of Queensland for their coal. I have no doubt that the hon. member for Bundaberg will find that he has been wrong, and then perhaps he will be shot by some of those men he was so thick with.

MR. KEOGH: Dinmore is the place he wants.

MR. BROWNE: Goodna is in that electorate, too, is it not?

HON. G. THORN: I say that the coalminers went almost solid against the Commonwealth Bill because they knew what it meant. It was absurd for the hon. member for Bundaberg to go up and try to gull them by telling them there would be an increased output of their coal. If they had coal of the same quality as Newcastle perhaps they might be able to compete with Newcastle. You have got to remember that they can bring coal here from Newcastle at about the same rate as it costs to bring it from Ipswich to Brisbane.

MR. GLASSEY: No, no!

HON. G. THORN: The huge colliers, when the river has been deepened by the Premier, will deliver coal here from Newcastle at that price, and the hon. members for Brisbane are going to allow it. They will bring it to Maryborough, too, and that place will be wiped out as well. I am pleased to see that the member for Burrum opposed the proposal by a kind of inactive resistance, but the members for Maryborough should give some reason for voting in the way they did. I am astonished at the members for Maryborough voting in the way they did. The reason is well known to myself, but if I gave it in this House I should be called to order, and I do not wish to be called to order. The Burrum people will be wiped out as well as the miners in the Southern part of the colony. I do trust that if the Premier is going to work to deepen the Brisbane River he will do so at once, because when the Bill is passed there will be no money. I am not prepared to trust a Federal Parliament to

make ducks and drakes of our money. They will spend a million of Queensland money on federal defence. That will be the first thing. I know the hon. member for Bundaberg is opposed to standing armies and the encouragement of the military spirit, but he will have no power to prevent it so long as the money is spent from the federal capital; they will go for it and we will have to submit.

MR. GLASSEY: They might make you Minister for Defence.

HON. G. THORN: It is not a question of making me Minister for Defence at all, but that they will certainly go in for military display. Hon. members on the other side have been talking about £80,000 or £90,000 for defence—£140,000 is the amount to be spent on defence, and instead of £140,000 we will be called upon to spend £1,400,000 by the Federal Parliament, which will be able to put on taxation to meet it, as they will have unlimited powers of taxation. Then we will have the property tax, and no doubt the hon. member for Bundaberg will be delighted when he sees it put on. We will have one imposed by the Federal Parliament and by the State Parliaments including the Queensland Parliament, if you will call it a Parliament. In my opinion it will be no longer a Parliament. I think I have said sufficient on the federal question. I am not prepared to go back on my word. I did my very best to defeat the Commonwealth Bill, and I am prepared to go still further. It is for this reason I am anxious we should go to the country. The Premier talked of the difficulty of carving out the electorates under one man one vote, but if he will give me the number of members he wants I will carve out the electorates for him in a week. We should go to the country because the hon. gentleman knows very well that in this House he misrepresents the country. I do not dissent from one man one vote, and I am anxious that it should be carried and that we should go to the country and let us have an election, so that this House may be a true reflex of the opinion throughout the length and breadth of Queensland, which I contend it is not at the present time. With regard to this Boer question, how would the Premier like the Chinese or Japanese Government to send an army down here? Their people here have not got the franchise in Queensland any more than the Outlanders have got the franchise in the Transvaal. How would the hon. gentleman like the Chinese or Japanese Government to tell us their people must have the franchise? I think the Hon. B. D. Morehead was quite right in talking in the way he did in the other House. The Outlanders have not got the franchise in the Transvaal, but it is no affair of ours. If volunteers go from Queensland to fight the Boers it will be a very bad day for them, as they will be picked off twenty-four hours after they get there. Then who will provide for their widows and children? They will not be fighting against blacks—Soudanese or Egyptians—but against the smartest soldiers in the world, who can pick out a bull's-eye at 1,000 yards any time. Where will the widows and children of these volunteers be? Who is going to provide for them? Is the Imperial Government going to provide for them, or is the Premier going to provide for them? The contingent cost about £1,000,000 to go to the Soudan, and this proposal will cost about the same. I do not say that they are feather-bed soldiers, but I believe they will jib at the last moment.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are nothing like you.

HON. G. THORN: I know the hon. gentleman belongs to the feather-bed [7:30 p.m.] soldiers, and that he wears a cockade. I should like to see him go and lead

his detachment against the Boers. In fact I would withdraw my opposition to the matter now if the Home Secretary were prepared to go to the Transvaal. But he is too wide awake for that; he does not want to be shot down and deprived of his life yet awhile. But if he wishes to go there I will withdraw my opposition to this war contingent vote. Unless he is prepared to do that, I will do my very best to knock out the money to be voted for the Boer expedition. I will be no party to allowing anything to the wives and children of the men who go on that expedition if they are lost, and I know the Imperial Government will not provide for them. I believe the Imperial Government will only find the ships, as they did when the New South Wales contingent went to the Soudan. Fighting against the Boers will be a very different thing from fighting against the Soudanese, who were not much better than the blacks of Australia. The Boers are not mere savages, but are far more wide-awake than some of the European nations, and in their particular kind of guerilla warfare are a match for any body of soldiers, as they can pick out a bull's-eye at 1,000 yards. I have said more on these subjects than I had intended, but I have endeavoured to keep the House amused. My words with regard to the effect of federation will come true, and what will become of the *Courier* and the people connected with it? Where will the money come from to subsidise it? Who found the money to carry on the advocacy of the Commonwealth Bill? I know very well that they would never have written in the way they did unless they were paid for it, and I believe they were paid handsomely with money from the southern colonies. I have heard some persons outside the House say that the paper was owned by people in the southern colonies. I do not say that, but I say the money they must have received came from somewhere, or they would never have written as they did to wipe out Queensland from the map of Australia. The *Courier* will get its reward in time, but federation will have the opposite effect to that which they expect. They came out too strongly in their advocacy of the Bill, for I know that many people voted on the other side in consequence of the *Courier* writing as it did. The *Courier* will have its reward; it will be wiped out. I know that a few places in my district were influenced by the *Courier*, and I was not quick enough in getting the *Telegraph* among the people in those localities. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: Perhaps the majority in Fassifern would have been the other way if you had been quick enough.

HON. G. THORN: No; I do not think so. I know that in some places where the people had been influenced by the *Courier*, they came round at the last moment after I had circulated the *Telegraph* among them. Two or three of the leaders of the billites in the district looked at the matter in a different light after reading the *Telegraph*, and voted against the Bill. In my district there were three to one against the Bill, and, I cannot, in the face of that, vote for the Address to the Queen. When that matter comes before the House I shall be bound, in duty to my constituents, to record my vote against the Address. I want the people to see how they have been treated, and who are their friends, and who are their foes, and I shall call for a division on the question, even if the hon. member for Rosewood and myself are the only members who vote against the Address. Now, coming to the Address of the Governor, I notice that it is proposed to revive immigration. I have always said that I do not altogether go with the Labour party on that question. At the same time I shall be no party to bringing people out here that they may go to the other colonies. About twelve years

ago I was in Victoria, and stayed with a farmer who owned a sawmill in which he employed twenty-two men. Out of that number about eighteen came from Queensland. They first of all landed in the Northern part of this colony, and when I asked them why they went to Victoria they said they and their wives could not stand the climate, and they would sooner live there on the smell of an oil-rag than in Townsville or Rockhampton on double the wages they received in Victoria. Why should we introduce immigrants for the other colonies? If we get federation, immigration should be a matter for the Federal Parliament to deal with, and should not be dealt with by Queensland alone. Like the leader of the Opposition, I want to know where I am in this matter. As to the other subjects mentioned in the Speech, I hope the Premier will carry out his promises, and I trust that other members will be brief and pithy in their speeches, as I have been. I come to the point at once, and I hope other hon. members will do the same, and let us get to business. But I think it will take the colony ten years to swallow all the legislation mentioned in this Speech. Referring again to immigration, I would say it is no more use to attempt to bring people to Queensland from the other colonies than it is to bring people from the old country to Queensland that they may afterwards go to the other colonies. This is a matter that the Federal Parliament should deal with, if we have a Federal Parliament, and we should delay a little longer the bringing out of more immigrants. It is all nonsense to talk about agricultural labour being wanted. The Premier knows very well that when the Commonwealth is established there will be no more agricultural labour wanted in Queensland. The agricultural industry will be wiped out, unless he is prepared to run stuff down to the seaports for nothing. As I have said, the agriculturists, particularly the agriculturists on the Darling Downs, will be wiped out clean. Agricultural produce is coming here daily from the southern colonies and being shipped North at 75 per cent. less than it can be sent there from Warwick.

The TREASURER: You are quite mistaken.

HON. G. THORN: I am as well up in the question as the hon. gentleman himself. I stayed with an old Scotch farmer in Victoria, named Guthrie, who cultivated 300 or 400 acres, and he told me that he could land hay on the wharves in Brisbane at 5s. a ton. At that time there were only two lines of steamers running—Howard Smith's and the old Australasian Steam Navigation Company. Now there are three companies, with three times as many steamers, of double the capacity of the steamers which were running here twelve and a-half years ago, and the Treasurer knows that they can bring agricultural produce here for a great deal less than 5s. a ton.

The TREASURER: They are shipping hay to Sydney now from Laidley.

HON. G. THORN: I believe that a cargo was purposely sent in order to catch votes. I have no doubt the Treasurer was at the head of the scheme in order to get the farmers of Laidley and other farming districts to vote for the Commonwealth Bill, and I believe the trick succeeded to some extent in and around Laidley. The Treasurer is a good tactician, but if I had accompanied or followed him round the country, I would have altered the complexion of affairs. I have seen it stated in the Townsville papers that 90 per cent.—some say 95 per cent.—of the agricultural produce which is landed at Townsville comes from Geelong.

The TREASURER: You are quite wrong.

HON. G. THORN: I have seen the statement in Townsville papers, which support the hon. gentleman. Only five or six days ago I was told

by an agricultural expert in this town that a vessel came here the other day loaded to her Plimsoll mark with produce for Townsville.

MR. DAWSON: How will federation make it worse, if 95 per cent. comes from the south now?

HON. G. THORN: This comes in while there is a duty on it; and if we have federation the people of Townsville will take nothing at all from our own farmers. In order to compete with the southern colonies, the produce of the farmers on the Darling Downs will have to be carried to Brisbane for nothing, and, in addition, the Government will have to do what Sir Charles Lilley did many years ago—go in for a line of steamers of their own to carry the produce from here to the North. The three lines of steamers now running are southern companies, and they fill up their vessels with southern produce, to the detriment of the people I represent, and represent faithfully and properly.

MR. DAWSON: What about black labour?

HON. G. THORN: We are going to exclude coloured aliens, but it is not proposed to exclude kanakas or natives of New Guinea. I shall be no party to introducing any more of these to our shores, and if the leader of the Opposition will table a motion to-morrow to wipe them out and send them back to their own homes, I will support him. I contend that sugar-growing cannot be profitably carried on in this colony in the face of the European bounty system. Yet the Government propose to give more money to the sugar-growers in the North. The present mills are not paying interest and part of the principal back as they were supposed to do. When they do pay off a little, they get a further advance out of which they pay interest and part of the principal. No matter what kind of labour they may employ, they cannot carry on profitably. English capitalists have sunk £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 in the West Indies, where the sugar-growers are insolvent. I read the statement in a paper which the hon. member for Enoggera showed me the other day. The Treasurer ought to draw in his horns and not allow any further advances to sugar-mills, especially to those who employ black labour.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: They are not allowed to employ black labour.

HON. G. THORN: I am prepared to give a little assistance to the mills at present in existence, provided they wipe out the black labour. It is recognised now by experts that there is an affinity between tuberculosis, consumption, and leprosy, and I believe that it is due to the presence of kanakas in our midst that both leprosy and tuberculous consumption are so prevalent here. That being the case, I hope the Premier will put his foot down and stamp out this black labour pest. We know that the hon. gentleman, like Sir Samuel Griffith, has changed his views on the question of black labour. He has gone back on a good deal of his former policy. I looked upon him as the most conservative man on this side of the House; and a little time ago none would have dreamt of expecting him to agree to one man one vote, but now he promises one man one vote. He might also promise to abolish black labour, and he would earn the lasting gratitude of hon. members on the other side—I do not believe he would ever have any more opposition from them—if he abolished it. Cheap money for the farmers I am not going to touch upon—I am in favour of that. In my district the farmers are well-to-do. They drive their buggies, and perhaps have hundreds to their credit, and will continue to do well if they are let alone; but I am afraid that under federation their balances will be on the wrong side, and they will then need this cheap money from the Government. Although in favour of cheap money for the farmers

I do not attach so very much importance to the cry, because anyone with good security can obtain money now at 5 per cent., and I have obtained money for farmers at that rate. In my opinion there is a great deal of claptrap talked by members on both sides on this question, but I think it is more than ever necessary that the farmers should have cheap money, seeing that the Premier proposes to take away their living by insisting that this colony shall join the federation. Now, in reference to railway extension, I think the quicker the Premier gets to work the better, because there will be very few new railways as soon as federation is brought about. I remember the hon. gentleman at an after-dinner speech in Gladstone advocated the construction of feeders to the main lines to be carried out on a cheap principle, and I hold that the prosperity of the colony depends upon the construction of such lines. The hon. gentleman has not stated whether these lines will be referred to his proposed parliamentary committee, but whether they are or not they should be constructed quickly. There are lines in my district that are very badly wanted indeed.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How many?

HON. G. THORN: I want two, but I will be satisfied with one, and I trust that my constituency will not be neglected. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government did us the honour of visiting the district some time ago, and he there expressed strong convictions upon the necessity of light lines to bring the farmers' produce to market, but he did not commit himself to any in particular. I don't know how the Warwick people managed to get round the hon. gentleman, but he made them a definite promise. I have been an advocate of the *via recta* for many years, but I do not like these promises being made on the eve of the taking of the referendum. Then the hon. gentleman definitely promised the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Bartholomew, a line in his district without first referring it to his proposed railway committee. I certainly think that no definite promises of that nature should have been made in view of the appointment of such a committee. Before all else, the branch lines in the farming districts should be constructed, and as a promise to that effect was given by the Premier, when Secretary for Railways, I expect him to fulfil it before he goes to the country. I certainly think that if he goes to the country on the question of one man one vote he will not know himself when he comes back. Now, I think I have touched upon most of the matters dealt with by the Speech. Of course there are a lot of minor subjects which I will not occupy the time of the House by alluding to, especially as there are many other hon. members who wish to speak. I trust the Premier will, even at this the eleventh hour, recant on the question of federation. I trust he will go back on what he said the other day in an impulsive manner and at a moment when he was flushed with victory. The hon. gentleman represents a Southern constituency which has itself declared against this movement. In fact, the whole Southern portion of the colony, knowing it will be a great loser, has declared against it. A portion of the colony returning forty-five members has by a majority of votes—I include, of course, the metropolitan area—declared its opinion in opposition to the Commonwealth Bill, the electorates extending right away out towards the Bulloo.

MR. LEAHY: Oh, no! Five to one for it.

HON. G. THORN: At any rate, adding together the votes given in the South, we find that constituencies returning forty-five members have

declared against federation. Although, apparently, it is the strong desire of the North to dominate the rest of the colony, the feeling round Brisbane has been plainly shown—so plainly, in fact, that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government would stand no chance of being returned in the South to the Federal Parliament—much as I would like to see him in it and a member of the Federal Government. As to one man one vote, if hon. members on the opposite side do not insist upon it being brought in at once they will never sight it. "Now or never" ought to be their watchword; and at the same time there should be a redistribution of seats. I am perfectly willing to act on a committee of experts to cut up the colony on a strictly population basis; I would undertake to do it in a week, and gratuitously. I have nothing more to say at the present time, except to again urge that—except, perhaps, so far as the sugar industry is concerned—this colony has everything to lose and nothing to gain by joining in the federation of the colonies. And although the result of the referendum at present shows a majority of about 6,000, I believe that will be considerably reduced by the time the final count is made.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): Seeing the part I have played in connection with the federal movement, I think it would be very wrong if I did not take this opportunity of saying a few words on that important question. From the date on which I first entered this House I have been an anti-federalist, and I have done what I could to show the people that it is not in their interest that they should vote for union with the other colonies. If I stand alone I shall, when the question comes up for final decision, call "divide."

It will then be seen who are the [8 p.m.] parties who are sincere, and who are not sincere on this question. While I am not in touch with some hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, and with some of the hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, it is only fair and legitimate that they should have their opinions equally as well as those I hold myself. I know that as far as the federation movement is concerned, South Queensland will decidedly reap no benefit from it. I cannot, for the life of me, see where there are any inducements held out under the Commonwealth Bill for people to come here, more than the inducements there are held out now to people to come and take up land under our present laws. I am aware that a number of gentlemen have gone into the different electorates preaching the doctrine that, unless we have federation, this country is sure to go down—that we shall by-and-by have to go down on our knees and beg to be allowed to enter the Commonwealth. I, for one, do not see it in that light, nor, I am sure, do the great majority of the people of the South. I am firmly of opinion that, like New Zealand, we can come in, if we wish to do so, on our own terms, or as Manitoba and several other states of Canada did. That is, come in at a later date, and of our own free will, whenever we require to do so. Queensland stands alone as one of the brightest jewels in the southern hemisphere. Therefore, looking at it in that light, she can come in at any time she thinks proper. Nothing can retard her progress as she stands. But under federation, at the present time, her progress will be retarded for many years. No doubt she may eventually come in; but at the present she is not in the position to enter into competition with the southern colonies. I read some of the extracts the other day from a speech of the hon. member for Mulgrave in which he showed the solvency of Victoria and New South Wales, and also of this colony. He showed, conclusively to

my mind—to put the matter in a nutshell—that Victoria, as a colony, had borrowed £17,000,000 more money than the whole of her wealth and the whole of her lands—that if all her wealth and all that she possessed were sold they would not bring within £17,000,000 of the amount she owes. With regard to New South Wales, he showed conclusively that if all that colony's wealth and land were sold, she would come out with about £6,000,000 of debt. On the other hand, he showed that this grand colony, which can be a nation in itself, would come out—if sold on the same basis—with about £150,000,000 to her credit. Looking at it in that light, there is no doubt the other colonies would be only too glad for Queensland to come in. And that is why they wish to try to get her to come in. They see they would be in a better position immediately after federation to raise money to try to replenish their exhausted treasuries. I am decidedly at one with them in that; I believe in keeping what we have to ourselves. But as I have just said, eventually—say ten years hence—when we may be on an equal footing with the other colonies, let us federate. Until such time as we are self-supporting, and have sufficient to send out of the colony—the other colonies are all producing more than they can consume now—we should not federate. When we have reached that stage it will be time enough for us to federate, and not until then. As far as the Darling Downs are concerned, it is a well-known fact that for the last three years the people there have not produced sufficient material from the repurchased lands to enable them to pay their rents, and they have asked the Government for an extension of the time to enable them to do so. Is it fair or right that you should bring in men from the southern colonies to compete with them? I say it is not. It has been stated by the hon. member for Fassifern that the greater portion of the produce that is going to the Northern part of this colony is coming in from Victoria; that is, such stuff as hay and chaff. Vessels are loaded up with this material, and it is brought in against the duty of £1 or 15s. per ton. What will it be immediately these barriers are thrown down? As far as the Southern portion of this colony is concerned, we shall not be in any way able to compete. We shall have no say whatever in it. I hold, with the hon. member for Fassifern, that the lands now under cultivation will have to go back to their former state—big sheepwalks. Looking at the matter in that light, I come to this conclusion—and it is a conclusion that the greater portion of the Southern part of the colony has come to—that we are not sufficiently ripe to enter into the federation at present. I should be very pleased to see the Premier withdraw this Address for some time—at all events until we are in a better position than we are in to-day to hold our own as against the southern colonies. Let me say one or two words more with regard to the Address. I congratulate the Premier on some of the things that are contained in it. I have been somewhat twitted by my friends on this side of the House that I am not in favour of the referendum because I am not prepared to join with them and vote in accordance with the wishes of, as far as I can learn, the majority on this side because the referendum has been introduced, and it has shown that the greater number of the people in this colony have voted in favour of the Bill.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Electors; not people.

Mr. KEOGH: Because the electors have voted in favour of the Bill. I hold they have not. The bone and sinew—the men who worked hard, who borrowed the capital and who made this country—are they not the people of Southern Queensland?

As far as the Northern portion of the colony is concerned, the people are purely migratory. If diggings were to start up to-morrow in South Australia or Western Australia, they would put their swags on their backs and away at once. They cannot be said to be *bonâ fide* settlers. That cannot be said of the *bonâ fide* settler or the farmer who takes up his land, and has to eke out an existence on it in the best way he can. I said before in this House that I am prepared to join issue with the Northern members and let them have separation.

Mr. STEWART: Hear, hear! Let us go.

Mr. KEOGH: I say separation any day for me before federation, for decidedly federation will not be beneficial to this portion of the colony. Now with regard to the great question of black labour, I was always opposed to it in any shape or form—Chinese, Japanese, Cingalese, Javanese or any of that description; and I am pleased to see the reference to the question here. I have no doubt the Premier and the gentlemen supporting him are prepared to carry out what is in this address to the best of their ability, but it is very cumbersome and contains a number of questions which I am afraid cannot be introduced during the present session. It is shown that to some extent they believe in doing what is right and just in regard to black labour. It has been stated here several times that, so far as the sugar industry in this colony is concerned, white men cannot do the work required. I am not at one with hon. members opposite in that. I believe white men can do the work quite as well as black men, and I would be one with the hon. member for Fassfern to vote for a Bill, if it was introduced to-morrow, to send these men back to their islands. I should be pleased to see Queensland for Queenslanders and only for Queenslanders. Again I would like to see cheap money for farmers introduced. So far as the farming electorates are concerned, this question is in the mouth of every farmer, for, as a rule, they are not in a very satisfactory position. They have to borrow money, and if they could get it at a cheap rate it would be a great inducement for the settlement of people on the land. Until there is a possibility of their getting money at a cheaper rate than they have been getting it lately there will not be that influx of people that has been anticipated by those who are in favour of federation. Now, with regard to immigration. That is a matter upon which I am not at one with the Labour party. I was always in favour of immigration—that is of a class of immigrants who would be beneficial to the agricultural and other industries of the country. I would be very pleased to see capital introduced, but no country can possibly go ahead without a population, and the introduction of a yeomanry class, prepared to take up and endure the hardships of the farmer's life, and of the life in the factories of the country. It is stated that the moment we get federation there will be an influx of the people from the southern colonies, but we do not want these 15,000 paupers in Melbourne, or the 10,000 in Sydney to come here. We do not want that class of people at all. Let them stop where they are. We want people here who will be beneficial to the colony, and we can do very well without that class in this colony. If we only look to the position we occupy at present it is far and away superior to that of the other colonies. Our revenue has been rising every month, and that is a fair indication that the country is going ahead. It is an old saying, and it was very truly said on platforms throughout the country recently, "That we should leave well enough alone." I hope we shall leave well enough alone, and let us go alone in our own way. Everything was against the anti-billites, as they had not the

means to send men all over the colony to tell the people what was good and what was not good for them.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You were not subsidised.

Mr. KEOGH: We had not a great number of speakers to argue for us, nor had we special trains to send them out. To prove that, I asked the Commissioner for a special train to go with some friends out to Cunnamulla, but I was informed that I could not get it. "Why not?" I said. "There is one just got back that the Attorney-General took out to Cunnamulla, and why should we not have the same opportunity of getting special trains as the other people?" I was informed by the Commissioner, "When you become a Minister you will have an opportunity of getting one." I knew very well there was no possibility of my getting one, and that was why I asked lest it should be said here afterwards, "Why did you not ask for one?" The Minister was not here at the time, or I would have come down to Brisbane to ask him for one, and no doubt the Commissioner for Railways could not grant it without the consent of the Minister.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: He refused us in the same way—and we were federalists.

Mr. KEOGH: Perhaps he was perfectly correct, but it might be said, "Why did we not ask for these trains and we would have got them?" I did ask for that reason, but if it had been granted we would have gone out to Cunnamulla and would have held forth there. Under these circumstances we had to take a back seat. Further than that we were not in a position to introduce speakers from New South Wales or Victoria, or an hon. gentleman from Canada. I do not find fault with those gentlemen for coming here, but they must have looked upon us as a very ignorant lot when they thought that men of this description had to be brought here to teach us our duty. There is another matter which has been mentioned. I do not know whether it has been brought under the notice of the Premier or not, but it is stated that the address delivered by Sir Samuel Griffith was printed at the Government Printing Office by authority, and circulated all over the colony.

The PREMIER: It was a parliamentary paper.

Mr. KEOGH: The statement is made that matter of this description has been printed at the Government Printing Office and circulated all over the colony, and whether that is correct or not I will leave it for hon. members to decide. The only fault I have to find with that is that if such a thing were done we should have been given the same privilege for the circulation of our literature.

The TREASURER: There was nothing any good issued by your side.

Mr. KEOGH: Perhaps the hon. gentleman is under the impression that anything we had to say was no good, but I think our side published just as good literature as the other side. The federationists have certainly got a majority in certain places, but I do not think those persons showed the same good feeling as colonists as the electors in the Southern portion of the colony. On nearly every platform in the colony it has been stated that the farmers were the backbone of the colony, but what is the result of the referendum? Ministers and their supporters say that the colony was polled as one electorate, and they must abide by the decision of the majority. With regard to electoral reform, I am certainly in favour of one man one vote, and I am also in favour of one adult one vote, because I consider the ladies are equally as well entitled to vote as the men. I would go further, and say that I should like to see the Elections Act amended somewhat on the lines of the New Zealand

electoral law, under which if a man will not vote he is penalised, and loses the right to the franchise. Look at the voting on the recent referendum. There were 107,000 persons on the rolls, but only about 60,000 voted. What has become of the other 40,000 odd voters? I contend that men should certainly be made to vote, or lose the right to vote. In my electorate a very large proportion of the electors voted, and there were six to one against the Bill, the only other electorate in the colony where the voting against the Bill was larger being Aubigny, where the proportion was six and a-half to one. I have very little more to say. There are many good things mentioned in the Opening Speech, and I trust the Premier will be able to carry out the greater portion of them, though he will have something to do if he means to run them all through this session, unless we come back after Christmas and sit for a couple of months next year. As far as I am concerned I shall be prepared to take my share of the work which that would involve. With the exception of the reference to federation, I am pleased to say that I am able to endorse most of what is contained in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. DUNSFORD: What about the Transvaal?

Mr. KEOGH: I am not much of a soldier myself, but I do not think the Premier has gone very far wrong in encouraging the military spirit displayed by Queenslanders; but he knows best himself whether he did right or wrong. At the same time I must admit that the Boers are fighting to some extent for their homes; they are doing as some of my countrymen would like to do, fighting for home rule, or keeping home rule when they have got it. As my hon. friend the member for Fassifern has said, we are parting with home rule for Queensland.

Mr. GLASSEY: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. KEOGH: I believe that to a great extent we are; when we part with our cash-box we are parting with all we have got, and under federation we shall part with our customs and all sources of revenue except the land. Then what shall we have to work upon? Our land revenue will be very small, and even that the Federal Parliament will be prepared to take, and they can take the whole of our taxation in the event of there not being sufficient revenue available to carry on the Federal Government. Of course if additional taxation is resorted to it will fall on the land, and who will be the unfortunate people who will have to pay that taxation? The small handful of farmers in the colony. I would be prepared to vote for a land tax, but not until such time as all the land in the colony is alienated. In Victoria they have not one acre of land that is not alienated, and in New South Wales nearly all the land is alienated, except some rabbit-ridden country, and I say we should not have a land tax in this colony until the land passes out of the hands of the Government into the hands of the people. As I have said, I shall certainly oppose the Address to the Queen in regard to federation; my constituents have sent me here to do all I possibly could against the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill, and I will carry out their wishes. I am very thankful for the patient hearing the House has given, and I shall certainly assist the Government to carry out the other matters mentioned in the Speech.

Question stated.

Mr. STEWART (*Rockhampton North*): I must certainly express my astonishment at the seeming probability of this Address going through with so little discussion. The Address, which I hold in my hand, is a voluminous document; it contains a most ambitious programme. The Government have at last awakened to the

reality of the progress democratic sentiment has been making in Queensland during recent years. In the paragraph referring to one man one vote, it is stated that federation has been the moving cause in impelling the Government to change our electoral laws.

Well, I must be excused if I do not [8.30 p.m.] believe an assertion of that kind.

I think the Government has at last come to the conclusion that the people of Queensland will not stand any more humbugging on the question of electoral reform. That is the real reason why we are promised it in this document. I find a great many subjects are treated of in this Speech. We have from federation to the Texas fever, and from protection to aboriginals to the prickly pear. In fact we have somewhere about forty subjects mentioned—as many planks as the Labour platform—and the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government hopes to pass them all during the present session. If he hopes anything of the kind, he is a much more hopeful man than I ever imagined him to be. But the great test of whether the hon. gentleman is really in earnest about carrying out this programme which he has submitted to us at this season of the year is that he will immediately begin to bring his measures before this House. The hon. gentleman absolutely refuses to do that. He places a scheme of business before us, embracing about forty different matters, and about thirty Bills. He proposes to deal with them all during the present session, but he says that nothing can be done till one particular measure has been passed. We know that that measure cannot be brought before us at the very earliest before the first week in October, that probably the debate upon it may last for a week or more. No one can tell what turn events may take, so that, if it is the intention of the Government that the House should rise at Christmas, we will only have about two and a-half months in which to deal with these forty different matters which are mentioned in the Speech. It must be evident, therefore, to anyone that the Government cannot be in earnest in bringing forward this scheme of business. The Government, in this relation, reminds me of a fussy old gentleman who gets up early in the morning and lays out a very extensive plan of operations for the day, but he reserves to himself the right not to begin till 12 o'clock. We know what that means. It simply means that there is a great deal of talk about work, but very little work either done or attempted to be done. Now with regard to the matters embraced in this Speech. The hon. gentleman places in the forefront the Address to the Queen on the subject of federation. I opposed the adoption of the Constitution, believing it to be a very illiberal Constitution—a Constitution which would deprive the people of Australia of a great many rights and privileges which they now possess, and which would place the Government of this continent in a much greater degree in the hands of the plutocracy than at present is the case. I opposed it also because I believed it took away from the people in certain portions of Queensland political rights which they undoubtedly possess at the present moment. But since the majority of the people by the referendum have decided to accept this Constitution, I certainly have no intention of opposing their expressed will.

MEMBERS of the Government: Hear, hear!

Mr. STEWART: If the people desire to hand over their political liberties, it is not for me to object. If the people ape the conduct of Esau, and sell their birthright for a mess of pottage, that is their business, not mine. I am here not to carry out my own will, but their will. I bow to their decision. Then with regard to one man one vote,

I would like to know why the Premier does not bring that measure in now? He told us a little while ago that an arrangement had been made between himself and the leader of the Opposition that no business of a contentious character was to be brought in before the Address to the Queen was passed. If this one man one vote Bill is to be of a contentious character, there is all the more reason why it should be brought in now and thrashed out while we have the time. Does the hon. gentleman doubt whether he is going to get the support of the men behind him upon this question? I believe there will be no opposition to a one man one vote Bill upon rational lines from hon. members on this side; but the hon. gentleman evidently expects some trouble from his own supporters, otherwise he would not talk of this measure as a contentious one. If it is contentious, it ought to be introduced soon, and thrashed out and passed, if it is to be passed, and sent to another place. If the bringing in of this measure is delayed—as it must be if the hon. gentleman's policy is carried out—till the middle of October, it will perhaps be the end of October before it is passed through this House, or later. Then it will be sent to another place in the closing days of the session, and we know what kind of treatment a one man one vote Bill is likely to get from the hon. gentlemen who sit in the Legislative Council. I do not think that any hon. member expects that the Council is going to swallow a one man one vote Bill without some protest. And I do not think any hon. member expects the Premier is going to quarrel with the Upper House if they throw out the Bill; so that the result of this delay in all probability will be that we will not get a one man one vote Bill this session at all. The hon. gentleman will simply be stringing us on—holding the proverbial bunch of carrots before us in the hope that he will be kept in power until this one man one vote Bill is passed. I ask the hon. gentleman again if he expects that his own supporters are going to mutiny in connection with this measure.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Do you expect him to tell you?

Mr. STEWART: I think the hon. gentleman should tell us his intentions. If he is more concerned about the community than about his own position he would let us know exactly what his intentions are, and what his reasons are for keeping back this important measure. Why should a contentious measure—even if it is a contentious measure—like a one man one vote Bill interfere with the passing of the Address to the Queen? Federation is not a party question. If the hon. gentleman's followers mutiny, and he is turned out of office, the Government which succeeds him will take up and pass the Address to the Queen just as well as if the hon. gentleman did it. But I believe the hon. gentleman is not at all desirous that anything of that kind should happen. He is anxious that the Address to the Queen should be passed by himself, and I have no doubt he expects a reward—a decoration or title or something of that sort—for his zealous services in the cause of federation. That being the case the cause of electoral reform, which I believe is of much more consequence to the people than federation, is to remain in abeyance. Before leaving that subject I would like to advert to a matter referred to by the hon. member for Rosewood. He complained that during the federal campaign the advocates of federation were carted about all over the country in special trains, while equal facilities were not afforded to the anti-billites. The Secretary for Railways himself carted Mr. Trenwith, a Vic-

torian politician, all over the Central district at the public expense. I say that is an indefensible course of conduct.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not true.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. gentleman uses the money of the anti-billites to help the cause of the billites, for he cannot imagine that the former are not just as much taxpayers as the latter. And the Government were not satisfied with taking their friends about by ordinary trains, but they had special trains. No wonder a majority was obtained for the Bill when such unjustifiable measures were resorted to. Now I find that the policy of the Government, so far as increasing the population is concerned, is to bring out immigrants from Europe and to restrict the number of aliens in the colony. With regard to the first, I think it has been abundantly proved that the very class of individuals whom the Government say it is desirable to bring here are not required. Take the report of the immigration agent, and you find that there are far more agricultural labourers than there is demand for. Then, again, I find that a large number of female domestic servants are being brought out at the public expense, and yet we know that there are numbers of girls in Queensland who are quite willing to enter domestic service if they are treated in a fairly decent manner. But they are often not treated as if they were human beings even. They are expected to work seven days a week, and from ten to sixteen hours a day. In fact, they are subject to such conditions that no men would think of putting up with, and yet people wonder why they cannot get domestic servants. I believe it to be desirable that our population should be increased, but, if that is our aim, then let us make the conditions of the colony such that people in older lands will see that it is to their positive advantage to come here. Let them see that they will be better off here than where they are, and they will come in their hundreds and thousands. In this immigration policy there is a phase of the Government's labours which will have my unflinching opposition. In regard to aliens, we have the same old cry: "The Government is determined to resist their influx." They have expressed that determination for years past, but their professions and their actions in this matter are as wide apart as the poles. They say they desire to restrict alien immigration, but they do not do it, and year after year large numbers of them are added to our population. For my part, therefore, I have not the slightest faith in the professions of the Government, and I do not believe this alien question will ever be tackled seriously while the gentlemen at present on the Treasury benches hold the reins of power. Then, concerning the matter of the Transvaal and this offer of troops to go out and butcher the unfortunate Boers. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government seems to think that this is a most laudable and patriotic action. I do not think it ever occurred to the people of Queensland when they raised a Defence Force that it was to be used for purposes of aggression. My idea was that if any foreign enemy came to our gates we had the nucleus of a force to defend ourselves, but I had not the remotest conception that there were a number of men in Queensland so bloodthirsty as to desire to go to South Africa and butcher men, women, and children, who, perhaps, are doing their level best to maintain their integrity as a nation. It never occurred to me that any Government in Queensland or Australia would be so utterly foolish and bad as to encourage men in such insane notions. What is the position in the Transvaal? I wonder if

the Government understand the position? Do the men who have volunteered to go there and shoot the Boers understand the position?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Do you?

Mr. STEWART: Well, I have a faint idea of the position. We have a free people fighting valorously, as valorously as any people ever did fight, to maintain their national independence.

Mr. McDONALD: And they have been doing it for two centuries.

Mr. STEWART: They have been doing it, as the hon. member says, for a long time. Should we not sympathise with men who are trying to maintain their national independence? Which is the brightest page in all British history? What do we read in connection with British history with most pleasure? Do we not read with pleasure the story of the magnificent stand made by our ancient forefathers against the Roman invasion? Do we not, whenever we take up the pages of history and consider the story of the country which has defended its rights, and its liberties, and its homes, feel our hearts beat in unison with those people? Do we not recognise what a holy, what a sacred, fight they were engaged in? When we read the story of the American declaration of independence, and how the American people rebelled against the tyranny of Britain, do not our sympathies go out to them? When we read the story of Holland, dismembered by more powerful nations than herself, do not our sympathies go out to her? Wherever we read the story of the oppressed, there our sympathies go. Here is a nation which is opposed to her as a people. Here is a people who are being trampled upon—

Mr. LEAHY: What about the Outlanders?

Mr. STEWART: And we propose to send men to slaughter them, to murder them, to imbrue their hands in the blood of these men who are fighting for their liberty. You talk about the Outlanders! Surely the people of the country have rights superior to the Outlanders! If the Japanese were to come here in such numbers as to swamp us, should not we be entitled to restrict them and to prevent them from becoming citizens of this country?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We do it now.

Mr. STEWART: The Boers do not impose any more serious disabilities upon the Outlanders than we do upon these people coming into our territory. They do not impose any more disabilities upon the Outlanders than the people of the United States do upon people coming into their territory. It is only this—Britain is more powerful than the Boers, and Britain is going to take advantage of the position. And Australia—liberty-loving Australia—is going to assist her. I confess I have no sympathy with this movement. I pray that Britain may be defeated in her attempt to strangle the liberty of the Boers. I hope the Boers will defeat her, and that liberty will come triumphant out of the struggle. I hope, however, that there will not be any war—that better counsels will prevail, and that the sharks, Jews, and money-grubbers—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And boodlers.

Mr. STEWART: And boodlers who are behind this movement will be defeated for once. I trust the Government of Queensland will not engage in any such an unholy enterprise as this. If that does not appeal to the Government, what is the cost of this expedition to be? How much does the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government think it is going to cost if we send these 250 men to butcher the Boers? Will £100 per man cover the cost? Will £200 cover it? Can the hon. gentleman or any member of his Government give the cost? How much are we going to pay for this bloodshed? How much are we going to pay for shooting and butchering these people and burning their homes, and leaving

their children fatherless, and making their wives husbandless, and leaving them without resources or home? How much is it going to cost? We ought to have some statement of that sort before we proceed further in this most despicable matter. I find, among other things, that the poor pastoralist is going to receive some consideration again as usual. I find that, whatever interests are neglected, the poor pastoralist always manages to have his little affairs attended to. I find that he is going to get another extension of his lease. It appears to me that to the men who are managing the pastoral industry—who are mainly absentees, and who are really not concerned in the progress of Queensland as a colony—it is a matter of no earthly consequence whether settlement proceeds or not, or whether the population increases or not. That is not their lookout. What they want is to get as long and as firm a hold upon our Western areas as possible. I trust that when this measure is brought before Parliament it will receive all the attention it deserves, and I trust that nothing will be allowed to stand in the way of closer settlement, not even the interests of absentee pastoral syndicates. I believe that the interests of the people of Queensland—the interests of the people who live here—are more to be considered than the interests of absentee syndicates. Then, again, I find that the prickly pear is to be dealt with. That is a very prickly subject, and it will be found rather a difficult matter to deal with. I may, perhaps, give the Government a hint. All the efforts of our philanthropists, as far as prickly pear is concerned, are directed towards finding some means of exterminating it. Is it not possible they might find some use for it? Would it not be as well to offer, say, £100 to anyone who can discover a method of making it useful. I have known it used hundreds of times to feed cattle and pigs, and I believe that some person who has a genius in that direction might find some means of utilising it. The prickly pear can be grown where almost nothing else can.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It is used as a vegetable.

Mr. STEWART: So before resorting to the extreme of eradicating it completely some attempt should be made to discover whether it could not be put to some profitable use. I find it is proposed to bring the legislation of this colony into line with that of several of the other colonies as far as financial assistance to the farmers is concerned. I quite approve of that. I hope the Government will bring in a measure of that kind as soon as possible; but there is something else the farmers want in addition to financial assistance. They want the best agricultural lands available thrown open. We know that large areas of agricultural lands are held up against settlement. Of course I know the Government is attempting to deal with this question in a way of its own. It is buying up a number of these large estates. Buying up these estates is better than not dealing with them at all, but there is a

[9 p.m.] better way still, and the Government if they were wise would take that way. I think the best way to break up these huge estates and bring them under the cultivator is to impose a land tax.

Mr. LEAHY: That is the one plank they have not taken from you.

Mr. STEWART: Oh, they will take that in time. You cannot educate a child all in a week. The hon. gentleman, I am sure, is himself a developing politician. I suppose the hon. gentleman agrees to one man one vote and to the referendum.

Mr. LEAHY : I always did agree to it, and you ought to know that.

Mr. STEWART : I was not aware of that.

Mr. LEAHY : Which shows you do not know everything.

Mr. STEWART : I judged the hon. gentleman by the company he kept. A man is usually known by the company he keeps, and as the hon. gentleman sat over there surrounded by men who did not believe in one man one vote—and who perhaps do not believe in it now only the logic of events is too strong for them—

Mr. LEAHY : That is the deduction of a logical mind.

Mr. STEWART : I naturally concluded that the hon. gentleman did not believe in one man one vote. I am glad to hear that he always did believe in it.

Mr. LEAHY : And always voted for it too, which is more, as you will find from the records of divisions.

Mr. STEWART : I am very glad to hear that he did. I find that in addition to financial assistance to the farmers there is likely to be some legislation with regard to the sugar-growers. This is a most important matter, and I think no further step in the direction of advancing money to sugar-growers should be taken until the position of the industry is exactly ascertained. I believe very few of these sugar-mills have paid the interest on their advances, and I believe that very few are able to pay the interest. I believe, further, that a large proportion of the £500,000 advanced in connection with the sugar industry will ultimately be lost. It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to exercise the very greatest care in dealing with this question—to see that no more public money is applied in this direction without at least some guarantee that it will be returned. I find the Government is very anxious to deal with the question of railway extension. Of course, we all know that our trunk lines must be extended. It is only a question of time, and as the finances are fairly good just now, and the revenue is expanding and everything is fairly prosperous, I think the time is opportune for their extension in some directions at any rate. The Southern and Northern railways have both been extended and it is now the turn of the Central Railway to be extended, and the Government, with that justice and impartiality which is so characteristic of them, will do well now to extend the Central Railway in a south-westerly direction. I am rather in a difficulty with regard to the public works committee. I believe in a public works committee, but I do not believe in members of Parliament being upon that committee.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Mr. STEWART : If we are going to have a public works committee, let us have it composed of men outside Parliament altogether. If you place the nomination to this committee in the hands of the Government, and if members of Parliament are to be eligible to sit upon it, then you open up a new era of corruption and bribery. It will be the same thing over again ; opponents of the Government will be blocked and friends of the Government will be rewarded. I do not think it is proper either that men who will be called upon afterwards to act as judges as to whether a certain railway line should be built should first, after going round the country to gather evidence and hear arguments about it, make a recommendation upon it. They should be in a position to deal impartially with every railway that is brought before the House. If they are members of the public works committee that will be impossible. I believe in the principle, and that it would save the country money to appoint such a committee, but I think members of Parliament should not have seats upon it.

Mr. KIDSTON : If they are to be paid.

Mr. STEWART : Whether they get paid or not, I do not think it proper that members of Parliament should sit on a committee of that kind.

Mr. LEAHY : Any other persons would be just as liable to the same influence.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : No.

Mr. LEAHY : Yes ; the thing is right, or it is wrong altogether.

Mr. STEWART : The only reason why I would advocate the appointment of a public works committee is that it would lighten the labours of the Railway Commissioner. I consider the time of the Railway Commissioner is fully occupied in carrying on the business of the railways open for traffic without having to investigate as to whether proposed lines would pay or not. If the Commissioner had sufficient time at his disposal to make those investigations, I should certainly say, "Leave it in his hands." I would be willing to trust him, but if it can be shown that he has not the time, or that it interferes with the general management of the railways, I say, by all means, appoint a public works committee ; but I reiterate that I entirely object to members of Parliament holding appointments on such a committee.

Mr. HIGGS : An outside body would be just about as useful as the Civil Service Board.

Mr. STEWART : If an outside body would be just as useless as the Civil Service Board, what more use would a committee of members of Parliament be ?

Mr. HARDACRE : They would be of use, because they would have to report.

Mr. STEWART : So would the outside body have to report. My objection to members of Parliament holding positions of this kind is, as I have already said, that it opens the door to corruption and bribery—the supporters of the Government would be rewarded, and opponents blocked. There has always been an objection to Royal Commissions of members of Parliament, and it has been that they afforded the Government of the day opportunities for ingratiating themselves with members of Parliament. We have not objected to members of Parliament sitting upon Royal Commissions, provided they did so upon payment of their mere expenses, but we object to them drawing large sums, and thus laying themselves open to the charge of being "got at" by the Government. I am glad that the attention of the Government has been directed to the construction of a number of light lines of railway for the development of our agricultural districts. I consider this of more importance than even the extension of our main trunk lines. If we are going to settle a population in the colony, we must do it upon our agricultural areas, and the only way we can do that is by constructing through those areas light lines of railway which will act as feeders to the main lines. I should be glad if I could believe that the Government are really in earnest on this question, but I am inclined very much to doubt their *bona fides*. I know a number of places in the colony, one of them in my own electorate, where light lines of the description shadowed forth in the Address would mean increased settlement within a very short time—additional population, additional exports, and of course greater prosperity to everyone concerned ; and I trust the Government will see their way to take up this matter at a very early date. I find also that additional harbour boards are to be created. It appears that we are in a difficulty with regard to our harbour boards. It is contended by some persons that after federation harbour boards will not be able to levy harbour dues, and if that is so and they are deprived of their revenue from that source they will have to depend on the State.

Mr. LEAHY: That is on goods between State and State.

Mr. STEWART: I do not profess to understand the matter, but I do not see any reason why harbour dues should not be levied or why wharfage dues should not be levied. They are not taxes on trade, but merely charges for services rendered.

Mr. LEAHY: They might make those charges protective or prohibitive.

Mr. STEWART: I do not think that any harbour board would for its own sake impose prohibitive dues, but if a harbour board dredges a harbour and makes it navigable, surely it is entitled to charge harbour dues to ships using the channel which it has dredged. And if a harbour board erects wharves without which ships could not use the harbour, surely the board is entitled to levy wharfage dues.

Mr. LEAHY: Has anybody disputed that? Wharfage is private property.

Mr. STEWART: Supposing a wharf was the property of a harbour board, would not the board have the right to levy wharfage dues? And if it is legal to levy wharfage dues, should it not also be legal to levy harbour dues? I observe that the hon. member for Bulloo always states it as his opinion that after federation harbour boards will not be permitted to levy harbour dues.

Mr. LEAHY: On goods between State and State, I said.

Mr. STEWART: If that is so, I foresee a great deal of difficulty in connection with our harbours.

Mr. LEAHY: So do I.

Mr. STEWART: If the Rockhampton Harbour Board is not permitted to levy harbour dues, they will have to fall back upon the Government for money to dredge the river, and we know what that means.

Mr. GIVENS: Brisbane wants the same, of course.

Mr. STEWART: Brisbane can get anything she wants.

Mr. LEAHY: And she will get something she does not want in federation.

Mr. STEWART: That is about the only thing Brisbane is getting that she does not want. Brisbane is not going to be left out in the cold by any means; she is not to be exposed to the full fury of the blast of federation after all. But I can see clearly that one of the principal ports of the colony will suffer material loss if the hon. member's contention is correct. The Fitzroy will be allowed to silt up, for the Government will not find us a dredge, or money to keep a dredge going. At least that has been our experience in the past, so that it is a very dark outlook as far as Rockhampton is concerned.

Mr. LEAHY: Would it not be better to have a free port?

Mr. STEWART: Personally, I have not the slightest objection to a free port, if we can have it.

Mr. LEAHY: That is what you will have.

Mr. STEWART: But where is the money to come from?

Mr. LEAHY: That is another question.

Mr. STEWART: Can we depend upon Southern Queensland to act fairly by us in this matter?

Mr. LEAHY: We saved you from yourselves last week.

Mr. STEWART: They have not acted fairly towards us in the past, and is there any reason to expect that they will act more fairly towards us in the future? The hon. member says they saved us from ourselves last week. I repudiate that entirely. They struck a most deadly blow at democratic government last week, and a most

deadly blow to the progress of Queensland in many directions. The hon. member for Bulloo is interested principally in absentee syndicates, and does not care particularly; but a large number of Queenslanders who live in the towns and in the country districts by agriculture will find out, when perhaps it is too late, what the full meaning of federation is. I am a federationist as much as anybody in this House; but I am not a federationist under the Commonwealth Bill. We might have had a better Bill, and if we had had the patience to wait we would have got a better Bill.

Mr. LEAHY: What kind of a Bill would you like?

Mr. STEWART: A Bill more worthy of Australia; a democratic Bill which would place the affairs of Australia in the hands of the people of Australia, and not a jumble and confusion such as the Constitution which has been adopted. But we need not enter into that question now. The thing has been settled. What is done is done, and we must make the best of a bad bargain, and use every endeavour after we enter federation to have the Constitution altered. I find, as I have already said, that Brisbane is not to be left out in the cold. Brisbane is subject to floods, and the resources of the colony are to be called upon to save Brisbane from its floods. If Brisbane is going to be saved from its floods, then I say it ought to be done at the expense of the property-owners in Brisbane. It is a most excellent thing to divert the flood waters from Brisbane, but I think it should be done by the people of Brisbane themselves. There are £13,000,000 sterling worth of property within a radius of twenty miles of Brisbane, and why cannot they tax that property for flood prevention?

Mr. LEAHY: Does that valuation include land only, or land and houses?

Mr. STEWART: Land only; it is the ratable value of land. If the buildings and everything else were taken into consideration I suppose the amount would be double that. If there is so much property to tax, I say it is incumbent upon the people of Brisbane to pay the cost of their own flood prevention, and I for one most strenuously protest against the people in the outlying portions of the colony being called upon to pay any portion whatever of the cost of saving Brisbane from floods. I find that the Government also propose to bring in a Local Government Bill. Well, that measure of itself—containing as it will 200 or 300 clauses, many of them of a most important character—would take a whole session, and yet the hon. gentleman tells us with all solemnity that he proposes to pass it during the present session. I take that statement with a grain of salt. The Speech is merely so much fireworks. The hon. gentleman does not intend to pass one-twentieth part of the measures that are mentioned in this document. Then, again, we are to have a Public Health Act—a most desirable measure—the charities are to be dealt with, the aborigines are to be protected, and we are to have a university. Seeing we are to have federation at an early date, the question of a university might remain in abeyance. We might have an Australian university. There are only some 4,000,000 people in Australia, and if we had an Australian university, with colleges, perhaps, in the different colonies, it would be much better than having a university in Brisbane. Then again the hon. gentleman proposes to deal with the Criminal Code. If anything should be dealt with by the Federal Parliament, it is the Criminal Code. Of course I have not the slightest objection to the Queensland Parliament dealing with it, but if the local Parliaments deal with a

question of this character, it should be taken up by the Federal Parliament, and let us have a uniform Criminal Code all over the continent.

Mr. LEAHY: You will have to alter the Federal Constitution then.

Mr. STEWART: Well, let us alter the Constitution—that should be no bar to progress. I have always maintained that Constitutions should be as easily altered as possible when alterations are necessary in the interests of the community. There are a number of other measures mentioned in this Speech to which I need not refer, but I cannot help saying that I think the Premier has erred most seriously in bringing in such a lengthy programme during the present session. If the hon. gentleman had confined himself to two or three, or half-a-dozen measures, and had stated to the House definitely that he intended to pass those measures—

The PREMIER: But your leader complains of deficiencies.

Mr. STEWART: And very properly so. There are a number of matters mentioned here which might very well have been omitted, while there are other matters of more urgency which are not mentioned. It was to these latter that the leader of this party referred, and the more important measures should always have the preference. Of course it is for the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government to say which are the more important, and he has evidently come to the conclusion that the measures mentioned in the Speech are those which ought to be dealt with in the near future. As I have said, if the hon. gentleman had confined himself to a few measures, and had stated definitely that he desired to see those passed, he would have had the assistance of a large majority of hon. members; but, seeing that he professes to attempt what is clearly impossible, I do not think that any hon. member almost will give him credit for a desire to do anything—at least, I do not. He may have some measures up his sleeve which are not mentioned in this Speech. He told us this evening that no proposals for syndicate railways were matured at the present moment, but he did not tell us that they would not be matured before the close of the session. I have a suspicion that we will have one, two, or more of these proposals sprung on us just towards the end of the session, that they will be rushed through in a similar fashion to the Chillagoe business, and we will be placed in this position—that the system of State-aided railways, to which we have hitherto clung so tenaciously, will be broken into to a very great degree. I would just like to say this to hon. members who come from the Northern portion of the colony. I was rebuked upon a previous occasion for seeming to interfere in regard to the affairs of the North, but the North is a portion of Queensland, and I claim my right to speak to the people of the North just as much as if I was a representative of the North. If the people of Northern Queensland had gone for separation years ago they would have been able to deal with this question of syndicate railways in the way they chose. As it is, at the present moment they can impose federation on the South, but the South can impose syndicates upon them, and can also impose black labour upon them. If the people of Northern Queensland had been well advised they would have agitated for separation years ago.

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: So they did.

Mr. STEWART: And, what is more, I believe they would have got it.

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: So they did agitate—before you came to the colony.

Mr. STEWART: It is quite right; they did, but the leaders were bought off and the agitation died out.

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: They were not bought off. I was one of them.

Mr. STEWART: I do not know whether the hon. member was bought off or not, but I know that a number of them were bought off.

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: You cannot prove that one of them was bought off.

Mr. STEWART: I know they were made members of the Ministry. What did that mean? We all know what making a separationist a member of the Ministry means. Did not the present Premier sit just where the hon. member is sitting not so very long ago? Was he not the "candid friend" of the Government? Was he not almost an opponent of the Government?

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes.

Mr. STEWART: But the Government took him to its bosom—embraced him—put him into its pocket. It was just the same with the separationist leaders of the North. The moment they were made members of a Southern Government, that very moment they ceased to be agitators for separation. What is the good of the hon. member shaking his head?

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: I shake my head because you are entirely wrong.

Mr. STEWART: That may be the hon. member's opinion, but I take the liberty of differing with him. I have nothing more to say. I shall be very glad if the Premier is able to get one tithe, one twentieth, of the matters mentioned in this Speech passed during the present session; but I am very doubtful whether he either will accomplish that much, or whether he intends anything of the kind.

Question—That the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech be adopted—put and passed.

Mr. STEWART: Come on with the next business.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*):

Mr. Speaker,—I beg to announce [9:30 p.m.] that His Excellency the Governor will be prepared to receive you and hon. members at 3 o'clock on Tuesday next.

SUPPLY.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the Governor's Speech be ordered to be taken into consideration at the next sitting of the House.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I would remind the Premier that it is only common courtesy that he should ask for permission to move that motion.

The PREMIER: It always follows without notice.

The SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. member to raise a point of order?

Mr. McDONALD: I did not exactly raise a point of order. The hon. gentleman made a motion, and afterwards desired to amend it, and I think, in common courtesy, he should ask for leave of the House to do so.

The SPEAKER: I think there is some little confusion. The first intimation that the Premier made was not in the form of a motion at all. It was an intimation that His Excellency the Governor would receive members at a certain time.

Mr. McDONALD: Then he was not out of order.

The SPEAKER: No, the hon. gentleman was not out of order. He was quite in order.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that the House, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday next.

Mr. KIDSTON: I thought we were going to sit three days a week.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I object to this motion. At an earlier stage I pointed out that private members have had no opportunity this year of ventilating their grievances or bringing forward motions; and I think the Premier ought to afford them every opportunity of transacting their business. I certainly think members should meet to-morrow and give the hon. member for Bowen an opportunity of dealing with his motion. Session after session he has been choked off until the last days of the session, and has had to restrict his remarks considerably when dealing with a matter of much importance to his constituents. A full and free discussion should be allowed, and the hon. member should have the advantage he has gained of getting first possession of the business-paper. If not, other private members will come along next week with their business, and that hon. member will find his motion at the bottom of the paper. Then the member for Gympie, Mr. Fisher, has an important matter on the paper, and if we meet to-morrow he gets through the first stage. If not, someone will intervene next week, and he also will find his business at the bottom of the list. I do not think that kind of thing should be allowed; and if we are going to adjourn over Thursday for the first few weeks of the session we shall have the same experience as we always have had—that private members' business is sacrificed at the end of the session. For that reason I object to the motion moved by the Premier.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I object to this motion. I understood that the Government were prepared to go on with the long programme they have announced, but what do we find? We have been accused of occupying too much time, and the Treasurer on one occasion said up North that if we on this side talked less the Government would be prepared to go on with certain business. The fact is, that now the Address in Reply has gone through, the Government are not ready with their business.

The PREMIER: Yes, they are.

Mr. McDONALD: They have not come down to-day with any motion to go on with to-morrow. Under the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed I quite understand that the Government cannot go on to-morrow, but when we meet on Tuesday what will be the result? We will present the Address in Reply, and then the Premier will give a number of notices of motion and we will have to adjourn. The Government know that as well as we do. If the Government were honest and sincere they would meet to-morrow, introduce all their formal motions dealing with various Bills, and then go on with the business on Tuesday. I intend to move as an amendment that the House at its rising adjourn until to-morrow. I ask the Premier whether he is prepared to go on with business? As a matter of fact I believe the most important measures mentioned in the Governor's Speech are not yet drafted.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, yes, they are.

Mr. McDONALD: Then why not bring them down? Here we are meeting in the middle of September instead of July. If this debate had lasted for any length of time, the Government would have told us that there was no time to introduce certain measures, and unless we get on with business now hon. members will not be prepared to sit here and do it when the very hot weather comes along. Hon. members on

both sides have waived their right to speak on the Address in Reply so that we can get at the actual business of the session, and what is the result? The Government are not prepared. They come down and ask us to adjourn for three days.

The PREMIER: It is only one day.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. gentleman says only one day. I challenge the leader of this House to show any method by which, under the Standing Orders, he can carry on that business on Tuesday. He knows he cannot. The only way we can go on with any business on Tuesday is by meeting to-morrow and passing formal business, which will give us something to go on with on Tuesday. I am very much opposed to this motion, and I move that "Thursday" be inserted instead of "Tuesday" in the hon. gentleman's motion.

The SPEAKER: I may point out to the hon. member that his proposed amendment is unnecessary. If the motion now proposed is negatived the Sessional Orders will apply, and the House will meet to-morrow as usual.

Mr. BROWNE: The Hon. the Premier, in closing his speech this afternoon, wound up with an *ad misericordiam* appeal to hon. members not to take up too much time for fear that the important business he was so earnestly anxious to get through should be delayed. I interjected from this bench—"If this Address goes through this afternoon, are you prepared to go on with the business to-morrow?" and he said, "Most certainly," and challenged this side to let it go through. We have, therefore, refrained from talking. The hon. gentleman said distinctly that if the Address went through to-night he was prepared to go on. If he is not prepared to go on with the business that he said he would submit, he is not fit to carry on the House. I have no wish to hurry on the business. When the hon. gentleman said he hoped members would not talk too much, he knew that he wanted this debate to go on, and now he has displayed his weakness—that he has nothing ready to put before the House after bringing members from far distant parts of the colony. If he wanted to prolong the debate, why did he not make some of his own followers get up and talk, so as to keep the thing going? He evidently thought that all he had to do was to start something and get members on this side to talk; but we have not done it, and as he stated that if the Address went through to-night he was perfectly prepared to go on with the business to-morrow, he should, in justice to hon. members, carry out his word.

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): I should like to know why we have been dragged 1,000 miles from our constituencies to carry on the business of the country when the Government is not prepared to go on with that business? In former years it was continually held up by Ministerialists, and by their newspaper barrackers, that it was the flood of eloquence on this side of the House which prevented the Government from carrying on the business; but in view of the fact of the large amount of business to be carried out and the small amount of time given for the consideration of that business, members on this side purposely refrained from occupying much time on the Address in Reply. They have been very lenient, with the result that the Address is through. So it is not always us who are responsible for blocking business. The Government are evidently not prepared to go on with the business. In addition to that, they wish to deprive hon. members of the right they undoubtedly possess of bringing forward their business on private members' day. There is business on the paper brought forward by private members—by the hon. member for Bowen and

the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Fisher—which this House is asked to consider, and which, with due deference to the Premier, is well worthy of consideration. But, owing to the action of that hon. gentleman, the private members, who are anxious to give consideration to this business will be deprived of that opportunity. Is it fair we should be dragged away from our constituencies at this time of the year to be treated in this fashion? There are only two or three months before Christmas, and in all probability the more important measures will have to be rushed through without consideration at the close of the session. For that the Government must take the responsibility, on this occasion at any rate. We have given them every opportunity to introduce the most important measures at the earliest date, and I hope the country will realise that they are responsible for any rushing that may be done in legislation hereafter. When the Government ask us—as they probably will have to do—to allow the business to go through, what claim will they have on our consideration if they will not proceed with the business when we give them the opportunity to do so? I have nothing to add except to enter an emphatic protest against this mode of procedure. I have come about 1,000 miles prepared to do business at the request of those who are responsible for carrying on the business of the country, and on the presumption that they were prepared to go on with that business; but when I come here I find they are not prepared. I object to that fatuous way of carrying on business. If they cannot find a better way of conducting the business of the colony, the best thing they can do is to get out and make room for some hon. members who will be more capable of carrying on the public business properly.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Maranoa*): I think that an unnecessary amount of heat has been displayed by hon. members opposite in regard to this matter. There is no disposition on the part of the Government to interfere with private members' business. The Premier could not have anticipated so unprecedented a proceeding as that the Address in Reply would go through in one evening. The hon. member, Mr. McDonald, is under the impression that there is a desire to prevent hon. members from bringing their business forward.

Mr. McDONALD: I never advanced that at all.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Had the Premier anticipated that any member would have thought it a grievance that the business of which notice was given by private members would suffer, he would not have proposed that the House adjourn till Tuesday. There is no disposition to prevent hon. members from discussing their business to-morrow. It was thought by several members of the House that the private business, some of which would not be contested at all, would occupy but a very short time, but if it is desired to go on with it I have the authority of the Premier for saying that he is not desirous of pressing his motion.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Hon. members can bring their private business forward to-morrow, and the Government can give notice of any business they may wish to bring forward on Tuesday next in the usual way. It was rather too much for hon. members opposite to get up and accuse the Premier of having brought them down here 1,000 miles to mock them by having no business to do.

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*): I think it has been of some value in inducing the Premier to listen to reason. It is an extraordinary position—

The HOME SECRETARY: Very!

Mr. KIDSTON: Yes, it is a very extraordinary position that at the opening of the session of Parliament the Opposition should have to compel the Government to go on with their important programme of business. They evidently intended to have a holiday while the Opposition members might talk at large, and we have actually had to compel them to do the business of the country.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, *Carnarvon*): It is just as well to place on record that the Government were perfectly unprepared, judging by the previous tactics of the Opposition, during the time we have had the pleasure of their acquaintance in the House—they were quite unprepared to find that hon. gentlemen opposite would be so well satisfied, and that the policy of the Government would raise so little objection that the Address in Reply would go through in one evening.

Mr. MAXWELL: We wanted to test their sincerity.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the Government were to judge, as they endeavoured to do by past experience of hon. gentlemen opposite, they would naturally conclude and they did conclude—

Mr. KIDSTON: You have a good deal to learn about hon. gentlemen opposite.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes apparently we have got a lot to learn about them. (Opposition laughter.) We concluded that the debate on the Address in Reply would last a fortnight at least. I believe on a previous occasion it lasted six weeks. What on earth was there in the shape of a precedent for the Government to go by? They could never have anticipated the conspiracy of silence adopted by hon. members opposite instead of their usual tactics of volubility *ad nauseam*.

Mr. McDONALD: This is a record.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am glad to think that hon. members have now altered their tactics, at all events for the time, and if the present tactics are followed we shall have a business and not a talking session. I ought to congratulate hon. members opposite upon their new departure, and I congratulate them accordingly.

Mr. BROWNE: Never count your chickens before they are hatched.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You are learning something.

The HOME SECRETARY: We are all learning something.

Mr. McDONALD: You have got a good thing on that programme, and we do not want to lose it.

The PREMIER: There need be no misconception. Of course if hon. gentlemen choose to adopt such peculiar tactics—(Opposition laughter)—for the purpose of bringing discredit upon the Government, I think it will recoil upon themselves. We are quite prepared to go on with the business, and I am absolved from all arrangements.

Mr. STEWART: So are we.

The PREMIER: Let that be understood. I endeavoured to act in good faith with the other side with regard to the conduct of the business here, and I certainly did not consider that any of these motions on the paper would suffer by standing over until Tuesday. Two of them might go as formal, so that there would be little or no business to do, and whatever there is of a contentious character on the paper might well have stood over to Tuesday. But if it be the

desire of the House to meet to-morrow the Government will be prepared to do so. We were prepared to sit all the month—I mention that distinctly—to hear members on the Address in Reply, which it has taken such a short period to discuss. Under the circumstances, and seeing that hon. gentlemen opposite are so industriously inclined—(Opposition laughter)—I will have great pleasure in meeting them to-morrow, and will now ask permission to withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL—PANEL OF ASSESSORS.

The SPEAKER: I have to report to the House that I have this day received a letter from Mr. Wm. Drayton Armstrong, the hon. member for Lockyer, resigning his appointment as a member of the panel of assessors under the Elections Tribunal Act, and I now lay upon the table my warrant nominating another member to serve in his place.

PAPER.

COST AND CIRCULATING OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to lay on the table of the House a report as to the cost of the circulation, etc., of the parliamentary debates. I find that perhaps I should apologise to the House for not having furnished this report before. When handed to me I thought it was a mere copy, but I afterwards found that it is the original document. I was not aware of that; otherwise I would have laid it on the table before. I beg to move that the paper be printed.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at three minutes to 10 o'clock.