

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 1899

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

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Correspondence respecting the testing of rifles for the Queensland Transvaal contingent.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): I may state that the "Cornwall" left the Brisbane Roads, reporting "all well," at 11.30 this morning.

QUESTIONS.

PROVISION FOR FAMILIES OF VOLUNTEERS FOR THE TRANSVAAL.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Premier—

1. What is the number of married men with families who are about to leave for the Transvaal with the Queensland contingent?

2. Have the Government made any arrangements to provide for the wives and children of these married men in the event of any of the latter meeting with death in battle?

3. Are the Government satisfied that none of the families so left by their breadwinners are in want?

4. Is it true that some of the married men have joined the contingent as single men, and that during the past few days there have been several scenes at the Meanderh encampment caused by deserted wives seeking their volunteer husbands?

The PREMIER replied—

1. I am unable at present to supply the information asked for.

2. The life of each member of the contingent has been insured by the Government for the sum of £250, in addition to which the families will be entitled to compassionate allowance at Imperial rates.

3 and 4. Inquiries are being made on these points.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Have the trustees of the Public Library of Queensland been put in possession of the building formerly occupied by the trustees of the Queensland Museum?

2. If so, when?

3. Is the catalogue of books in the library completed?

4. When is the library likely to be opened for public use?

The PREMIER replied—

1. Not yet.

2. The alteration of the Exhibition Buildings for Museum purposes is now practically completed, and the transfer of the Museum to the new premises will be immediately proceeded with. A plan showing the alterations required in the Museum for the accommodation of 100,000 volumes has been prepared, and the work will be commenced as soon as the building is vacated.

3. Owing to the fact that for several months past a large proportion of the books have had to be packed and stored, the completion of the catalogue has been necessarily delayed.

4. It is impossible to state at present.

FEES IN QUEENSLAND NATIONAL BANK PROSECUTIONS.

On the motion of Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*), it was resolved—

That there be laid on the table of the House—

1. A return showing the names of the barristers-at-law employed on behalf of the Crown in the Queensland National Bank prosecutions.

2. A list of all fees (in the said cases) paid to each of such barristers from the date of the decision of the late Attorney-General to institute such proceedings.

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the adjourned debate on Mr. Groom's motion—

1. That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when the Grammar Schools Act 1860 and the Grammar Schools Act Amendment Act of 1864 should be repealed; and that the grammar schools established under the provisions of these Acts should form part of the educational system of the colony, and be placed under the control of the Secretary for Public Instruction as the responsible Minister of the Crown in charge of the Education Department.

2. That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause the necessary action to be taken to give effect to the foregoing resolution—

* The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, *Mackay*) said: I am rather embarrassed to know what is meant by this resolution, particularly when I remember the arguments by which the resolution was supported. The hon. member has said that the grammar schools of the colony are very admirably conducted, and he made this statement, among others in which he highly praised the management of the grammar schools—

I take this opportunity of saying—and it is only right that I should say it—that it is not intended by me in moving this motion to cast the slightest reflection in any way whatever upon the various head masters and head mistresses of the grammar schools of Queensland. I believe the whole of them, in their several capacities, have done excellent work, and are trying, as far as they possibly can, with the limited means at their disposal, to carry out the duties entrusted to them of educating our youth in the higher branches of knowledge.

Again he says—

And, therefore, considering the heavy responsibility which has rested upon them from the time those schools were established up to the present, so far from saying anything which would be derogatory to them, I contend that they deserve the greatest credit for the success which has attended their efforts, more especially when we bear in mind the number of pupils they have turned out who have distinguished themselves in professional, commercial, and other walks of life.

In the face of those statements it is rather difficult to understand, if I am so to understand it, that the hon. member wants the whole of the grammar school system abolished, and that the schools should be taken into the hands of the State. I could understand that argument if the hon. member had endeavoured to show that the grammar school system was a failure, but I am

at a loss to understand how he arrives at the conclusion expressed in the resolution, because the arguments which he has given us are to the effect that the grammar school system is highly successful. I do not know from his resolution whether he desires to abolish it altogether, or whether he does not, but it is open to that interpretation, and his arguments would in many instances lead up to the conclusion that the Grammar Schools Act should be repealed. The hon. member during his speech seemed desirous of showing, not that the Grammar Schools Act should be repealed; not that the whole system should be revised; not that the trustees should be done away with, and that the schools should be placed under the control of the Secretary for Public Instruction; but he seemed disposed to think that the Grammar Schools Act required amendment or revision. But then having proceeded to show in one part of his speech that the Act only required a little revision, in another part he shows that the results of the grammar school system are apparently so eminently satisfactory that there really would be no justification for interfering with it at all. One position taken up by the hon. member was that it was desirable that an inspection of the grammar schools should be made by some competent authority. That is, I think, quite in keeping with the opinion of the House, and I think that it would be desirable, but that is a very little way to go when what you have to prove is that you must do away with our grammar school system altogether. It seemed as if the speaker would be satisfied if an addition was made to the arrangements at present existing. The State now has no authority under the Act to inspect grammar schools, nor has it the machinery to inspect them. But if the House desires, and I think the desire would be reasonable enough, that there should be some supervision over grammar schools, it might be possible, and I should be glad to promise as far as I am able to promise, to induce some competent person from the University of Sydney to take upon himself the responsibility of inspecting our grammar schools and their methods. But in order to inspect those schools properly and in a way that would satisfy the public, it is certain that we should have to go outside the present State school system. We should have to get some gentlemen whose antecedents have been such as to bring them before the public in some high character; they would have to be men who had degrees. Our State school system is not necessarily staffed by persons who have acquired a very great deal of distinction as scholars; their function is more the function of the schoolmaster. And if it is desirable—and I venture to say that I think it is desirable—to have grammar schools inspected, in order to satisfy the opinion which has been expressed by a large portion of the public, then we have no machinery at hand in our State school system wherewith to conduct an efficient examination. It is one thing to say our grammar schools need inspection and quite another thing to say that the Grammar Schools Act should be repealed, and that the trustees, I imagine, should be no longer left in charge of those institutions in any shape or form. I am not prepared to say that I am in favour of that, for I cannot understand why our grammar schools as they exist at present should be done away with altogether, unless the hon. member is prepared to maintain—that he is not prepared to maintain—that they are absolute failures. I should be much better prepared to deal with this matter, and I think the discussion of it would be very much more profitable, if the hon. member had brought in a Bill dealing with the subject, instead of proposing a resolution to the effect that the Grammar Schools Act should be repealed, and that the State should take charge of

those schools. He should have brought in a Bill indicating what was the best way to bring about what he desires. Hon. members on the opposite side very often bring in Bills dealing with subjects which they desire to call public attention to, and which they think are of importance, and I venture to say that that is a much more practical way of dealing with a subject than by submitting a sort of academic motion such as is the one before the House. But it seems to me that the hon. member desires as far as possible to escape responsibility. I do not know whether hon. members opposite are quite prepared to take that responsibility, and I am really sorry that the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, who has been so long in the House, and who may be called the father of the House, should, on a subject like this, which he professes to have studied particularly, have merely brought forward a vague resolution instead of tabling a Bill showing the ideas he may have for reforming the present system. The hon. member points out that there are thirty-five pupils at the Toowoomba Grammar School, and 231 at the Brisbane Grammar School, and he says it is a manifest injustice that they should receive the same amount of endowment, but that it is not for him to say whether the endowment is too little in Brisbane or too much in Toowoomba. I should say it is perfectly clear that it is too much in Toowoomba, but it would not suit the hon. member in his position as member for Toowoomba to say that £1,000 was an excessive sum to pay for thirty-five pupils at Toowoomba, or that if Toowoomba received £1,000 for thirty-five pupils, Brisbane should get £8,000 per annum. Then, again, the hon. member tells us, and perhaps tells us correctly, that we must not forget that the founders of the grammar schools have their rights. What are we dealing with in this matter? I should like to know how he proposes to deal with those rights. Upon that point the hon. member was quite silent. The hon. member quoted a report, and a very valuable one, of the Royal Commission on secondary education in England, and he would lead us to believe that the recommendations of the commissioners entirely bore out the resolution which we have here before us, which I say is, if not indefinite, nothing more than that the State should take over the grammar schools. I should just like to read the following quotation from the report to which the hon. member referred:—

So far from desiring that secondary education should be a matter for a Department of State to control, we propose to leave the initiative in public action to local authorities, and to prevent even those authorities from superseding the action of individuals. So far from attempting to induce uniformity, we trust that a free and spontaneous variety, and an open field for experiment and enterprise of all kinds, will be scrupulously preserved. We conceive, in short, that some central authority is required, not in order to control but rather to supervise the secondary education of the country, not to override or supersede local action.

So that, so far as that report is concerned, I think it goes to show that it would be advisable not to take over the whole control of the grammar schools by the State; not to do in fact what the hon. member seems to desire should be done, but rather to leave it in the hands of the local authorities to exercise more discretion and control. I say, then, that if the system of control is to be altered to begin with at present by having an inspection by officials under the Department of Public Instruction, which at present it has not got, some qualified person from the Sydney or Melbourne University would have to be obtained, and with that I am entirely in accord. I am not prepared to say that I altogether disagree with the motion because I cannot say what it means.

Mr. DAWSON: How do you intend to vote?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We shall see about that. Probably some further light will be thrown upon the matter. The hon. member for Toowoomba, before the debate is over, will be able to put clearly before the House what he does mean—whether he means a revision or a revolution.

Mr. DAWSON: He made it clear enough by his speech.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The motion and the speech are quite different.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Exactly. The motion and the speech are quite different.

Mr. DAWSON: Oh, nonsense!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: As far as the motion is concerned he spoke of a radical change. He says the whole system of grammar school education requires revision, and I know he said in a part of his speech that ample ground had been shown for a radical change in the government of our schools. While he tells us that a radical change is necessary in the government of the schools, he goes on and tells us nothing but what is good of the government of those schools, and he showed the magnificent results which have accrued by reason of the ability of the teachers and those who govern the schools. He practically says also that the founders have rights, and that those rights should be protected. In considering the hon. member's speech it all depends upon the point of view from which we are looking at it whether we can discover what he is aiming at. I say the speech is inconsistent, that it does not support his own conclusions, and I should be glad to hear, by and by, clearly what the hon. gentleman means; whether he means revision, or inspection, or the overturning of the present system altogether, as we can well imagine when he talks about a radical change being brought about. I say that in this matter I require more light. I know exactly what I am in favour of. I am in favour of an inspection of the grammar schools, and I have no doubt that that could be brought about if the House approves of the idea. We might approach the Sydney University, and we should probably have to pay £200 or £300 to a competent man. We could, by that means, obtain, in the first instance, some kind of a report from an unbiased authority. That, I think, is good enough, but with regard to the rest of the resolution generally I should like to hear from the hon. member more clearly than I have heard up to the present what he really means. A portion of his speech I am certainly in favour of, but unfortunately if I look to another portion of it I am not in favour of it, and it does not in the least coincide with the other portion. In fact, it conflicts absolutely with it, and it would be very much better if the hon. gentleman would put forward clearly what he would approve of, and what faults, if any, he finds with the present method of conducting the grammar schools. He has found none whatever in his speech. He has praised them, and, generally speaking, I think they are fairly entitled to praise.

Mr. DAWSON: He gave credit where credit was due, and he blamed them where blamable.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There was no such discrimination.

Mr. GROOM: I scrupulously kept away from the late disgraceful scenes at the Brisbane Girls' Grammar School, and you know it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That may be, but the grammar schools have at any rate been in existence for twenty years, and the results, as the hon. member says, have been fairly satisfactory.

Mr. GROOM: According to circumstances.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I say that on the whole they seem to have been eminently satisfactory.

Mr. GROOM: Not in all cases.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I should like to know if the hon. gentleman believes that any system devised by human means is going to give perfect satisfaction under all circumstances, and I should particularly like to know in what shape he wishes the State to conduct these schools? The hon. member sits on the bench opposite as other hon. members do, and we know that the burden of their song is that they are compelled to sit on that bench, because the Government cannot manage to carry on satisfactorily the administrative services of the country.

That is why they are there, I presume, and yet we find certain schools in the colony which are under independent authorities, who, according to the hon. member, have done admirable work, and the hon. member for Toowoomba desires to take away from them that control—at any rate, he seems to desire that. I would really like to know what the hon. member does desire; but, assuming that he desires a radical revolution, then those schools would be taken away from the control of the trustees at Toowoomba and elsewhere—admirable gentlemen—and placed under the control of the Secretary for Public Instruction, whom the hon. member regards with—call it aversion, possibly, or call it contempt—but whom the hon. member looks upon—judging by the columns of his paper—as a thoroughly incapable person.

Mr. GROOM: That is an untruth.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What he professes politically on those benches, and what other hon. members also profess—although they believe that the Government is incapable and cannot manage business—is that they desire to take away from the schools of Toowoomba, from the schools of Rockhampton, from the schools of Townsville, that local management which they have. This really passes understanding, and I may point out that, although some friction has occurred in Brisbane lately, I have seen articles in the papers of Rockhampton and in one or two other districts of the colony, saying that they are very reluctant—they protest, indeed, against it—to blame the ladies and gentlemen connected with the various schools, and to take the control of those schools out of the hands of those people, who they believe are very efficiently conducting them, and place it in the hands of the State, so that everything shall be centralised in Brisbane. I really should like to know the bearing of the resolution. I should like to know precisely how far the hon. member desires to go; whether he desires to turn out—or, at any rate, deprive of all power—the trustees who have for many years managed the schools with a great deal of satisfaction to the local residents. I do not know what the feeling is in Toowoomba. It is quite possible that the hon. member's motion will give the greatest satisfaction in regard to the Toowoomba school—that the trustees are inefficient—

Mr. GROOM: I did not say so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Possibly the hon. member may believe that the headmaster is incapable, or requires a great deal of pushing up—of pin-pricking—in order to make him do his duty properly. That is not my opinion of anyone connected with the Toowoomba school. Still that is what one would suppose from the fact that he desires that no local control should be retained by those bodies. If the control is going to be taken out of the hands of the trustees—as it must be if we carry this motion—and handed over entirely to the State, the local trustees will have no justification for their existence, and the schools will go out of

local hands and into the hands of the Ministry. As to whether that is desirable or not, the hon. member did not make clear, and before I can come to any definite conclusion on the resolution I require more light. I believe it would be of advantage to the State to have the grammar schools inspected by a competent authority. If that is what the hon. member means, then I am with him; but I cannot go further than that until I am certain what the hon. member means—whether he means a revolution, or whether he means a reformation—and that I cannot say.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB (*Ipswich*): The hon. member for Toowoomba, in introducing this motion, gave what I consider a very valuable *résumé* of the Acts under which our present grammar schools are incorporated, but he made what I believe to be an error. He mentioned in his speech that the original subscribers in some schools had died out, and there were not sufficient of them to elect the subscribers' trustees. I am rather inclined to think that the hon. member is mistaken, because in the case of the Ipswich Grammar School—which is the oldest by far of the grammar schools in the colony, being over thirty years of age—there are still more than sufficient original subscribers to comply with all the requirements of the Act. In addition to that, there are numbers of subsequent subscribers, so that, if the number of foundation subscribers was reduced, there are still plenty of subscribers. I am rather inclined to think that in a place like Toowoomba the number of subscribers has not been so reduced that they have no right to be represented by trustees. If the hon. member proposed that the various schools should be subject to Government inspection, I would cordially agree with him. That is a matter which the trustees of the Ipswich school have been agitating for for some time, and I believe the trustees of all the grammar schools in the colony would approve of some system of inspection. The present system of gauging the work done by the schools by the Sydney senior and junior examinations is not at all a satisfactory one. It is only an evidence of the ability of some few of the girls or boys and of the special attention that has been given to their classes; but it is no evidence at all of the general work done by the schools. Certainly I favour—and I believe all the trustees of the grammar schools favour—any motion which might be passed to supply Government inspection. I may say, further, that some of the schools have spoken about this matter, and would, certainly, if the way had been clear, have provided for such inspection, but the difficulty has been with regard to the expense. To provide suitable inspection, the work could hardly be undertaken by one man. There are classics, mathematics, science, and other parts of the curriculum to be considered. A person with a university degree might be well qualified to examine on some portions of the curriculum, but he would be unable to undertake the work in other branches of study, and, consequently, the expense of providing suitable inspection would be altogether too much for the schools to bear. But if the Government would undertake the work, I believe all the schools would be perfectly willing to fall in with the scheme. The hon. member who introduced the motion made no attempt to prove that the schools are in any way inefficient; that the trustees do not perform their duties properly, or are in any way incompetent. Rather, I think, he gave credit to the schools for the good work that has been done, and I fail to see that he has given any sound reasons why the schools should be handed over to the Department of Public Instruction. The Government have to approve of the trustees elected by the subscribers which gives them control over the choice of the

subscribers, while they have absolute control over the appointment of four other trustees. If the Government wish to obtain any more efficient control over these schools, it is quite in their power to attain that object by the appointment of suitable trustees. It is perfectly true that trouble has occasionally arisen between the trustees of these schools and the teachers—head teachers or junior teachers. We have had an example of this recently in connection with the Brisbane Girls' Grammar School, but this is not the time to go into the merits or demerits of that case. I do not think that anyone can contend for a single moment that the handing over of these schools to the Department of Public Instruction would make any difference with regard to the appointment or dismissal of the various teachers. If there has been any complaint at all as to the trustees being occasionally arbitrary in connection with the dismissal of these teachers, I would ask hon. members to consider whether these officers would be likely to receive less arbitrary treatment if they were under the Department of Public Instruction than they would under the trustees. I don't think so. Is it not a fact that when teachers have been shifted, or disrated, or dismissed, the department has been assailed by various members of Parliament to obtain the restoration or reinstatement of these teachers? Do we not all know that a considerable amount of pressure has been brought to bear time and again on the head of the department to obtain the restoration of certain teachers who were disrated or dismissed by the department? Is it reasonable to suppose that if these grammar schools were under the control of the Education Department that this difficulty would be obviated? I don't think it will. There is one other matter I would like to refer to, and that is with regard to the endowment of lands for these schools. As the hon. member for Toowoomba explained, under this Act, these schools are entitled to an endowment of land to the value of £2,000. The intention of the framers of the Act was this: they had the idea that land in Queensland was rapidly increasing in value, and that in course of time this land would become so valuable as to provide sufficient income to enable these schools to cease to be a burden on the State. But we know that that has not been realised. There are very few places outside the metropolis where land has increased so much in value that the income from same would make these schools independent of subsidy by the State. While various Governments have given this endowment to three grammar schools—the Ipswich Boys' and the Boys' and Girls' Schools in Brisbane—other grammar schools have been refused this land endowment. The previous Minister for Education persistently refused to recommend that such endowment should be given to other schools. I think that is a very bad policy, because the Act provides for it, and I contend that all should be treated alike. I cannot see why any exception should be made between one school and another. I know that several Ministers have been in favour of this; but, notwithstanding all our efforts, it has not been given to the Girls' Grammar School at Ipswich, and to the grammar schools at Maryborough, Rockhampton, and Townsville, in accordance with the Act. I may say that one Minister said to me: "What is the use of having this endowment in land, any income derived from it will reduce your endowment in cash?" We are quite prepared to accept that position, and I would like to remind hon. members that when the old site of the Brisbane Boys' Grammar School was resumed for railway purposes, they got £10,000 and a new site. I am not grumbling at that. When the Girls'

Grammar School in Brisbane was established, it was endowed with 18 acres of land, of which three acres have been resumed for railway purposes, and for this the trustees received an allowance of £4,000. They have received in actual cash double the original value of that land. I repeat that all schools should be on the same footing in regard to endowment. I am sorry that the hon. member for Toowoomba spoke so disparagingly of the school in his town—whether it was properly managed I am not prepared to say, but it must be borne in mind that the cash endowment is not given on the basis of the attendance at the school but on the amount of money collected from the residents on behalf of the school; and I say that country places like Ipswich and Toowoomba which have raised £2,000 to establish these schools deserve every credit for having done so. I would also point out that in and around Brisbane there are a large body of Civil servants who can afford to send their children to the local grammar school, so that they do not need the endowment to the same extent as grammar schools which are not in that fortunate position. I have pointed out that the Brisbane schools are specially favoured in the matter of population, and the number of persons here in a position to take advantage of them and pay the fees required. But there is another advantage. There have been in the Brisbane schools at one time something like 150 pupils, for each of whom the State was paying sixteen guineas a year in addition to the endowment. While I would not be in favour of lessening the number of scholarships, I point out that the circumstances are such that the Brisbane schools, on account of the surroundings, can always obtain a far larger proportion of scholarship pupils than any of the other schools, and in that way also they receive a larger revenue than any of the country schools. I will conclude by saying that if the hon. member for Toowoomba will confine his proposal to some system of Government inspection of grammar schools I will be very much pleased to support him.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: I do not wish to detain the House by speaking at any length on this matter, and I will therefore put the remarks I have to make in as concrete a form as possible. I consider the motion a step in the right direction in perfecting the State school system of the colony. Does the Education Department know whether the money spent on the grammar schools is properly spent or not? I know one school where there are fifty-four pupils and they cost £870 a year, and that is far above the average of the State school system. I consider that wherever the State contributes money to the educational institutions of the colony they should have some power over the institutions to which it is given. I consider that the State schools should be elementary, and when the children reach the fifth class in them they should be admitted to the grammar schools free.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: I consider that our grammar schools should be considered as high schools or secondary schools. If the grammar schools were worked on the State school principle they could be worked for half what they cost now. I hold with the mover of this motion that the grammar schools should be inspected. I think the State schools should be for the development of the mind instead of for cramming it, and if we are to have a university, I consider we could have a schedule which would enable pupils to be prepared on a proper university scale. We have to remember the children from the back blocks, and if they wish to take advantage of the grammar schools they have to pay board and residence as well as high grammar school fees.

If we are to build up a nation we must attend to the education of the children, and I have much pleasure in supporting the motion now before the House.

* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. V. Chataway, *Mackay*): I am sorry so little interest is taken in this matter. I may be wrong, but I think it one of the most important matters which has come before the House for a long time. It involves the questions, first, whether State assistance to secondary education is desirable, and, secondly, the question whether we are now giving that assistance in the best possible way. It is not often I find myself thoroughly in accord with the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, but on this occasion I have the fullest sympathy with his motion as it is worded. I am speaking now purely as a private member, as this has never been a matter of discussion amongst Ministers to such an extent as that they have arrived at a decision upon it. Personally, I am entirely in favour of this motion as it is worded. I think, however, that in the speech with which the hon. member introduced the motion he rather, if I may say so, backed down on the wording of his motion, and left me under the impression—I think he left the House under the same impression—and I know he left my hon. colleague, the other hon. member for Mackay, under the impression that he did not wish to go so far as the motion indicates, that he did not wish that the grammar schools should be grafted on to the education system of the colony.

Mr. GROOM: Oh, yes, I did.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was not the impression he left upon me, because the hon. member was so loud in his encomiums of the present grammar school system and its results. From the unstinted praise which the hon. gentleman passed upon them, the impression was left amongst members that he did not wish the present system to be entirely abolished. If it is admitted that we should help secondary education—and no one at this time of day will deny it—then the position I take up is that this is not the most satisfactory system we could possibly have. It involves very considerable expense, and the results are not commensurate with the expenditure. The present expenditure upon grammar schools is an annual vote of £10,000, and I think another £3,000 is spent in scholarships. For this expense we educate some 200 children at a cost of about £65 per boy or girl, as the case may be. That is an expenditure which it does not seem to me gives an adequate return for the outlay. It is true that by this assistance we enable these grammar schools to supply an education for a certain number of other children for whom fees are paid. I regret to say that in many cases the pupils attending the grammar schools are not of such a character that it is desirable that the State should supply money to enable them to receive a secondary education. In a great many cases boys of considerable age are attending grammar schools, and when they arrive there they have to receive the mere elements of a primary education. Many are sent in to these schools from the back blocks, and, while the fact that they are sent in there is a proof that their parents are perfectly well able to pay for their education, they are receiving it at the cost of the State, and they are pupils who, I hold, should not be primarily assisted by the State. Then the standard of the work of the grammar schools is necessarily not of the highest, because there is no competition. One grammar school does not compete with another, and they are kept comparatively at their ease with a staff of tutors paid by the State. Their existence and the

promotion of their teachers does not depend upon effective work. Wherever you withdraw the element of competition, you naturally get slackness. Wherever masters find that whether the education they impart is of a high class or only second class, so far as they are concerned it is exactly the same, they will naturally take their ease, and will be bound to be more slovenly in their work than they would otherwise be. Not only then on account of the expenditure, but also on account of the natural easing off of the work, the present system is not the most desirable. There are those who have, as it were, vested

rights in connection with those
[4.30 p.m.] grammar schools—the subscribers—

but as the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba pointed out, those rights are largely covered by their present indebtedness. Without checking that statement to see whether it is accurate, I think we may take it to be so. The hon. member has given much attention to this matter, and we may dispose of the claims of subscribers by the fact stated by him—namely, that their present indebtedness covers their claims. I believe it would be possible for the State to devise a very much better scheme than the present one. It may be urged that the present time is inopportune, as we are about to found a university, and that in a few years we shall be much better able to provide local talent to oversee and inspect the grammar schools. But I think the matter has got to such a stage that it is very desirable that before long something should be done. At the present time the State is educating some 200 of its brightest boys at a cost of £65 apiece annually. That cost, I hold, is excessive, and I hope to be able to show before I sit down that at least double that number could be educated and at no greater cost. This is a matter to which I have paid considerable attention for many years. Two years ago I was in conference, or consultation, or talk with a master of the Toowoomba Grammar School—I think I am at liberty to mention his name—Mr. Allpass, and he told me that having carefully gone into the matter he believed that at no greater cost than the present a very much larger number of the best and brightest of our students could be educated. In his letter to me he points out that country grammar schools are receiving our endowment of £1,000, with fees for scholarship pupils amounting to about £200. He leaves out of account the Brisbane Grammar School, which stands on a somewhat different basis, owing to the number of pupils, and to the fact that it is in keen competition with private institutions which are able, by the first-class education they supply, to compete with this State-subsidised institution in Brisbane. With country grammar schools the position is somewhat different. For this £1,200 which the State supplies, some ten or twelve pupils are educated at an average cost of from £100 to £120 a year each. I may say he also pointed out to me that there were from twenty-five to thirty other pupils whom it was not desirable that the State should assist in their secondary education, because they came to the grammar schools without even having received a primary education. His scheme for reconstruction or reformation was that the State should give a secondary education to those boys who were fairly capable of receiving it; and that the grammar schools, to do that, should be worked entirely under the control of the Education Department; and that the boys of the fifth and sixth classes of the State schools who are of more than average ability should be drafted into the grammar schools for a four years' course. That would probably provide a school with 100 boys. Then he goes into the cost of the staff, and he assures me that at the present sum, with an allowance for expenses

bringing it up to £1,400, instead of educating ten or twelve boys at a cost to the country of £100 each, 100 or 120 boys could be educated. He goes on to show that the whole scheme would provide an addition for the educational facilities of the colony at no extra cost, by giving secondary education to about 600 boys. I said in my opening remarks that it would about double the number of scholars who would be assisted by the State. As a matter of fact it would really educate about six times as many—that is, leaving out the Brisbane Grammar School. He also says that such a scheme would offer openings for the brightest of the State school teachers, and that it would relieve many of the State schools of their pupils in the higher classes. It is within the knowledge of those who live in the larger country towns that many of the State schools have, in their higher classes, boys who have got a grammar school scholarship and could not take advantage of it, or perhaps boys who hoped to get one, but could not afford to go up for it; and this scheme would to a large extent relieve those schools of their congestion in the higher classes. It is to the credit of a great number of parents in this colony that they are anxious to give their boys the best education available, and that they keep them at the State schools after they are really doing effective work and getting effective education. That is the scheme as submitted to me some two years ago, and it seems to me that there is very much to recommend it. Of course there are weak points in it, as there are weak points in every scheme. One weak point has already been disposed of by the hon. member. Another is that it does not supply grammar schools all over the colony. There are many towns in the colony the residents of which will not find any relief from this, because if they desire to enable their sixth class pupils to take advantage of the grammar schools they would have to find board for them in the towns where those grammar schools are. I admit that that is a very serious objection; but it is an objection that ought not to be allowed to weigh where so much benefit would be afforded to the educational facilities of the country, which would be very largely increased by the adoption of some such system as this. I believe the House is very generally of opinion that it would be wise to increase the facilities for secondary education. I may say I know that is the case, because the motion hammered through the House by the hon. member for Musgrave was to the effect "that the facilities for secondary education in the colony should be increased;" and his motion has been so far carried into effect. I say again that I sympathise entirely with the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba in this motion, and if he is of the same opinion as the wording of the resolution leads us to believe, I say the whole House ought to support him. There is a second clause in his resolution, and I do not know exactly what it means—

That an address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause the necessary action to be taken to give effect to the foregoing resolution.

I think it might be as well to leave that out. If the House are agreed on the matter whatever Government occupies these benches will introduce the measure on the very first opportunity, and an address to the Governor will not in any way hasten it, and the action, as far as I can see, cannot possibly be taken this session for many reasons—one being the state of public business, and another that an important change like this cannot be entered on without very wide consultation. People interested in the question, and people with special knowledge, would have to be seen; a mere rough scheme, such as I have outlined as coming from one of the masters

of the Toowoomba Grammar School, does not provide a final solution. The details would have to be worked out, and it would probably take many months before they could be settled. I think it would be a wise thing if we omitted the second paragraph, while I am willing to accept the first with very much pleasure.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*): The Secretary for Agriculture said he was sorry that there did not seem to be more interest taken in the debate, but I think the reason why there is so little interest taken in it is simply because members on this side, I fancy, thought the Government would allow the motion to go on the voices, particularly after the remarks which the Premier made to a deputation that waited upon him some time ago in reference to the Brisbane Girls' Grammar School. The Premier then expressed himself as being very favourable, I think, to the idea of placing the grammar schools under the control of the Minister for Education, though I admit that the Premier pointed out that the matter was not quite such a simple affair as appeared on the face of it on account of the vested interests that had accrued. We recognise these difficulties, and I think that the fact of recognising these difficulties is an answer to the criticism of the hon. member's colleague, the Secretary for Lands, who advised the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, to introduce a Bill instead of a motion. The speech of the hon. member who has just spoke was sympathetic, but I cannot say the same of the hon. member's colleague, the Secretary for Lands, who devoted a good deal of his speech to criticising what I may call the political action of the hon. member for Toowoomba—he seemed to drag in personalities that might very well have been left alone. It seemed to me that the object of the Secretary for Lands was to damage the hon. member for Toowoomba in the eyes of his constituents. Personally, I think the hon. member for Toowoomba did the right thing in introducing this question by way of motion, because we have had so much experience of the difficulties of any private member getting a Bill through this House, but we know he has a chance of getting a motion approved by Parliament. Besides that, a question of this sort is not at all suitable, in my opinion, for a private member to take in charge by way of a Bill; it is too difficult a matter. It is a matter for the Government, and not for a private member, to introduce any Bill transferring the grammar schools from the control of trustees to the Government. I have not risen to speak at any length; I only rose to express sympathy on my part, and I think I may say the same of hon. members on this side.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. JACKSON: I think I may express their sympathy with the efforts of the hon. member for Toowoomba in the direction of placing these grammar schools under the control of the Government, and in advancing the cause of secondary education. We not only believe in doing what we can for primary education, but we also believe in assisting secondary education to the utmost of our power. I think, after the remarks of the Secretary for Agriculture, there really is not very much need to debate the matter very much further, because after the sympathetic tone in which he spoke, though he spoke as a private member, I assume that there will be no difficulty in carrying this motion this afternoon.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): I have only a few words to say on this question. I do not think it would be very wise for the State to interfere with these schools, which are proprietary schools subsidised by the State.

They are really owned by the subscribers, but the State has been very liberal in subsidising them, and, though I must confess that I do not think they have been altogether the success which most people say they have been, I do not think it would be a good thing for them to be taken over by the State. If we are going to take them over we shall first have to compensate the subscribers, and some of those schools are in debt. I think it would be better to have an amendment to the present Bill authorising the Government to appoint an inspector for these schools—not an occasional inspector, but a permanent inspector, the same as we have for our State schools. I believe that would add very much to the usefulness of our grammar schools, but I think it would be a mistake for the State to come in now and take over those schools. It would cost a great deal of money, and I question whether the State could efficiently manage the schools so much better than they are managed now. With a thorough system of inspection I think the schools could be—

Mr. JACKSON: You would still have a body of men like the trustees to supervise them.

The TREASURER: Why should we have these schools in the hands of the State providing free education?

Mr. JACKSON: That is what I want, anyhow.

The TREASURER: It would stop the payment of fees whereas the parents of the bulk of the boys who attend are able to pay and ought to pay the fees. If we have free grammar schools, by-and-by we shall want a free university. I think that would be a great mistake, because to my mind we have as many lawyers and doctors as we are likely to want for some time to come.

Mr. JACKSON: They would have to pass an examination to get there even if it were free, and only the best boys would pass.

The TREASURER: If you had free grammar schools every boy could get there over a certain age.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why not?

The TREASURER: I do not think they should get there without some qualification. At present the best boys in the colony, if they pass a certain examination, can get in without fee.

Mr. McDONNELL: Only State school boys, though.

The TREASURER: Or any other schools inspected by a State inspector. I think we went pretty far the other night when we passed a resolution in favour of the State establishing schools of mines—a very desirable thing to do; but if we go on at this rate we shall find ourselves in the same position as Victoria was in five or six years ago.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: There are no grammar schools in Victoria.

The TREASURER: But they have a lot of higher education in that colony; and at the time of which I speak they were spending £800,000 a year on education, and they cut the amount down in one year by £250,000. If we go on like this we shall come to the same position, because we are not always going to have a big surplus in the Treasury, and I think we should go on gradually. I think that if we get our grammar schools thoroughly inspected we shall be doing good work. There are lots of boys going to our grammar schools whose parents can afford to pay for their education, and why should they not pay? We know that a section of the community pay for the cost of educating their own children, besides paying a share of the cost of the education in the State schools as well. I do not think it is fair.

Mr. JENKINSON: They need not pay it unless they like.

Mr. JACKSON: This will not involve free education in the grammar schools.

The TREASURER: It will come to that. If the State takes over the entire charge of the grammar schools this year, you will find that next year there will be a motion introduced in this House that the education in those schools shall be free. I am quite certain of that. I think that the parents of three-fourths of the children in the grammar schools can afford to pay for their education; and as for the other fourth, the State is now paying for their education. Clever lads pass from the State schools to the grammar schools.

Mr. JACKSON: Tax the rich people another way.

The TREASURER: We may do; but I think this is a fair way of taxing them—making them pay for the higher education of their children. I shall oppose the motion as it stands; but if it is altered to provide that a Bill be introduced to amend the Act so as to ensure the thorough inspection of grammar schools, I shall support it.

Mr. O'CONNELL (*Musgrave*): I should like to say a few words on this question, which I take considerable interest in. I think the last speaker failed to see that if we are going to have a thorough inspection of these schools they must be under State control, or the result will be, when the inspector's report comes in, and he says, "This school is not being worked properly," the trustees will say, "This is a proprietary school. You can put the report where you like. We do not recognise him and are not going to recognise his suggestions." There can be no doubt about it that there is a necessity for inspection. Not only here, but in England, there is a movement for the inspection of secondary schools, and I believe it must come here if the grammar schools are going to be worked properly. But if the inspection is carried out, it is absolutely necessary that some authority should be vested in the State to enable the Department of Instruction to enforce the recommendations of the inspector. The inspector would have to be very highly paid, and a very efficient man. It has been said it is probably doubtful if any one man would be capable of dealing with all the subjects. However, that is a matter of detail. To my mind, the real necessity is that the inspector should have the power, if he sees the schools are not doing their work satisfactorily, of altering the way they are being worked. I should like to say one word about the value of education. I was reading a book on the subject the other day, and it was put this way: That everybody thinks it is very desirable that his own children should be as well educated as he possibly can, but never thinks of the value it is to the nation that the children of everybody should be educated. But it is as much value to him, as a citizen of Queensland or a citizen of Australia; not only that his own children should be well educated, but that the children of everyone in the colony, or in the country, should have as good an education as possible, so as to fit them for the life in which they may have to earn their living and contribute as much intelligence as it is possible to contribute towards the whole work of the colony or the federated States of Australia or any other portion of the British Empire. I believe there is no money we can reasonably be expected to vote that can be better spent than in providing our young people with the intelligence which will fit them to meet the competition which is going on all over the world in business—in Germany, in the United States, and all the countries of the world that are going ahead in business. The aim of the Government should be to increase the intelligence of its people. I am perfectly satisfied that the motion

is a desirable one, and that the State should have some control, and its first aim should be the inspection of the grammar schools.

Mr. GROOM (*Drayton and Toowoomba*), in reply: If anything justifies the motion which I have before the House it is the fact that from all parts of the colony I have received letters thanking me for introducing this motion; making various suggestions, some particularly in the direction that the hon. member for Musgrave has mentioned; and pointing out that large sums of money are now being spent on the grammar schools without any practical effect whatever. I am not going to follow what I may call the personal attack made upon myself by the Secretary for Lands. Why or wherefore it was made, I am sure I do not know. I never alluded to the hon. gentleman in the course of my speech. I took what I conceived to be broad grounds in dealing with a great public question, and I expected the hon. gentleman would have replied in a similar strain, and why or wherefore he should choose to go out of his way to make an attack on me in connection with a matter of this kind, I cannot for the life of me understand; nor do I think it is calculated to enhance his own reputation or the reputation of those with whom he is associated. To drag in the *Toowoomba Chronicle* into a public discussion in this Chamber I cannot understand what it means. I have said before, and I say again, that I am only a sleeping partner in the *Chronicle*, and my partners conduct their business in the way they think best in their own interests. I object strongly to my private affairs being dragged into a discussion in this House. I never drag in other people's private affairs or ever say a word by way of personal attack on a member with a view of damaging him in the eyes of his constituents—not that I think that what the hon. gentleman has said can possibly damage me in the eyes of my constituents, because they do not care three straws what the hon. gentleman may say. Therefore I shall not refer to what the hon. gentleman said except on matters in connection with this motion. I think I made it as clear as possible, when I brought in the motion, that my object was to achieve three things: The first was a thorough inspection of the grammar schools, and I think that is admitted on all sides. Secondly, a better arrangement of the distribution of the endowment. I think I pointed out that we were paying £10,000 a year to the grammar schools.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is quite different to bringing them under the Department of Instruction.

Mr. GROOM: Yes; but will the hon. gentleman pardon me for saying that if the grammar schools were under the control of the State and a responsible Minister of the Crown, and such a state of things as I pointed out existed—that the Brisbane Grammar School, with 240 scholars, was only getting £1,000 a year, and another school, with only thirty-five scholars, was receiving a similar sum—he would naturally inquire what was the cause. I pointed that out as one reason why these schools should be under State control.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And part of our educational system.

Mr. GROOM: That is why I say the educational system requires amendment. The Grammar Schools Act was passed in 1862, and surely our laws are not like the laws of the Medes and Persians? Surely we are not going to say that our laws are never to be amended—that once we pass a law there it is to be for ever? The circumstances of the colony have altered entirely since the Act was passed, and it is necessary now we should direct our attention to the present condition of the educational question. I will emphasise what I said by pointing out that when the framers of our present educational system brought in his Bill in

1875, he had made strict provision for doing what I now ask the Chamber to approve as necessary to be done in 1899. Although the Treasurer objects to free education, I may state it was part of Sir S. W. Griffith's scheme in 1875 that the brighter boys should be sent to the grammar schools and educated free.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: So they are now.

Mr. GROOM: I know they are. You have got to pay fees for them. Under his system there would be no fees paid by the Government.

At the time the Grammar Schools [5 p.m.] Acts of 1862 and 1863 were passed it was never suggested for a moment that in addition to the subsidy of £1,000 a year to each school they should receive further subsidies in the shape of scholarships of the value of £60 a year each. That was never contemplated, and it is very well known that had it not been for the State school scholarships some of the grammar schools would not have been able to carry on a few years ago. I know that in some instances the trustees had to go to the bank and give their bond for an overdraft in order to get funds to carry on the schools. Inspection of the schools would reveal such a condition of affairs, which is not at all satisfactory. The third proposition I made was that, as the original subscribers to grammar schools have disappeared in many instances owing to the long lapse of time, it is necessary that we should enlarge the electoral body. I know, of my own knowledge, where five or six subscribers meet to elect the trustees, and elect three of their number as trustees for the current year; in point of fact they elect themselves to that office. Those are the three propositions I put forward:—First, that there should be inspection; second, there should be a more equitable distribution of the endowment paid to grammar schools; and third, that the body electing the trustees should be enlarged. If those three propositions are assented to by the House, and are afterwards embodied in a Bill they will effect a considerable improvement in the management of our grammar schools. The Secretary for Lands asked why did I not bring in a Bill. The hon. member should know, if he does not know, that it is not the province of a private member to bring in a Bill dealing with a question of State policy. That is the province of the Crown itself. A Bill involving such a change in the Grammar Schools Acts as this motion proposes should not be introduced by a private member, but should be brought forward by the Government. If I or any other private member introduced such a Bill it would be said that the member undertaking that task was assuming the leadership of the House, and trying to take it out of the hands of the Government. The duty of a private member in a matter of this kind is to submit a motion drawing the attention of Ministers to the subject with a view to their introducing a Bill founded on the resolution in the ordinary way. I am very glad to have received on this occasion the support of the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Chataway, and I think the scheme he has foreshadowed, as supplied to him by a second master in one of the grammar schools, is one that may hereafter be embodied in our educational system. At all events, the scheme suggested by the hon. gentleman is one that deserves very serious consideration; we may well consider whether our grammar schools cannot be improved in the direction indicated. In many of the letters I have received—particularly from around the neighbourhood of Brisbane—the writers have affirmed that in their opinion the colony is not receiving adequate benefit for the £10,000 annually spent on grammar schools, and that there is

room for very considerable improvement in that respect. If that is the general opinion, then it is the duty of this House to consider whether the time has not arrived, or is not near at hand, when the grammar schools of the colony should not be placed on a more satisfactory footing. I was very pleased with the answer given by the Premier the other day to an influential deputation of citizens of Brisbane, who asked that the Grammar Schools Act should be amended; and I confess that, in view of that reply, I was quite taken aback by the extraordinary attitude assumed by the Secretary for Lands. The Premier told the deputation that he was in entire sympathy with their object, but said that the state of public business would not allow the Government to deal with the matter this session. I am much obliged to hon. members for the sympathetic way in which they have received this motion. It is satisfactory to know that public opinion outside is with me, and when I find that the opinion of the majority of members in this Chamber is also with me, I have reason to be satisfied with my action in bringing forward this motion. If it is the wish of the House to deal only with the first part of the motion I am quite prepared to omit the latter part, and I now ask the permission of the House to omit the second paragraph.

The SPEAKER: The motion has already been moved in its original form, and any proposal to omit the second paragraph should come in the form of an amendment.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I move the omission of the second paragraph of the motion.

Amendment agreed to; and motion, as amended, put and passed.

UNIVERSITY BILL. COMMITTEE.

Question—That all the words after line 43, clause 16, "Powers of the senate," be omitted with a view of inserting "the senate shall have power to appoint and dismiss all professors, lecturers, examiners, officers, and servants of the said university, and shall have the entire management and superintendence of the affairs, concerns, and property thereof, subject to the statutes and regulations of the university."

* The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS argued that portion of the amendment of the leader of the Opposition really corresponded very closely to the Bill as it stood, but it was intended to be followed by-and-by with another amendment the object of which was to give the senate power to make regulations, but not without being ratified by the council. By-and-by he should be prepared to ask the leader of the Opposition to consent to the introduction of an amendment which he thought would carry out his object, and meet the objection which he had to the Bill as it stood. What he would propose would be to substitute for the amendment which the leader of the Opposition proposed one which would follow on the lines of a certain provision in an Act of Parliament which was passed in 1898—the Slaughtering Act—under which those who were administering the Act had power to make regulations, but that those regulations should be brought before Parliament within a certain time after they were made, and if either House of Parliament expressed an opinion one way or the other, those regulations should stand or fall. Each House would then have the power of reviewing what had been done.

Mr. GLASSEY: Or amending, as the case may be.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They had the power of veto under the Slaughtering Act. They could say that any portion or the whole of the regulations which had been

made should not stand. Of course if they expressed no opinion they would stand. With regard to something which had been said previously in the debate, with a view of maintaining the control of Parliament, the proposition was, and it was taken objection to by himself and others, that the regulations should be brought before Parliament, and that any member of either House should have power to prevent those regulations or statutes from becoming law. Now that was not the case in any legislation which Parliament might pass. It was not within the power of any one member to veto that which had been agreed to by the majority. The power was left in the hands of the majority, and if hon. members could see their way to accept his proposal the power would then be left where he ventured to say it ought to be left, in the hands of the majority of members. The dual authority of both Houses would then be asserted. If in either Chamber a majority was found to disapprove of any action taken by the senate, either Chamber would have power to declare that action null and void. That was the proposal which he would make.

Mr. GLASSEY: That would not interfere with this amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The amendment appeared to be unnecessary, because, except in its phraseology, it appeared to be identical with the provision in the Bill. It provided that the senate should have power to appoint lecturers and examiners, but he did not think the hon. gentleman had any wish to limit the authority of the senate, so that while they could appoint professors and examiners and lecturers they should not appoint deans, who really were officers of a similar character. They were the heads of the faculties. The senate was empowered to appoint professors, lecturers, examiners, and other officers and servants of the university, so that, as a matter of fact, it included deans under the heading of "other officers." He thought it had been left out entirely through inadvertence, otherwise it appeared to him to be practically the same as the hon. member's amendment. Both clauses gave the senate the entire management of and superintendence over the affairs and property of the university. It was quite true the leader of the Opposition proposed by-and-by to introduce a limitation, providing that the senate should have power to do certain things, but that the statutes which they enacted should not have full validity until they had been laid on the table of both Houses of Parliament, thus giving to either House an opportunity of giving effect to its dissent in regard to anything proposed by the senate. He did not see any important divergence between the clause of the Bill and the amendment which the hon. member proposed to introduce.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) was very pleased indeed that the Secretary for Lands, who had charge of the Bill, recognised the very great importance of the proposed amendment. He recognised that it was so serious that he proposed to achieve the same object in a different manner. But the hon. gentleman intended to do it by getting him to withdraw his amendment with a view to accepting the amendments that the hon. gentleman was getting printed at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is so—with the idea of carrying out the same object.

Mr. TURLEY: It is not the same object.

Mr. JACKSON: What does the Minister propose?

Mr. DAWSON: The Minister's proposal was that he recognised the importance of the object aimed at by his (Mr. Dawson's) amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS asked if he might be allowed to speak for one moment. With the permission of the leader of the Opposition, he desired to either read or hand to him the amendment which he suggested the hon. member should allow to be substituted for his own amendment. He also desired to explain that it was not his fault that hon. members had not been supplied with copies of his amendments. He had sent them to the Government Printing Office, desiring them to be ready by 7 o'clock, at which time he presumed the University Bill would come on. He did not foresee that the motion of the hon. member for Toowoomba would be so soon disposed of. In accordance with the promises which he had made last night, and with a view to seeing whether the objection which was taken to a portion of the Bill could be met, he had discussed the matter with the Government draftsman, and he had sent amendments which he (Mr. Dalrymple) thought would meet the wishes of the Committee to the Government Printing Office, but the printing office had not had time to print them. Would he read the proposed amendment?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Read it, please.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The amendment was as follows. On page 7, clause 26, omit sub-clause 2, on lines 29 and 30, and insert—

Every statute, upon being so approved and signed by the Governor, and upon being published in the *Gazette*, shall have the force of law; and copies of such statute shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament forthwith, if then sitting, and if not then sitting within fourteen days after the commencement of the next ensuing session:

Provided that if either House of Parliament, within the thirty days next after any such statute has been so laid before such House, resolves that such statute, or any provision thereof, ought to be annulled, such statute or provision thereof shall, after the date of such resolution, be of no effect, without prejudice to the validity of anything done in the meantime under such statute or provision thereof, or to the making of any new statute.

He had just received a message from the Government Printing Office saying that some amendments would be sent to the Chamber within ten minutes, but he could not guarantee that they were the amendments he had sent there. They might be amendments that had been sent by some other hon. member.

Mr. DENSFORD: Why not postpone the consideration of this clause?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We can go on with this.

Mr. DAWSON was not at all prepared to accept the hon. gentleman's amendment in substitution for his own, because it would be a most difficult thing to understand exactly how the amendment which the hon. gentleman had read would fit in with the idea he was driving at with his amendment. It would be utterly impossible for hon. members to really understand the position until they had the hon. gentleman's amendment in print, and had, at any rate, a reasonable amount of time—say an hour—to see how it would agree with the rest of the Bill. He did not think there was any hon. member in that Chamber smart enough to listen to the reading of the amendment, or even to read it, and then in an off-hand manner, on the spur of the moment, know exactly what it meant, and what its effect would be. At any rate, he was not one of those, and he was not prepared to withdraw his amendment with a view to inserting that which was proposed by the Secretary for Lands in clause 26, as a substitute. He would much prefer to wait until he received a printed copy of the hon. gentleman's amendment, and had sufficient time to compare it with the other clauses of the Bill. He certainly thought it was the duty of every member of the Chamber—and more particularly

of Ministers—that when they were going to move any amendments, that they should get their amendments printed and circulated in order that hon. members might have sufficient time to know what the amendment meant.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: That applies to both sides.

Mr. DAWSON: Of course it applied to both sides, but he had not taken any hon. [5.30 p.m.] member by surprise by his amendment, because he took the precaution to get it printed and circulated amongst hon. members.

Mr. JACKSON: The Minister has given an explanation of that.

Mr. DAWSON: There was one parliamentary practice which might be followed on this occasion, and that was to adjourn the clause until a later period. That had been done on more than one occasion under similar circumstances.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS proposed that the clause be postponed until after clause 18. He had been taken by surprise, because it could not have been anticipated that the motion of the hon. member for Toowoomba would have been disposed of so speedily.

Mr. GLASSEY: What was the use of postponing the clause, seeing that any alteration in this clause might materially affect other clauses? He suggested that the whole Bill be postponed until a future time, and let the Committee proceed with Supply. In that way no time would be lost, and that course would be in the interests of the Minister and of the House. He thought very few people outside were satisfied with the Bill as it stood, and hon. members were only asking that they should have more time to consider the matter. Outside it had been suggested that public meetings should be held to consider the details of the measure before it was passed, and a matter which was of such great importance to many sections of the community should not be rushed through.

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*) thought he quite understood the amendment of the Minister. Under clause 16, as it stood, the council had no power to veto any regulations or statutes that the senate might make. The leader of the Opposition proposed to give this power of veto to the council over the senate. There was one power of veto given to the Governor in Council in clause 26, but the hon. member did not think that was satisfactory; he wished to give the council a say in the management of the university. Seeing that the Government refused to give Parliament power to nominate the senate, it was very singular to see the Minister coming forward and giving Parliament the power of veto over the small matters mentioned in clause 25. In that section there were eighteen subsections, dealing with matters that the senate could deal with, and it was now proposed to give Parliament the right of veto over those innumerable trifling matters. In fact, the amendment proposed was a ridiculous one—absolutely absurd. The amendment simply provided that any statutes that the senate passed should be laid on the table of the House, and if Parliament did not disapprove of them they should have the force of law. That would give Parliament a veto, in addition to the veto given to the Governor in Council in clause 26. If the Minister was prepared to omit clause 26, that would not affect the matter one bit. The amendment proposed by the Minister desired to give members of Parliament the power of veto over regulations which they probably would not understand. They were matters for experts to deal with, and as the council would be composed of experts they would be able to criticise any statutes or regulations the senate might pass.

He was quite satisfied to leave the matter over until hon. members had the printed amendment before them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Seeing that hon. members wished this matter postponed, until hon. members got the printed amendment, he asked leave to withdraw his motion postponing the consideration of the clause, that he might substitute for it the motion that the Chairman leave the chair.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

CHIEF SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

The PREMIER moved that £2,285 be granted for the Chief Secretary's Department. There was an increase of £255 proposed in salaries, and he felt justified in asserting that there were never increases more meritoriously deserved than those submitted in this vote. The first increase was that proposed for the Under Secretary for the department, and he was sure that hon. members on both sides who had had occasion to interview the Chief Secretary's Department in connection with the very many matters that occurred from time to time would recognise that the officer performing the duties of Under Secretary in that department was well entitled to be placed in the position of an officer in receipt of an adequate salary as one of the principal Under Secretaries.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The Under Secretary was not present, and he was pleased that he was not, as he could speak more strongly than he otherwise would. He thought he could speak for members of the Opposition as well as for members on his own side when he said that the gentleman who fulfilled the duties of Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary's Department was one of the ablest of their Under Secretaries, and should be a well-paid Under Secretary of the State. The increase proposed to the salary was £100, and the other Under Secretaries received the remuneration now proposed, at least. There was an increase of £30 proposed to Mr. Abell, who had been specially recommended for promotion to the 3rd class in the service by the Public Service Board in 1891, and it was only last year that the recommendation had been given effect to. There was an increase of £20 proposed to Mr. Kennedy; Mr. Agar, £15; Mr. Palmer, £10; and Mr. English, £10—from £70 to £80. He did not think anyone could object to a gentleman occupying an important position getting an increase from £70 to £80 a year. All those increases were proposed on the recommendation of the Public Service Board. There was an increase of £10 proposed to the assistant messenger, and provision was made for a probationer at £60 a year. That made a total increase of £255 in the vote, which he confidently asked the Committee to sanction.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) was pleased to know that the Government found themselves in such a sound financial position that they were able to increase the salaries of the Civil servants. He hoped that at the end of the Transvaal war they would still be in that happy position. He agreed with everything the Premier had said about the capabilities of the Under Secretary.

There could be no doubt at all that he was an efficient officer, and he supposed he was one of the most obliging men in the service.

The PREMIER: Not only obliging but efficient.

Mr. DAWSON: He had said so. Those who had had occasion to come in contact with Mr. Dutton must necessarily pay him that tribute. He deserved it. But he had an objection to the principle of increases. They were now in a prosperous year, and could afford to pay decent salaries to their public men, who did their work for them efficiently, but he would sooner see a different principle adopted. Instead of increasing the salaries of those who were well paid at the present time it would be better to spend all the surplus cash they had in increasing the pay of those who were ill-paid at the present time.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: There were a very great many of them in the lower branches of the service. The wave of generosity at present passing over the colony would result, he was inclined to think, in disaster later on, and they would have a period of depression when they would have to use the pruning knife on the salaries of Civil servants, and the man who now got an increase to £160 from £150 would be the very first man who would then have his salary docked, while the men getting many hundreds a year would be carefully left alone, and Minister after Minister would get up to give reasons why the highly paid men should not suffer a reduction.

Mr. FORSYTH: I think they should suffer a reduction all the same.

Mr. DAWSON: They did not. They had had the experience before, and that was why he said that, before they increased the salaries of well-paid officers, they should recognise the just dues of those who were ill-paid at the present time.

The PREMIER: That is what we are endeavouring to do.

Mr. DAWSON objected to the way in which it was being done; which was by increasing the salaries of well-paid men, and then, if there was any balance left, distributing that balance amongst the numerous people who were not well paid in the service. The principle should be reversed. The salaries of the ill-paid men should be increased, and then, if there was any balance left, let it go towards increasing the salaries of the highly-paid Civil servants.

Mr. GIVENS: Why not devote it to relieving the burdens on the taxpayer?

Mr. DAWSON: He was saying if there was any balance available for that particular purpose. Any stranger to Queensland looking over the Estimates would imagine that the colony was in a very prosperous condition, and could afford to increase salaries all round. But there were much better ways of spending a surplus than increasing the salaries of highly-paid Civil servants. There were many old pioneers, who had opened up and developed the country and made Queensland what it was, who, in the sunset of their lives, when they were absolutely unable to work, were grudging the miserable pittance of 5s. a week in order to get "tucker" enough to sustain life. When a battered old wreck, who had spent all his energies in the development of the country, made an application for that miserable pittance to keep body and soul together, it took about three months to get it through.

The PREMIER: It is never refused if it is a genuine case.

Mr. DAWSON: He was glad the hon. gentleman had made that interjection, because it enabled him to state that the very day after they passed, in a light and airy fashion, £32,000 to send the contingent to South Africa, to be followed by £1,500 a month afterwards, an old Northern digger, who had spent thirty years of

his life in prospecting North Queensland, and was beyond work, came to him and asked him if he could get him such assistance from the Government as would ensure that he would have enough to eat for the rest of his life. The man's name was McKrae, and he was feeble and blind.

Mr. GIVENS: Blind through an accident.

Mr. DAWSON: Even though he happened to occupy the position of leader of that party, which was supposed to be a position of some influence, it took him about seven interviews before he could get that old pioneer that small pittance.

The PREMIER: There are certain forms to be gone through. The grant cannot be made on a mere application. The circumstances have to be inquired into.

Mr. DAWSON: That was the kind of contract he wanted to call attention to. While spending the taxpayers' money freely in sending a contingent of troops to South Africa for a purpose not very creditable to the colony, the Government could barely be induced to give the colony's crippled soldiers of industry money to buy sufficient food to sustain life. He objected to spending any of the surplus cash they had in increasing the salaries of highly-paid Civil servants.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, *Carnarvon*): The hon. member had very little cause of complaint with regard to the case of John McKrae.

Mr. GLASSEY: There will be many causes of complaint as long as you are at the head of the department. A more inhuman person than you I have not met.

The HOME SECRETARY did not know whether the hon. member was in order in making that remark.

Mr. GLASSEY: You are utterly unfit for the position.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member ought not to interrupt.

The HOME SECRETARY: He understood that the hon. member, who had just interjected in a most disorderly way, had promised, because he prevented him last night from committing a breach of the rules of the House, that he (the Home Secretary) should have a very rough time when his Estimates came on.

Mr. GLASSEY: He has a lot of things in store for you besides your Estimates.

The HOME SECRETARY said he was quite prepared to meet the hon. member whenever he chose to attack him. He was saying that the senior member for Charters Towers had very little to complain of with regard to John McKrae. The hon. member, he understood, made an application for 5s. a week in the usual way, and it went for inquiry in the usual way. That sub-department of the Home Secretary's Department had to ensure that there should be no imposition, and because the hon. member happened to recommend John McKrae, that was no reason whatever why the usual inquiries should not be made—inquiries which he should insist upon even if one of his own colleagues made the recommendation. In this particular the hon. member for Charters

Towers wanted to know what was [7 p.m.] to become of this old man while inquiries were being made, and he (the Home Secretary) wrote directions for the immigration agent to supply him with rations till the case could be dealt with. Where the immigration agent was satisfied that a man was in destitute circumstances he believed that without any inquiry at all, further than seeing that the man appeared to be destitute, he gave him shelter and also rations. In this case, without a moment's hesitation, he (Mr. Foxton) wrote out the order, and handed it to the hon. member

himself. He presumed that it was taken by the man to the depôt, but he understood from something the hon. member had said that there was some difficulty. He would be glad to know the particulars, though it was scarcely necessary to bring up cases of that sort in the Committee. If any officer refused to deal with an order so given he would be severely dealt with unless he could give a satisfactory explanation; but in this particular instance he did not think there was anything to complain about.

Mr. DAWSON said he only brought forward the case of John McRae to show that while the Government looked upon the expenditure in connection with sending troops to the Transvaal as a mere fleabite, they apparently begrudged a few miserable shillings to a man who had spent the best years of his life in helping to develop the colony. Other cases could be quoted, but that case happened to come up immediately after it had been decided to spend such a large sum of money for the purpose of sending the troops to the Transvaal. And he would like to point out that the case of John McRae had not been fully stated by the hon. gentleman.

The HOME SECRETARY: I stated all I knew.

The PREMIER: I object to charitable allowances being discussed on this vote. The vote for charitable allowances is not in this department at all.

Mr. DAWSON: This was the first vote of the department, and he was challenging the Government system of expenditure on the first vote. That had been the recognised rule, but if the Home Secretary objected to the true facts of the case—

The HOME SECRETARY: Why say that? I did not object. That is a most unfair way of putting it.

Mr. DAWSON: Perhaps it was, but he was simply stating the facts. He wanted hon. members to understand the system adopted by the Government in handling public moneys, and he was dealing with the question on the first vote in this department. It was proposed to give an increase to a highly-paid servant; and he objected to the system under which the Government spent public money on those who might, to some extent, be entitled to it, but not so much so as the case of the man John McRae was entitled to consideration.

The TREASURER: Why do you mention the man's name here?

Mr. DAWSON: If he did not he would probably be challenged to state a case, and he mentioned the name so that the hon. gentleman in charge of the department might know the particular case to which he referred. If the Premier insisted upon his objection he would not be able to proceed, but he would take the opportunity later on of stating exactly how long it took, and what a roundabout method had to be adopted, even when the Minister was really favourable to giving this man relief, before he could get it—a miserable 5s. a week.

The PREMIER said it was the duty of the leader of the Opposition, equally with himself, to maintain the propriety of debate, and therefore the hon. gentleman should not take umbrage at him for pointing out that the incident to which he referred was entirely out of place under this vote. The hon. gentleman knew as well as he did that any question in connection with charitable allowances should be brought forward when the vote for charitable allowances came before the Committee. If they did not confine the discussion to the subjects specially under review, they would not get through the Estimates in the next twelve months; therefore he took it upon himself to request the hon. gentleman not to speak on the matter further under this vote. Although, as he had said, the question of

charitable allowances did not come under this vote, he might say that he did not believe there was any colony in the Australasian group where relief was more readily and immediately administered to cases of distress than in Queensland. It was *ultra vires* to discuss this question; but it was due to the colony and the administration of the colony to say that he believed that no other country afforded relief more readily, spontaneously, and fully to cases of deserving distress than this. He could not, however, discuss the question raised by the hon. member, as it had no connection with the subject under consideration.

* HON. G. THORN (*Fassifern*) wondered the Chairman had not pulled up the leader of the Opposition and the Premier for discussing the question of charitable allowances, which came under the Home Secretary's Department, not the Chief Secretary's, and had no right to be discussed now; and he hoped that in future the Chairman would do his duty. He did not object to the increase. He believed Mr. Dutton was a very efficient officer; but there were other under secretaries who had been much longer in the service than Mr. Dutton, and they were not getting the salary that gentleman was receiving. He had always contended that the salaries of the under secretaries ought to be assimilated, but the Under Secretary for Works, Mr. Robertson, had been in the service for twenty-five or thirty years to his knowledge, and he did not receive the same salary as Mr. Dutton.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member reminded me that I have been rather lax. I hope he will keep to the question before the Committee.

HON. G. THORN: In his opinion the Home Secretary's Department and the Chief Secretary's Department should be under one officer. One man could do all the work of the two, and it was a great mistake to have them separate. They used to be under one head, and when retrenchment came they would have to be so again. To have them under two meant a multiplication of offices. If the increases were wanted he should be the last to object; but he contended the public service could be well worked with the number of officers there were in it at present without bringing in fresh ones. He should like to know how many years Mr. Dutton had been in the public service. He believed he was a first-class man. He started as private secretary to Sir Thomas McIlwraith.

The HOME SECRETARY: Before that.

HON. G. THORN: He started as private secretary, and now he was Principal Under Secretary. He did think he should be called Principal Under Secretary. In the other colonies the officer holding the position that Mr. Dutton held was called Principal Under Secretary. Mr. Ryder had always performed his duties most satisfactorily, and he trusted that the Chief Secretary would see that the under secretaries, or permanent heads of departments, as they were called, were put on the same footing, and received like salaries, and not have one getting £300 and another £650. They ought to be on one level. The hardest-worked under secretary was the Under Secretary to the Post Office. He had to work after hours very often. The reason he had been sat on was because the Postmaster-Generalship was held by a Minister who sat in the other House.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) did not agree with the hon. gentleman who had just sat down that the under secretaries should be paid the same salary. The hon. gentleman had referred to the Under Secretary for Works, and when the Estimates for that department came on he would have something to say about that. The hon. gentleman also said that the work done by

the Home Secretary's Department and the Chief Secretary's Department could be done by one man, but the only man who could do it was the hon. member for Fassifern. (Laughter.) He believed the hon. gentleman could do it without any trouble or bother at all. As far as the Under Secretary to the Home Secretary's Department was concerned, he was a man members all knew well.

The CHAIRMAN: The vote for Mr. Ryder's salary is not now before us.

Mr. PETRIE: He was aware of that; he was only referring to it by the way. The Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary was a man who worked very hard. He did not think the Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary was overpaid. He regarded him as underpaid, and he was very glad to see that the Government had been so good as to place an extra amount of money on the Estimates for him. He believed he was as good an under secretary as there had ever been in the service. He worked both early and late, and had a lot of responsibility on his shoulders, and he was well worthy of the increase.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) was somewhat startled in going through the Estimates to see the enormous amount put down for increases to the salaries of various officers, and he should like to know if that increase to the Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary's Department had been made on the recommendation of the Public Service Board, or at the instigation of the Public Service Board. He intended to ask each Minister a similar question as his Estimates came before the Committee.

The PREMIER: So far as he knew, the Government in proposing increases had in all cases been guided by the recommendations of the Public Service Board. In some cases they had confined themselves to the recommendations of the board, though they were of opinion that the officers concerned deserved larger remuneration. With regard to the increase to the Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary's Department, he had taken it upon himself, from his knowledge of the excellent service performed by that officer, to recommend the increase proposed on the Estimates, but all the other increases on the Estimates were certainly recommended by the Public Service Board. If that was not the case, his colleagues would be able, when their Estimates came on, to point out any cases in which they had taken it upon themselves to recommend increases, but so far as the Estimates for the Chief Secretary's Department were concerned, all the increases, with the exception of that to the Under Secretary, were recommended by the Public Service Board.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) wished to say that he agreed with the Chief Secretary that they should conduct their business in an orderly way and assist to get the Estimates through, and that up to the present he had done his level best to assist the hon. gentleman to forward the despatch of business. But the question he had raised that afternoon was a perfectly legitimate one to raise on the first item of the vote—namely, whether the Government were disbursing the public money in a fair manner, or whether a better system could be devised. The case of John McRae he merely cited in support of his contention on that matter. The Estimates showed that the prosperity of the colony was recognised in increasing the salaries of well-paid Civil servants, and he contended that instead of that being done the Government should have afforded facilities for relieving the distress of old colonists who had spent the best years of their lives in opening up and developing the country, and who were now too old and feeble to earn their own livelihood. If there was a

capable, efficient officer in the public service who was entitled to an increase of £100 it was Mr. Dutton. He deserved that increase as well as any officer in the service, but he thought that £100 would be better spent in doing something for old colonists which would enable them to live in reasonable comfort during the remaining few months of their lives. However, he would not pursue that matter any further on the present vote, though he would certainly do so on the next vote.

The PREMIER was quite certain that if the amount of work done by the Chief Secretary's Department were done by any private institution it would never be managed for £2,200 a year, and he was convinced that if a gentleman of the ability of the Under Secretary were placed at the head of any commercial or financial business in the city he would get double the salary he was paid at the present time.

Mr. LEAHY: He would get more, but not double.

The PREMIER: Would even the branch manager of a bank be satisfied with £700 per annum? Considering the diplomatic and important business transacted by the Chief Secretary's Department, the country might well be congratulated on having the department conducted by such an efficient officer.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Grimes, *Ozley*): I cannot say that the hon. member for Charters Towers is altogether out of order in referring to the case he has mentioned in a casual manner by way of contrast, but I do think it would be out of order to pursue a debate on the matter in such a way as to make an attack and provoke a reply from the Chief Secretary as head of the department.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): The Chief Secretary stated a minute ago that that increase had not been recommended by the Public Service Board, but that he had taken upon himself to recommend it.

The PREMIER: The Government have taken it upon themselves to recommend it.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. gentleman said he had recommended it himself, in the same way as other Ministers had recommended increases to their Under Secretaries. He could understand the hon. gentleman submitting, and even recommending, the increase to the Public Service Board, but the recommendation for an increase like that should come from the board.

The PREMIER: I may say they approved.

Mr. McDONALD: That was an afterthought. The hon. gentleman said a few minutes ago that that was one of the rare exceptions in which the Minister took upon himself the responsibility of recommending the increase without consulting with the Public Service Board.

The PREMIER: No, I did not say that.

Mr. McDONALD: That was the exact position the hon. gentleman took up, and he should like to know what use were the Public Service Board if they were not to make recommendations for increases in such cases. If the Minister could bounce the Public Service Board

[7.30 p.m.] into consenting to any recommendation he made, what was the use of the board? The sooner they were done away with the better, because if what the hon. gentleman said was true they were mere puppets in his hands.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) could not say that he altogether objected to the praise which had been bestowed on the Under Secretary, or to hon. members expressing the opinion that he was a valuable officer who was worth £600, or £700, or £800 a year. He had had very little to do with the Chief Secretary's Department. He was not like hon. members opposite, who camped on the doormat of that office or took up free selections

in the Treasury Buildings endeavouring to get favours for their constituents. He objected every time they accumulated a little bit of a tin-pot surplus to the fat row being greased, whereas persons in the lower ranks of the service, who did a great deal of work, and were presumably competent to do it, were ignored altogether. It was as well to express that opinion in public, so that the public, through the Press and *Hansard*, might know what was going on. It was as well that they should know that surpluses obtained by the over-taxation of the people were dissipated by the Government in the direction of increasing the salaries of officers already in receipt of large salaries.

The PREMIER: Surpluses go towards the public debt reduction fund.

Mr. LESINA: £149,000 had gone this year towards the public debt reduction fund, but as pointed out by the hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Forrest, when speaking on the Financial Statement, the system of reducing the national debt by paltry payments of that sort was utterly absurd. Why, it would take 200 years at that rate to work off the public debt. It appeared to him that one of the justifications for increasing salaries of well-paid men was that they were in a good position to do it. He had noticed right through the colonies that whenever there was a little bit of a surplus one of the first things Governments did was to fill the service with persons who were not at the time required, but who were placed there to placate political supporters, and who were paid very small salaries indeed. When it became necessary to retrench, the persons in receipt of small salaries were promptly shot out because they were friendless and uninfluential. Persons who had been shoved into the service to placate a friend, or because they were the cousins, or uncles, or relatives in the 52nd degree of some influential person, were kept there by the expenditure of some portion of the surplus, but the poor and friendless person at £80 a year went out while the man who was in receipt of £600 a year got an extra £100 in prosperous time, and in times of retrenchment his salary remained untouched. The poor understrapper, who kept a widowed mother or had a number of children to support, was passed out of the service because he lacked that influence in proper quarters which appeared to be so necessary to-day in securing appointments in the Civil Service. He protested against increasing the salaries of persons already in receipt of large salaries, while persons at the bottom of the ladder who did valuable work for the country received little or no consideration.

Mr. McDONALD asked whether it was customary to make increases without the consent of the Public Service Board?

The PREMIER: It is quite customary.

Mr. McDONALD would like to know if it was not contrary to the Public Service Act? In his opinion it was, and the hon. gentleman was setting at defiance an Act of Parliament and doing an illegal thing. As Chief Secretary he ought to know that. If he did know it he ought to be brought to book, and if he did not know it he showed his ignorance of the Public Service Act. The board was specially brought into existence to do away with improper increases and appointments, but now they had the Chief Secretary actually stating that he was prepared at any time to override Acts of Parliament. His action was not fair to the Public Service Board. It placed them in a most unenviable position, and the hon. gentleman ought to see that it was his duty, above all others, to set a good example and maintain the laws of the country.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Carpentaria*) thought the hon. member for Flinders was somewhat wrong in his statements. If there was one man more

competent than another to say if a man was worthy of an increase it was the man at the head of the department. He did not see how the Public Service Board could have the same idea of a man's worth as the head of the department. He therefore hardly thought the Chief Secretary was wrong in making a recommendation for an increase of £100 a year to an officer of whose capabilities he was well assured, especially as he had done so with the approval of the Public Service Board. How could the Public Service Board know all the circumstances connected with every man in the service? It was utterly impossible for them to go through the whole service and know exactly what each man was worth. To a large extent they must be guided by the man in charge of the department. They must get reports from the heads of departments as to the men most deserving of increases. Consequently he thought the Chief Secretary was quite right in the action he had taken. It stood to reason that the man at the head of any department—even of a commercial department—was the man who should recommend increases in salary. It was natural that objections to increases should be raised from the other side, and he was very pleased at the generous manner in which the leader of the Opposition had spoken of Mr. Dutton. He did not believe there was a man in the service who was more entitled to an increase than Mr. Dutton. He was a most efficient officer. He believed that every man in the service should be paid according to merit. The hon. member for Wide Bay had stated that the proposed increases should invariably be put before the Public Service Board; but he could quite understand that it would be particularly awkward in some instances if that was to be the system. For instance, in one department there might be 1,000 men employed. If each man in the department received an increase of only £5, that would mean a total of £5,000, and the Public Service Board might not care to recommend a general increase under the circumstances. If there were only twenty men in a department, the Public Service Board would be readier to agree to each man getting an increase of £25, because it would only amount to £500. That was a principle which was absolutely wrong. He believed in every man being paid on his merits, whether he was one of 1,000 or one of twenty. There were plenty of men in the large departments at the present time who did not get the increases that they deserved, simply because of the fact that they were employed in large departments. He hoped the Premier would take the matter into consideration, because he knew of one department they were coming to where very few increases were given, and he believed that the reason was simply because that department employed such a large number of men. He raised his voice against such a system?

Hon. E. B. FORREST: How do you know that is the system?

Mr. FORSYTH believed that was the system. So far as the increase to Mr. Dutton was concerned, it would have his most hearty support, because he thought Mr. Dutton was justly entitled to the increase.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) was very pleased to learn that they had made a convert to the necessity for a revolution in the system of promotion in the Civil Service.

Mr. FORSYTH: I have always believed in it.

Mr. DAWSON: That party had been battling ever since it had come into that Chamber against the system which at present obtained. A Civil servant was not paid according to the work he did, but according to his length of service.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Not according to the hon. member for Carpentaria.

Mr. DUNSFORD: According to whether his friends are in power.

Mr. DAWSON: In some departments, employing large numbers of men, changes, transfers, and promotions must necessarily be largely left to the heads of those departments; but the system of payment according to the work done was not carried out at all. One man got £500 for performing certain work, while another man who did precisely the same work did not receive the same pay, simply because he had not been long enough in the service. If they continued to make converts on the other side, the day might come when men would be paid according to merit, and not according to length of service. He had not made the remarks he had with reference to Mr. Dutton out of any spirit of generosity, but merely as a matter of justice. He did not wish it to be thought that he was in any way generous towards Mr. Dutton. In regard to the question raised by the hon. member for Flinders, they were entitled to know from the Premier whether the increase to the Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary had been submitted to the Public Service Board. Had the increase been brought about under the same conditions and in the same way as all the other increases on the Estimates? He had always understood that the board had been brought into existence to remove the Civil Service from political influence. The board was to be an absolutely independent body, which would keep the service pure, and enable every man to receive his due rights, without any political influence being brought to bear, and without any interference on the part of the heads of departments. The question now raised was whether the Public Service Board were performing their functions or not. If, as had been said by the hon. member for Flinders—and apparently on good grounds, judging by the Premier's own words—the board was not consulted in regard to that increase, what was the use of the board at all? He saw no reason why the country should be put to the expense of keeping such a board in existence if it was absolutely useless. If they were not removed from political influence, or from the influence of the heads of departments, he would certainly counsel the Committee, when they got to the vote for the Public Service Board, to refuse to pass the money.

The PREMIER: It was very obvious that hon. members did not understand the *modus operandi* of the Public Service Board in connection with the preparation of the Estimates. When the Estimates were being framed, the Public Service Board were requested to make recommendations concerning such officers in the service as they thought should receive increases. Generally the board asked whether the finances of the colony warranted a general increase all round. Recently the board was informed that the circumstances of the colony were not such as to warrant a general increase, and they were requested to confine their attention to the subordinate officers whom they considered underpaid. As he had told the hon. member for Wide Bay, as far as he could remember, nearly all the increases which appeared on those Estimates were distinctly made on the recommendation of the Public Service Board.

Mr. JENKINSON: You say nearly all the increases.

The PREMIER said he was about to explain that. In some cases the Government did not deem it necessary to accede to the full amount of the recommendations made by the Public Service Board, because the Treasurer had to consider his ways and means. The recommendations of the board were not always accepted; but, in this

case, the Government considered that the gentleman occupying such an important position as the Under Secretary to this department was entitled to special remuneration. The Public Service Board did not initiate the recommendation, but it was approved of by the board, to whom all these increases had been submitted. Some increases recommended were dissented from, and consequently did not appear on the Estimates, but this particular item was approved of by the board. He did not wish to protract the discussion, but it was obvious to hon. members that some officers in the public service were worth double the salaries of others. The question did not depend merely on seniority, but also on ability and efficiency, and that was why the £100 increase was recommended in this case. He did not wish to disparage other officers in the service, but this gentleman was one of the most competent men in the service, and he was justly entitled to the increase.

Mr. McDONALD said the Chief Secretary had distinctly stated that the Government had acted in this case in defiance of the Public Service Board; that this increase had been given without their knowledge.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. McDONALD: What the Premier stated was that the board did not recommend this particular increase.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: But they approved of it.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes, he said the board approved of it, and he asked the hon. gentleman if that was not the position.

The PREMIER: No. I shall give you no further information which you distort.

Mr. McDONALD: This was just like the hon. gentleman in all his transactions connected with the Government. The hon. gentleman had made so many mysterious statements that he was a perfect mystery himself. It was something like the appointment of Mr. Kellett, of which he would have something to say later on. The hon. gentleman gave them distinctly to understand that he was prepared to override the provisions of the Act and the recommendations of the Public Service Board. The Act stated that promotions and increases must be recommended by the board, and the hon. gentleman admitted that that had not been done. The Act stated—

All promotions must be recommended by the board, and except in the case of promotion from one situation to another an increase shall not be made to the salary of an officer until he has received such salary for a period of twelve months. Increase of salary of the officer shall be contingent upon his efficiency, diligence, and good conduct.

The hon. gentleman never had a recommendation from the board, and on his own showing the Government took upon themselves to make this increase. He wanted to know what was the use of passing Acts of Parliament if the Government did not recognise them, but overrode them in this way. They had seen occasions where similar acts had been done; and there was something more in the matter than the mere increase of salary in this case. If the Government were so unscrupulous in this case there was nothing to prevent them doing the same thing in other cases. Hon. members had only to look at the mysterious statements made to the House by the Premier during the past few days, when it was admitted that he was doing illegal things. He agreed with the hon. member for Carpentaria that a man should be rewarded according to his merits, and he would warn the Committee that this matter of increases should not be left in the hands of the Government without the sanction of the Public Service Board. He did not know the gentleman in question personally; no doubt he was quite worthy of the extra remuneration,

and he did not object to it, but he did object to the increase being made without the sanction of the Public Service Board.

The TREASURER: The hon. gentleman was quite wrong. As a matter of fact the board did not prepare the Estimates at all. They were prepared by the departments; the Minister went through them and sent them to the board. In some cases the Government wished to make reductions, but the board objected, and it could not be done. Even if the House passed increases, the board could afterwards object to the increases. He knew a case where a gentleman was recommended for an increase of £50, but according to the Act he was only entitled to an increase of £30; and although the House passed the increase of £50, the board pointed out that it was illegal, and it was reduced to £30.

[8 p.m.] But in any case not a single shilling was paid until it had passed that House, which was the final arbiter.

Mr. DAWSON: How can it be, if, as you say, the Public Service Board have power to deal with the salary afterwards?

The TREASURER: That was a case in which the increase was against the rule of the service. A man getting £300 a year was in a certain class, and in that class he could not get an increase of more than £30, and if they wanted to give him more they would have to give him so much as would put him up into the next class. But in the first place the Estimates were never made up by the Public Service Board, but were recommended by the board after they had been submitted by the department.

Mr. McDONALD: That was not Dutton's case. Ask the Premier.

The TREASURER: The board sometimes recommended increases which Ministers were not inclined to let go. The heads of departments should know far more about the men under them than the Public Service Board, but when the Estimates passed the House Ministers always got a certificate from the board that they approved of the increases.

Mr. LESINA wished to ask the Premier, through the Chairman, whether they were to accept his statement or the statement of the Treasurer?

Mr. McDONALD was quite prepared to accept the Treasurer's statement, but what he wanted to know at the present time was—who was lying? They had two statements, one from the Premier and a different one from the Treasurer.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think it is parliamentary to use a term like that.

Mr. McDONALD: If that was not parliamentary, he would like to know whether it was the Premier or the Treasurer who was stating what was not a fact, because the Treasurer had got up and contradicted the statement made by the Premier? The Treasurer's statement agreed exactly with his (Mr. McDonald's), and the members would prefer to accept their statement to that of the Premier. The Premier had told them that the Public Service Board would not recommend that increase.

The PREMIER: No; I said I recommended it myself.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. gentleman had said that the Public Service Board would not recommend it, though they had recommended the other increases on the vote. The hon. gentleman was now trying to back down from that position. The hon. gentleman had already made two contradictory statements, and he hoped he would get up a third time and tell the Committee what he really did mean. The hon. gentleman had shown distinctly that the Government had overridden

an Act of Parliament, and that was calculated to bring about a great deal of trouble in connection with State matters.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) was not prepared to let the vote go at present. The Premier, in replying to his interrogation, had thrown a little very necessary light on the question. He had nothing to say with regard to Mr. Dutton's capabilities. He thought he was a most estimable young man, and when he had met him, that gentleman had been the embodiment of courtesy. He did not discuss the question as to whether Mr. Dutton was entitled to that increase or not, but the question whether the increase had been legitimately proposed. Until last year it had been customary for the Premier to have a private secretary of his own, and to pay him out of the increased allowance he drew for holding that position, the Premier getting £300 a year more than other Ministers to reimburse him for having to employ a private secretary.

The PREMIER: That is quite wrong.

Mr. JENKINSON might be wrong, but he understood that up to last year the Premier had a private secretary who was not paid out of the consolidated revenue.

The PREMIER: He was.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And did he draw the £1,300 as well?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. JENKINSON: Then he must have misunderstood the statement of the late Hon. T. J. Byrnes, because it left him thoroughly under the impression that the private secretary was paid by the Premier himself.

The PREMIER: Make sure of your facts.

Mr. JENKINSON: From conversations he had with others he thought that was also the general impression, and he understood the late Premier to explain that the appearance of the Under Secretary of that department on the Estimates was a new departure, though Mr. Dutton had virtually occupied the position before. He accepted the statement of the Premier on the subject. There was one other question he would like to ask the Chief Secretary, although it had no bearing on the present vote.

The CHAIRMAN: If the question has no bearing on the vote now before the Committee the hon. member will be out of order in putting it.

Mr. JENKINSON: Strictly speaking his previous question to the Chief Secretary was also out of order for the same reason. He wanted to know—

The CHAIRMAN: I would again remind the hon. member that he has admitted that his question has nothing to do with the vote now before the Committee, and that he will be out of order in asking it.

Mr. JENKINSON: The Treasurer said this recommendation was made by the Public Service Board.

The TREASURER: No, with the approval of the board.

Mr. JENKINSON: His question might have been answered by this time, and time might have been saved.

The CHAIRMAN: No doubt the question might have been answered, and time might have been saved, but at the expense of order.

Mr. JENKINSON said he would put his question later on.

Question put and passed.

AGENT-GENERAL.

The PREMIER moved that £4,638 be granted for the office of the Agent-General in London. The estimate showed an increase of £548 on that of the preceding year. That increase arose, in the first place, from an increase to the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General, which the

Government now asked the Committee to approve, from £700 to £800 per annum. It would be remembered that Mr. Dicken's salary was reduced from £800 to £600 in 1893, and increased to £700 in 1896. Mr. Dicken had been in the public service since 1866, and had several times acted as Agent-General for long periods. The proposed increase had been before the Committee on several occasions, but it had not received that recognition to which he thought it was fairly entitled. He brought it forward now, for the reason that they had endeavoured, as far as possible, to restore all the retrenched salaries. The next item was an increase to the salary of Mr. Dick, the inspecting engineer, from £300 to £600. Mr. Dick's salary was reduced from £800 to £300 a year in 1893, with the right of private practice. The amount of work passing through Mr. Dick's hands now was larger than at any former period; and if the cost of inspection were based on the system prevailing in some of the other colonies—commission on the work inspected—would amount to many thousands a year. The Chief Mechanical Engineer, who lately arrived from England, was asked to inspect and report on the engineer's department in London, and he recommended that the salary be increased to the amount for which provision had been made, and the right of private practice withdrawn.

Mr. GLASSEY: Do you mean to say you can get a first-class inspecting engineer for £600 a year, without private practice?

The PREMIER: That was the recommendation of the Chief Mechanical Engineer, and probably they could not get another equally competent engineer for that salary. The next item was an increase in the salary of Mr. Grant, the correspondence clerk, from £300 to £350, the amount he was receiving previous to 1893. Mr. Grant also performed the duty of despatching officer, and was a good linguist. The remainder was made up of small increases to minor officers of the department; and all were based on the strong personal recommendation of the Agent-General after Sir Horace Tozer had had an opportunity of making himself conversant with the duties of each member of his staff. He did not suppose there would be any objection to the minor increases. If there was any objection no doubt it would be to the increases to Mr. Dicken and Mr. Dick. He would ask the Committee to consider whether it would not be a fair thing to restore Mr. Dicken to the position he held prior to 1893. Hon. members knew as well as he did that Mr. Dicken had been a very faithful officer. He had, as he had said, discharged the duties of Agent-General frequently, and was acting in that position now while Sir Horace Tozer was absent in Philadelphia. It was very desirable that the gentleman who occupied that position should be a gentleman of Mr. Dicken's abilities, professional education—he was a barrister—and knowledge of the working of the department. He did not think it was an unreasonable thing to ask that the salary should be increased, especially as there was a feeling on both sides that retrenched officers should be restored to the position they formerly occupied with regard to salary.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) did not intend at present to speak with regard to the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General. He thought it was usual on this item to go into a review of the work of the Agent-General's Department for the year, and this year they had an elaborate report of forty-three pages from the Agent-General, thirteen pages of which were devoted to the important question of immigration, and to debate that question—

The PREMIER: Better take that discussion on the immigration vote.

The TREASURER: There is a vote for immigration in the Loan Estimates.

Mr. BROWNE objected to leaving the question over till the Loan Estimates came on, because that would be during the last two or three days of the session, when a great number of members had cleared out, and there would be no opportunity of discussing this question at all. In connection with this report from the Agent-General, he had the same thing to complain about that had been complained about year after year, and that was the fact that large sums of money were spent every year in the Agent-General's office and no detailed accounts were given. He believed that last year the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimate said he thought there should be attached to the Agent-General's report every year a statement of accounts, the same as was given in connection with other departments, but that had not yet been done. On page 38 of that report it said—

The sum of £13,848 was paid to Her Majesty's Admiralty as Queensland's contribution towards the Australian Squadron, and £3,270 on account of coastal surveys.

Sums of £5,015 18s. 8d. and £5,103 14s. 8d. were paid to the Bank of England for the management of inscribed stock to the 31st December, 1897, and 30th June, 1898, respectively.

The disbursements from the "Queensland Government Agent-General's account" current for the year amounted to £26,340 2s. 10d. for general purposes and £16,498 1s. 10d. for indents, making a total expenditure through this office of £130,975 18s.

There was just the simple statement that the disbursements for the year amounted to £26,340 2s. 10d., and they were not vouchsafed a bit of information as to what it had been spent for or how it had been spent, and that was too big a sum to be left in the hands of any department to spend without giving the details of expenditure. That was where the question of immigration came in here, because the Agent-General was the head of that department, and in his statement of accounts he did not show a single farthing he had spent on immigration, though a considerable amount must have been spent in London. There was a vote for immigration later on—a small vote for the department in the colony—and then there was the sum of £50,000 on the Loan Estimates for immigration. If the Premier was prepared to take the discussion on the subject of immigration on the vote which came after the vote for the Public Service Board, he would defer his remarks till then. There had been statements made by hon. members on his side which had been contradicted and ridiculed from the Ministerial benches, and those things were found now to be embodied in this report written by Sir Horace Tozer. The report was an elaborate one dealing with almost everything under the sun. There was a great deal of useful information in it, and information that perhaps would not be very satisfactory to hon. gentlemen on the other side.

The PREMIER thought it would be more convenient to take the discussion on the immigration vote, when they would all be prepared to discuss the question. In the meantime he wished to say that the hon. gentleman need not imagine that the sum of money to which he had referred was disbursed promiscuously, or without the fullest details being sent to the Auditor-General. It represented expenditure for all the departments of the State, and they were discriminated by the Auditor-General, who, of course, charged the respective departments with the particular amounts expended for their services. These were added by the Agent-General to his report, and the

[8.30 p.m.] Auditor-General saw that they corresponded with the statement in

the report. He hoped hon. members would confine themselves to matters connected with the vote under discussion.

Mr. BROWNE: The Premier had stated that the Auditor-General received a statement of the expenditure and charged it to the different departments in his report. That might be very well; but members were asked to vote this large sum, and had not the slightest idea how it was spent. The year before last or last year the matter was brought up, and it was suggested it would be a very good idea to have a statement of accounts with the Agent-General's report. Everything might be fair and square and above-board; but people were suspicious, especially people on this side. They wanted to know all about it. The Agent-General sometimes took trips, distinguished citizens went home and had a very good time of it; and when there was a sum like this put down as a sort of petty cash disbursement, it was quite open for anyone to say, "Oh, so-and-so is getting his expenses paid." And who could contradict it? There was nothing there to show it. He should like to know how much of this £26,300 had been spent on immigration, and how much of it had been spent on these trips of the Agent-General. The Agent-General was in Philadelphia at the present time. No doubt the country would benefit from the visit; and the Agent-General would no doubt benefit by it. What he complained of was that every report which came from the heads of the different departments there was a statement of expenditure, and members knew exactly how the money was expended, except a few hundred pounds that were put down for contingencies. But here there was no such thing, as £26,000 was put down in one lump sum, and no hon. member, unless he happened to be a Minister, knew how it had been expended. The practice was a very objectionable one, and the sooner there were strict accounts attached to this report, the more satisfaction it would give to everyone.

HON. G. THORN did not object to the small increase in this department, but he believed the salary of the consulting engineer (Mr. Dick) had been doubled. He had not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman, but he should like to know what extra work he had to do to what he had some years ago. His opinion was that he would have considerably less, because the colony was making its own locomotives in the colony. What had Mr. Dick to inspect in London? He supposed he had to look after a few steel rails. He supposed the hon. gentleman had put on this increase because of the policy he was about to carry out of extra railway construction, and because Mr. Dick might have to inspect railway material.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And dredges.

HON. G. THORN: The Secretary for Railways talked about inspecting dredges, but he did not believe that Mr. Dick, although he was an engineer, was competent to inspect them, and know whether they were properly constructed or not.

Mr. GLASSEY: He ought.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He does.

HON. G. THORN: It was all very well for the hon. gentleman to say he did, but he was a Scotchman, and Scotchmen thought they knew everything when they knew nothing. The hon. member for Bundaberg laughed. The hon. gentleman was a North of Ireland Scotchman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. G. THORN: He should like some little explanation from the Premier as to what extra work Mr. Dick had to do. In his opinion he had less to do.

The PREMIER: Not only had he the testimony of Sir Horace Tozer, as published in his

report, page 42, to which he would refer hon. members; but the new Mechanical Engineer, Mr. Nesbit, and Sir Horace Tozer, before Mr. Nesbit came out here, inspected the office and reported on the working of it. The report of the Agent-General would show that Mr. Dick had a very large amount of work to do. The Agent-General said—

INSPECTION OF PURCHASES OF MATERIAL AND STORES.—The present system of payment for the supervision and inspection of material and stores is not satisfactory.

The sub-department has at its head a professional experienced officer, who has been in the public service for twenty-three years, and who is competent to perform the duties required of him. The value of his services was for many years assessed at £800 a year. In 1893, when there was a considerable falling off in the material required from here, it was decided to reduce his salary to £300 a year, and to give him the right to practise his profession. That right practically means nothing save in regard to some semi-public commissions from Queensland, so that in effect the colony is having the services of a professional expert for the reduced emolument of £300 a year, though since then the duty required from him is largely increased, as is evidenced by the fact that the purchases made by him have averaged for the last three years £107,274 a year.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is the amount of the material he passed?

The PREMIER: Yes.

I have sufficient experience to know that one does not get the best results from a badly-paid servant; and as the right of private practice necessarily constitutes Mr. G. G. Dick his own master, I do not like the change, which clearly was only intended to be temporary. Either there is sufficient work to justify the continuance of this officer, and to call for his whole time, or there is not. In the first case he should receive a professional man's remuneration; if there is not work to justify his continuance, and the commission is not by comparison excessive, then we should give the work, which consists principally of indents from the Railway Department, to some leading firm, and do away with this sub-department altogether. Bearing in mind the volume of work at present, and allowing the usual commission as paid by other colonies, the balance is largely in favour of a continuance of the present system, with some adequate compensation to the officer, Mr. G. Gemmell Dick. If my recommendations are carried out, it will, in my opinion, add to the efficiency of this department; nevertheless, I can confidently certify that the work is faithfully performed, and that Queensland receives an adequate return for the moneys it pays to its officers here. As its present head, I desire to express my personal thanks for the assistance given myself, and for the energy and cheerfulness invariably displayed by all its members in the faithful discharge of their duties.

That was a part of the Agent-General's report, but in addition to that he had received a report from Mr. Nesbit on the working of the Executive Engineer's Department. That report was as follows—

In reply to yours of 2nd August, I have the honour to inform you that, by direction of Sir Horace Tozer, Agent-General of the Colony, I inquired into the working of the Executive Engineer's Department of his office, before leaving London early in May, with a view to offering any suggestions which might be of value in the direction of improving the working of that department in its dealings with the various branches of the Government service in Queensland.

From my inquiries I found that trouble had frequently arisen in the past which might have been avoided had a better system of communication between the colony and the Inspecting Office existed. By bringing the various departments in closer association with that of the Inspecting Engineer, much unnecessary trouble and expense could be avoided; and on this matter I speak with more especial reference to that department of the service over which I have recently had the honour to assume control.

Taking the average of the last two years, the value of indents passing under the review of the Executive Engineer was about £135,000 per annum. Of this sum, £95,000 is represented by indents from the Railway Department, £20,000 by indents from the Post and Telegraph Department, and £20,000 by miscellaneous indents, bridges, dredges, and other minor matters.

Of course that did not deal with Mr. Lindon Bates's dredges, which in themselves formed a large additional amount.

Mr. GLASSEY: Will this gentleman inspect the dredges supplied by Mr. Lindon Bates?

The PREMIER: He thought he would.

Mr. GLASSEY: Is he competent for that purpose?

The PREMIER: He was assumed to be so, having been connected with the Harbours and Rivers Department here for a long time. Mr. Ni-bet continued—

This sum, however, does not fully represent the amount of work which passes under the review of the Inspecting Engineer, as there are many indents which he is called upon to inspect for local contractors, who are purchasing their various materials from merchant houses in London and Glasgow. These indents, I find, for the past two years represent a sum something like £21,000 per annum; and, although the sum is a small one compared with the amount of work done for the Government departments, still it is broken up into such a diversity of items, and the work is distributed among so many manufacturers, that the labour involved in inspecting is somewhat in the inverse ratio of the amount of money represented. For this work, I understand, the Inspecting Engineer receives no remuneration whatever. I find that the cost of the Inspecting Engineer's Department is about £1,700 per annum; this figure covering salaries, travelling expenses, employment of assistant inspectors, proportion of rent, stationery, etc., and other incidental expenses.

Now, taking the figures already quoted—viz., £135,000, it will be seen that the cost of the Inspecting Engineer's Department to the Government represents a sum equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on the total value of the work passing through the office officially. If, however, there is added to the £135,000 the sum of £21,000, which represents the amount for inspecting local contracts, and which I have already pointed out is not directly credited to his department, it will be seen that the cost of the work directly and indirectly for the Government amounts only to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the total value of the indents.

Taking the larger figures and putting the cost of the Inspecting Engineer's Department at $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., it will be found that the Government of Queensland is getting the work at a much cheaper rate than it would if given to an outside firm of consulting engineers, as is done by some of the neighbouring colonies.

There is no doubt that the system adopted by the Queensland Government of having their own inspecting engineer is the proper one, and I would here suggest that the title of executive engineer be changed to the more proper one of "inspecting engineer."

The inspecting engineer should certainly be absolutely in the employ and payment of the Government, and should be called upon to give his whole attention to the work passing through the Agent-General's office, except by special permission of the Agent-General.

Contractors to the Government for whom the inspecting engineer does work, should be called upon to pay at least a proportion of the cost of such supervision.

Of course you could not call upon the inspecting engineer to confine himself entirely to the work of the Government without the remuneration being fixed at such figure as would command his best services, and I would recommend that his remuneration be at once increased to the figure at which it originally stood—namely, £300 per annum.

He need not detain the Committee by reading what followed, which simply corroborated what had gone before—namely, that the amount of work done by the inspecting engineer was very large, and that it would be done at a cheaper rate even with the increased salary than they could get it done by a firm of consulting engineers. By giving him £600 as proposed, and denying him the right of private practice, they would get the work well and efficiently done on the most economical terms.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): At the time the present Agent-General was appointed to that position for three years at £1,500 a year, he thought that officer was getting too much. Since then they had a report from the Agent-General, in which they had quantity if not quality. He would like to draw attention to the duties that that gentleman at £1,500 a year had to perform. One of those was "to attend regularly at the office for the purpose of giving full and reliable information in regard to the colony's industries and prospects." Hon. members knew that there

was no gentleman who had filled that office who was so likely to give reliable information as Sir Horace Tozer.

Mr. LORD: He is not here to defend himself.

Mr. McDONALD: He took it from the interjection of the hon. member that Sir Horace Tozer did not give reliable information. If it did not mean that he should like to know what it did mean.

The PREMIER: He is not here to defend himself.

Mr. McDONALD: Now, the Premier had told them that Sir Horace Tozer was not giving reliable information. He (Mr. McDonald) was certainly under the impression that the gentleman filling that office was always capable of giving reliable information. Then, the Agent-General had also "to carry out the statutory duties imposed on me by the Immigration Act of 1882 and the Amendment Acts of 1884, 1886, and 1887, which include the negotiation of the best arrangements for the transport of emigrants; the systematic distribution of knowledge of the colony's resources and prospects by means of literature, lecturers, and personal addresses by myself; the economical organisation of agencies, and of all manner of advertising media for furthering emigration of the right kind." He had also "to represent the colony in all its transactions with the Colonial Office," and he supposed it was that gentleman who fixed up the going away of the contingent to South Africa. He was probably the medium between the Chief Secretary and Mr. Chamberlain. Then, again, he had to attend to the financial arrangements of the colony with the Bank of England, see that the interest on the debentures and inscribed stock was paid, and the liabilities of the Treasury met. He had also to represent the colony at all conferences of consultative bodies either in Great Britain or Europe. He did not know that they sent an Agent-General to London to go galivanting over different portions of the continent of Europe. He understood that he was sent as a commercial agent to London, but now they had the information that it was his duty to galivant about and go to conferences. He also noticed that he had gone to Philadelphia to attend a conference. He supposed he was in company with the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer, entering into a contest to see who could give the most reliable information. However, if a man was physically capable of performing all the duties set down by Sir Horace Tozer, he thought he was badly paid at £1,500 a year. They knew his capacity for work and talk, and that he was just about the champion talker they had ever had in Parliament, but he did not think he was as capable in that respect as someone who was now in the front.

Mr. LEAHY: He was only champion before the last election.

Mr. McDONALD: He believed the Premier ran him very close.

Mr. LEAHY: There are some champions on your side.

Mr. McDONALD: He must say, as he had said on former occasions, that the appointment of the present Agent-General was a very extraordinary one, made to get that gentleman outside of politics, and the extra £250 was given in order to get him away. However, that was passed, and could only be terminated, he supposed, when another person took the office. Then came the question of the increase to the Secretary to the Agent-General, which he believed was a deliberate attempt to try and undo what Parliament had decided on several occasions. It was practically an attempt to bind Parliament. On two occasions the House had distinctly said that the increase should not be given; yet year after year they found the Government placing

on the Estimates that extra £100. He would like to know what special influence that gentleman had with the Government of this colony. Successive Premiers had placed that increase on the Estimates, and had come to Parliament prepared to defend it. It struck him that that gentleman's influence was so great that he could get the Government to do whatever he wished. He thought when any Government had been defeated on two separate occasions over that proposed increase to salary they should take it as an indication that the House was not in favour of it, and the only way in which the increase could be obtained was by getting members to stultify themselves and their action on former occasions.

The TREASURER: This is a new Parliament altogether.

Mr. McDONALD: There were many of the old faces there still.

The TREASURER: A lot of the old faces have gone.

Mr. McDONALD: A large majority of members had decided on former occasions that the increase should not be granted, and the Treasurer knew that the Government were defeated last year on a similar proposal. He thought they ought to have sense enough when Parliament year after year refused to grant an increase not to press it.

* Mr. FINNEY (*Toowong*) thought it was two years ago since this £190 increase was first refused. As a matter of fact it was not an advance of salary, but a restoration, and the reason why on a former occasion he moved an amendment—the hon. member for Flinders would remember it—was that there were other officers in the service whose salaries had not been restored to their full amount. He felt now that it was only fair that the secretary to the Agent-General should have his salary restored to £800 when the other Under Secretaries had been placed in the same position. On this occasion he felt it to be his duty, knowing what an excellent officer Mr. Dicken was, to vote for the restoration of his salary to the full amount of £800, which he was as much entitled to as all other Under Secretaries. That was his justification for the action he now intended to take. He felt now that it was only fair and just that Mr. Dicken's salary should be restored, and he would vote for the extra £100 being granted.

Mr. ANNEAR (*Maryborough*): Of course all members would recognise the special appeal made by the hon. member for Flinders a few minutes ago to the hon. member for Toowong, and he had now got his answer to that appeal. The hon. member for Toowong, like several other hon. members, had seen that an injustice was done to Mr. Dicken, and he took the first opportunity of remedying that injustice. He (Mr. Annear) thought he should be failing in his duty towards a gentleman he very much respected if he did not reply to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Flinders—he referred to the hon. member's observations in reference to that worthy gentleman, Sir Horace Tozer. The hon. member made those remarks because he thought they would raise a laugh, especially when he talked about giving full and reliable information. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. McDONALD: Does he not give full and reliable information?

Mr. ANNEAR: He had had the pleasure of knowing Sir Horace Tozer since 1863. He had had many business transactions with him, and a more honourable and truthful man it had never been his lot to meet. (Laughter.)

Mr. McDONALD: Why, your own side are laughing.

Mr. ANNEAR: Knowing what he did of Sir Horace Tozer, he would be failing in his duty if he did not speak. Every hon. member, and the people of the colony, knew that while Sir Horace Tozer had been a member of that House he had done his duty faithfully.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. member for Flinders referred to work and talk. There was no doubt the hon. gentleman could talk, but there had been no Minister since he (Mr. Annear) first entered that Assembly in 1884 who had done more honest work for the colony than the present Agent-General.

Mr. McDONALD: There are Ministers on that side who could work the head off him.

Mr. ANNEAR: Twenty men of the ability of the hon. member for Flinders would not be a match for their Agent-General as regarded work and ability.

Mr. McDONALD: We ran him out of politics, anyway.

Mr. ANNEAR: They would see if he would be run out of politics if he returned to Queensland to-morrow. The colony was to be congratulated on having such a man to represent its interests in the great city of London. With reference to the proposed restoration of the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General, he had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Dicken when he lived in Townsville, before he went to London. The people of Townsville knew what a worthy officer he was. His salary had been £800 before 1893, when it was reduced to £600. Since then it had been increased to £700, and it would be a great injustice if the Committee refused to give him the additional £100 which was now proposed, and which would give him his former salary. His office was a very important one, and he was sure the hon. member for Toowong would bear him out when he said that any Queenslander—no matter how humble he might be—who called upon Mr. Dicken in London received every attention and consideration.

Mr. FINNEY: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: He never knew how vastly important he was until he called upon Mr. Dicken, and saw the interest that gentleman took in him. A great injustice had been done, and he felt pretty confident that the Committee would remove that injustice by voting Mr. Dicken the salary of £800 which he had long ago. Some remarks had been made with reference to the inspecting engineer in London. He had known Mr. Gemmell Dick for over twenty-five years. The late Mr. Nisbet, who was formerly engineer for harbours and rivers, had placed Mr. Dick in charge of the works and plant in the Fitzroy River, and if Mr. Dick had not been a competent man he would not have been entrusted with the important works which he had faithfully carried out. The proposal now was to give Mr. Dick £600 per annum without the right of private practice. With the hon. member for Bundaberg, he thought the salary was too small.

Mr. GLASSEY: If he is a competent man, it certainly is too small.

Mr. ANNEAR: It was not his opinion alone, but it was the opinion of men who were qualified to give an opinion—that Mr. Dick was a thoroughly qualified man. The Premier had told them that for the last three years Mr. Dick had had to pass material to the value of £107,000 per annum. He felt sure that they would not be able to get an engineer in London who was competent to pass all that material for less than 2½ per cent. commission. On £107,000 that

would amount to £2,675 per annum. Mr. Dick's salary was only to be £600 per annum, so that that made a saving of £2,075 per annum.

Mr. KERR: But he will have his travelling expenses as well.

Mr. ANNEAR: They could not expect him to pay his travelling expenses out of his salary. The Government were going in the right direction in having an engineer to supervise the purchase of the material they required. Mr. Dick would not have the right of private practice, and he would really like to see the salary £800 per annum instead of £600. The Government had made a good bargain in securing the services of Mr. Dick for such a small amount. He would like to draw the attention of the Premier to the number of years that Mr. Dick had performed the duties attaching to the office. He had never heard a word against him, and he had never heard anyone insinuate that those duties had not been faithfully performed and in the interests of the country.

Mr. GLASSEY: I would remind the hon. member that there are 115 pages of Estimates.

Mr. ANNEAR did not wish to waste time, but he wished to give the Committee the benefit of his knowledge of those two gentlemen. If no hon. member wasted more time than he did during the few weeks they had to do business, no time would be wasted.

HON. G. THORN: The hon. member for Maryborough had made an unfortunate remark with reference to Mr. Dick. He had stated that Mr. Dick was the engineer in charge of the works in the Fitzroy River. That was enough to condemn him at once. He was a Minister at the time that Mr. Nisbet appointed Mr. Dick to dredge the Fitzroy River, and he opposed the scheme from its very inception. What took place was just what he had predicted would take place. The Fitzroy River was not a bit better now than it was when the Canoona rush took place in the Rockhampton district. The work of Mr. Dick in connection with that work proved that he was not fit for his position. He had another reason for considering Mr. Dick an unsuitable man. He did not wish to speak uncharitably of anyone, but Mr. Dick was supposed to inspect dredges that were built for the colony. They were told that they were to have a number of dredges constructed of the Bates type, and Mr. Dick was the gentleman who would have to inspect them. The last dredge that came from London was inspected by Mr. Dick, and before it could be used it had to be built—new lock, stock, and barrel. That dredge should have been constructed at Maryborough, and the colony had lost by it not being constructed there. He contended that all our dredges should be built in the colony. There were just as good men at Walkers, Limited, and other places, to build dredges as in the old country. In fact, he would rather trust Walkers, Limited, than any London firm.

Mr. GROOM intended to support the increase to this officer's salary, because he thought he was fully entitled to it. On the last occasion that this vote was before the Committee, it was lost, because it had been taken at a late hour when many hon. members, who would have supported it, were absent. One reason why he was inclined to vote for the increase was because he had just received information that the officers in the Agent-General's office had to contribute to the Imperial income tax, and that the Secretary to the Agent-General had to pay £40 a year in this connection. He believed that the Agent-General had also to contribute to the income tax. He was struck with this information when he heard it, and he asked the Chief Secretary whether what he had stated was a fact.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. GROOM: That being true, the salaries of the officials in the Agent-General's office should be increased by that amount. They might have to pay other taxes, in addition to the income tax, and he did not think it a fair thing that these officials should be obliged to pay this income tax out of their own pockets. With regard to Mr. Dick, he was entirely in accord with the hon. member for Bundaberg. If hon. members looked at the Estimates they would see that the Master of Titles received £600, and £100 as legal adviser to the Stamp Office, and he had been lately appointed an acting judge. And at the same time he had the right of private practice.

Mr. LEAHY: While he is a judge?

Mr. GROOM: Not while he is acting as a judge.

The TREASURER: But he does not practise.

Mr. GROOM: Yes. He had seen him engaged, not only in the Supreme Court cases in Brisbane, but in the circuit court in Toowoomba.

The TREASURER: Not of late years.

Mr. GROOM: Yes. He was leading counsel in a recent case in Toowoomba. He made this remark by way of illustration—to show that the present salary of the Secretary to the Agent-General was inadequate. Anyone who looked at the voluminous reports of the Agent-General could see that his duties were most arduous, and would be more so with regard to the dredges to be built by Mr. Lindon Bates. Considering the length of time Mr. Dick had been in his position, if he had been incompetent, it would have been reported long ago, and under all the circumstances he was entitled to fair remuneration. His principal reason for rising to speak on this matter was that on previous occasions he had voted against this increase.

Mr. JENKINSON: You voted for this last year.

Mr. GROOM: He did so because at that time they were reinstating officers who had been retrenched in 1893, and he did not see that the officers in the Agent-General's office should be excepted. He was now all the more inclined to vote for it, because of the information he had received with respect to those officers having to pay the income tax, which was really a deduction from their salaries.

Mr. TURLEY did not think there should be any misconception on the matter. The hon. gentleman had said that Mr. Dicken paid £40 a year in income tax on his salary of £700. As a matter of fact, the income tax was 8d. in the £1 on salaries of £700, with an exemption of the first £70, so that it was paid in this case on £630, and hon. members would see that that came to £21 exactly, and not to £40 as represented by the hon. member for Toowoomba.

Mr. GROOM: In explanation, he should say that his informant wrote to him generally on the subject, and he might himself have confounded the amount of income tax said to have been paid by the Agent-General with that said to have been paid by his secretary. The writer of the letter to him thought that hon. members might not be aware that colonial officers in London had to pay the income tax. He was not himself aware of it, and he did not think many hon. members were. He did not want to put the case extremely on behalf of Mr. Dicken, and had no wish that there should be any misconception.

Mr. McDONALD: When that House refused to pass the increase to Mr. Dicken on the last occasion, he found that the hon. member for Toowoomba had got up and said that he did not think Mr. Dicken a smart commercial man.

Mr. FINNEY: I said he was not the best about.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. member had contended that the salary of £700 was a good salary for a gentleman who had been a police

magistrate in the colony, and he denied the statement of the Acting Premier that Mr. Dicken was one of the smartest commercial men in England. The hon. member was now going to support the vote because he thought Mr. Dicken a very smart man and thoroughly deserving of the increase. To be quite fair to the hon. member, the hon. member had on the last occasion when he voted against the increase given another reason that some small men had not received increases which they should have received, but the principal reason the hon. member gave for opposing the increase was that he thought Mr. Dicken was well paid at £700 a year.

Mr. FINNEY: No, it was not.

* Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): There was one phase of the Agent-General's action which had not so far been brought under the notice of the Committee. He was prepared to admit that the Agent-General, Sir Horace Tozer, was a very eminent man, who had a world wide reputation, but there was a certain Scriptural character who had a wider reputation through the centuries, and was not more admirable in consequence.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Ananias.

Mr. GIVENS: Hon. members were sufficiently acquainted with Scripture to be able to fix the character for themselves. When the Queensland contingent for the Transvaal was first mooted Sir Horace Tozer expressed himself on the proposal in London, and in such terms as were particularly offensive to a large section of the community composed of as good colonists as any in the colony. It was particularly distasteful to have a public servant like Sir Horace Tozer aspersing the good name of a large section of the community which paid him to represent the whole community in the capital of the Empire. He pointed out in a speech which he had made and afterwards explained—though he only made it worse by his so-called explanation—that there were 23 per cent. of the people of the colony of the Irish race, and that probably they would be opposed to the contingent merely from that fact alone, the plain insinuation being that they were disloyal citizens. That statement was worthy of the world-wide reputation which Sir Horace had won for himself, and he need not put it plainer than that. He wanted to know why they should pay Sir Horace Tozer £1,500 a year for casting aspersions at a large and worthy section of the community. He wanted to know also if the Government, when the statement was brought under their notice, as it had been in that House and through the Press, had publicly reprimanded Sir Horace Tozer for having made that statement, and whether if they had not expressed disapproval of that statement and reprimanded the Agent-General they were now prepared to take the responsibility of expressing approval of it.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: Read what was said. Give us your proofs.

Mr. GIVENS: Considering that the matter had been referred to in the House before—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What are you quoting from—*Hansard*?

Mr. GIVENS: From a statement copied from the London *Times* over the signature of the Agent-General himself. As he had [9:30 p.m.] been challenged to read the remarks of Sir Horace Tozer he would do so. They appeared in the London *Times* over his signature, and they were quoted in the House on a former occasion. He said—

Concerning the cost of the contingent—

Mr. J. HAMILTON: What is the date?

The CHAIRMAN: May I ask the hon. member what he is quoting from?

Mr. GIVENS: From the London *Times*. There was no one present who could deny that what he was about to quote appeared in the London *Times* over Sir Horace Tozer's signature. That letter purported to be an explanation of some very indiscreet and disparaging remarks about the Irish colonists of Queensland, but the explanation was as bad as the original offence, if not worse. He objected to such a statement coming from a responsible official like the Agent-General, who was paid by those very Irish colonists whom he disparaged. He wanted to know—he insisted upon knowing—whether the Government, as representing the people of the colony, had addressed any reprimand, or any expression of disapproval to Sir Horace Tozer for having made use of such expressions. And if they had failed to do that, were they prepared to accept the responsibility for it themselves? If they refused to reprimand the Agent-General it was a practical endorsement of his utterances. He contended that the Irish in the colony were as good citizens as any other people in it, and were quite as loyal and as prepared to fight for the well-being of the colony and to sacrifice as much as the people of any other nationality in it. He (Mr. Givens) had not a word to say against the people of any nationality in Queensland. He had friends whom he highly valued amongst all nationalities; men whom anybody could admire. It would be a disgrace to the colony if that statement of Sir Horace Tozer's were allowed to go without challenge or without reprimand. He had here a file of the London *Times* for July, and in that paper the Agent-General wrote—

The HOME SECRETARY: What is the date?

Mr. GIVENS: He was quoting from the London *Times* of July. Sir Horace Tozer wrote—

1. Concerning the cost of contingent, I merely remarked that if the Imperial Government desired a larger number of mounted infantry from the Queensland Defence Force than those now offered to be sent and paid for by the colony, they could doubtless obtain them on consenting to pay the expense.

2. The description of the *personnel* of the men related more closely to the selected number than to every soldier in this branch of the service.

3. Till recently I had two sons in the mounted infantry. My observations as to probable service now only applied to the survivor.

4. To the question of policy I stated that the offer would be loyally and patriotically endorsed by the majority of the people.

But that if there was any criticism such would only emanate (1) from a section who would probably object to Australasia's interference in any Imperial disputes outside their own territory, and (2) from our Irish colonists, who, numbering about 23 per cent. of the total population, may follow the lead given here and contend that the redress of Irish "grievances" should precede the enforcement of the claims of the Uitlanders.

Beyond the mere narrative I did not desire to offer any comments upon the wisdom of either policy.

Why should the Irishmen be singled out for a special insinuation of that kind? Yet when the matter was brought forward here in a serious fashion it was sneered at by the Government, and openly laughed at by the hon. member for Cook, who, they were informed the other night, was an officer of the Government.

The TREASURER: The Government have not sneered at it. They simply asked for the date of the paper.

Mr. GIVENS: He only wished to call attention to it, and to get an expression of opinion from the Government as to whether they endorsed those remarks or not. Not only had an insult been hurled at a large section of the community, but they had seen, not long ago, in Brisbane and other places, that the lead given by the Agent-General had been followed in many quarters, and that Irish colonists had been openly sneered

at in the same way that Sir Horace Tozer sneered at them earlier in the year. This was a very serious thing, because it was likely to create racial antipathy and national bitterness which never existed except when they were created by interested people like the present Agent-General. People came to this colony prepared to sink all the old world antipathies and work together for the good of the country to which they had come, but if this sort of thing was allowed it would breed racial antipathies and generate national bitterness amongst the different races composing the citizens of the colony, which would be a very bad thing indeed, and anything of this kind done by a public servant should be nipped in the bud before it had had time to take effect. It was the duty of the Government to show that they had no sympathy with such a thing, and announce that they had reprimanded Sir Horace Tozer, or intended to do so; and if they failed to take that course it was their duty to state that they were prepared to take the full responsibility for the statement he had made.

Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*): The hon. member stated that Sir Horace Tozer insulted the Irish community because he said that a large number of them considered that Irish grievances at home required to be treated prior to our interfering with the affairs of the Transvaal. He (Mr. Hamilton) believed a great many Irishmen thought so, and he did not consider any insult attached to them on that account. Nobody thought any the less of them on that account. He knew some men who prided themselves on being Irishmen who had done much worse. When three cheers were called for the Queen in this Chamber, on the Federal Bill being passed, the hon. member for Cairns kept his cap on—a man who had sworn loyalty to the Queen—and although every member on the Government side joined in those cheers, not one of the Labour party joined in those cheers. The hon. gentleman had attacked Sir Horace Tozer's character. He had never heard Sir Horace Tozer revile a man behind his back. A more warm-hearted man he never saw. No needy man or woman ever went to Sir Horace Tozer for assistance in vain. Could as much be said of the hon. member for Cairns? If that hon. gentleman had half the character of Sir Horace Tozer he would occupy a far higher position in the minds of the people of Queensland than he did at present.

Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*) was pleased that the hon. member for Cairns had brought up this matter, but the hon. member did not give the whole of the facts. The statement came about in this way: Sir Horace Tozer, after the announcement was made of the Premier's offer of a contingent, was interviewed by a representative of the London Central News Agency, and asked whether there would be any opposition offered in the colony, and he said, "Yes, we have 33 per cent. of Irish. We have their opposition to contend with, as is the case here," but afterwards he wrote to the London *Times* modifying the statement to the extent of reducing the percentage from 33 to 23. That was the whole qualification he made as far as his statement in regard to the Irish was concerned. Now they had the opportunity of criticising the Agent-General, and this was the proper time to do so. He felt sore that Sir Horace Tozer, who owed his first election to this Chamber to the Irishmen of Gympie, and who now represented this colony in London, should have gone out of his way to insult the Irish people in Queensland, and he thought it was the duty of the Government to reprimand Sir Horace Tozer, who was a public servant. If any public officer in this colony had made such a statement he would soon have been brought to book by the Government, and he

could not understand their silence in this case. If the Government were not prepared to say they would call upon Sir Horace Tozer to make an explanation or an apology, he was prepared to go so far as to test the feeling of the Committee by moving a reduction in the salary of Sir Horace Tozer.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He may never have said it.

Mr. McDONNELL: What was the use of talking? Did he not make a statement and then write to the London *Times* qualifying the statement? The qualification that he gave had been read by the hon. member for Cairns from the Brisbane *Telegraph*. The wire from London appeared in the *Telegraph* some weeks ago.

The PREMIER: We have not got any date to it yet.

Mr. McDONNELL: The hon. gentleman wanted all the particulars. Surely he must believe, except he disbelieved all the other wires that appeared from time to time in the Press, that the statement was made. It was reported in several of the papers when the statement was first made, and that part of the denial appeared as a cable from London some weeks after. He considered that the Government in this matter should take some action, because he could assure them that it was looked upon as a wanton insult to the Irish people. He considered it was the duty of members, particularly in discussing the action of that official, to resent anything on his part of that nature. He would do so, and unless there was some satisfactory explanation on the part of the Government he was prepared to go so far as to move a reduction in the salary of the Agent-General as a protest against the insult.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The hon. gentleman said that Sir Horace Tozer had insulted the Irish people of the colony, because he said a large proportion of them would object to the contingent going to South Africa. If that hon. gentleman considered it was a degrading and unjustifiable thing to oppose the contingent going, then Sir Horace Tozer insulted the Irish people; but seeing that the hon. gentleman himself opposed the contingent going, and every other member of that party opposed it going—

Mr. GLASSEY: That is not true.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: They knew perfectly well that the hon. gentlemen did. Look at *Hansard*. Look at the speeches. They knew that the leader of the Opposition opposed it. They knew what he said. They knew that the principal members on that side opposed it. Did they regard their conduct in doing so as disgraceful and degrading? If they did not, why should they consider it insulting to state that others would do exactly what the members on the Labour side had done. He really could not see how they, of all others, could object to what Sir Horace Tozer said, and characterise his statement as an insult, seeing that a large number of the Labour party were actually guilty of that conduct themselves.

The PREMIER: Really, too much had been made of the affair. If he had conceived the statement in question to be a wanton insult to any portion of their fellow-colonists, he should at once have taken it up and demanded a retraction of anything which would convey an insult. His attention was not drawn to it until the House met, and then the time had really passed for taking official notice of it. He knew that Sir Horace Tozer had written to several members of the Ministry explaining in connection with it.

Mr. GIVENS: It wants a lot of explanation.

The PREMIER: He had written private letters to Ministers in which he had explained what he had done, and put it in such a light that he never intended to insult in any way any of

their fellow-colonists. If the same thing had been addressed to Scotchmen, Englishmen, or Welshmen he (the Premier) should just have treated it in the same way. They were attaching a great deal too much importance to the matter, which he certainly did not approve of. He thought that what Sir Horace had said was very indiscreet; but there were times when it was as well, perhaps, to pass over these matters and not attach undue importance to them. To magnify them would be a great mistake. They knew that Sir Horace Tozer—although he might have said this, and although his tongue might have run away with his good sense—was a man who would be the last to offer any offence to a very large section of this colony.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Especially a section with whom he was always on remarkably good terms, and had had the very highest regard and respect for.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: He was sure that if there was a plebiscite of the Irishmen of this colony called to pronounce judgment on that expression, in the light of it being an insult to them, they would at once acquit him of any such intention. He regretted that the matter had been brought up in this way. In private correspondence with Sir Horace Tozer, he had deprecated his using such ambiguous expressions; but, at the same time, to make it the subject of official correspondence or censure, would be to attach undue importance to it. Viewing it in the light of an indiscretion on his part, he (the Premier) thought they had far better let the matter drop.

Mr. DAWSON: The Premier had admitted that the Agent-General had allowed his tongue to run away with his judgment.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Like your own sometimes.

Mr. DAWSON: As a matter of fact, he had made some remarks in that Chamber not so long ago; but what had the hon. gentleman and his friends done ever since? They had not only done their level best to publish those remarks throughout the Press that they had command of in the colony; but had gone further, and tried to magnify and misrepresent.

Mr. DUNFORD: Distort.

Mr. DAWSON: They had distorted and misrepresented in the most outrageous manner. Now when one of the hon. member's own officers had committed something of the same indiscretion that he committed—in fact, much worse—

The TREASURER: You admitted you committed an indiscretion not very long ago.

Mr. DAWSON: He admitted it was an indiscretion in this respect.

The TREASURER: Don't qualify it.

Mr. DAWSON: No. He was going to tell the truth about it. When he used the term "indiscretion," what he meant was that in endeavouring to make his point he used an illustration which was harsh; but the illustration was true all the same, which he still stuck to it.

The TREASURER: Don't qualify it.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. gentleman need not trouble his boots about that. He was not built that way. However, it appeared now that, if any harsh terms happened to be used by members on this side of the House, the Premier and his friends were prepared to pursue them to the death; but when they were used by their own friends they must forgive and forget, kiss and make it up. As a matter of fact, what Sir Horace Tozer had done was to needlessly insult one particular section of their colonists.

The TREASURER: Not at all.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. member for Cook pointed out that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley was against the sending of the contingent, and it was quite correct that he (Mr. Dawson) was also against it; but the hon. member entirely missed the point of what Sir Horace Tozer told the people of England, not by a hastily-spoken word, but by deliberate writing to the London *Times*. He sat down in his office in his cool moments, and deliberately wrote it and signed his own name to it. He said that 23 per cent. of the colonists of Queensland were going to object to the sending of the contingent, not because they believed the war was an unjust one, but because they were Irish and were necessarily disloyal. That was exactly the position. He said there were two classes of people who

would object to the sending of the [10 p.m.] contingent, one class who believed that the war was not justifiable, and another class, who constituted 23 per cent. of the population and were known as Irishmen, who would object to it because they were disloyal. He (Mr. Dawson) still objected to the sending of the contingent to South Africa, and though he had not offered a prayer for a long time, yet if he thought that by offering a prayer to-night he could get the "Cornwall" stranded on some island so that the contingent could not reach South Africa, he would willingly offer that prayer. Sir Horace Tozer had distinctly insulted their Irish fellow-colonists by informing the British public in cold blood that merely because they were Irishmen they were necessarily disloyal, and would object to the sending of the contingent to South Africa on that ground alone.

* Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member for Cook had stated that on a certain occasion when cheers were called for Her Majesty the Queen in that House, he (Mr. Givens) kept his hat on. As a matter of fact, while he had been in the House—and he had been present at every sitting since the session commenced—he had never at any time heard cheers called for the Queen in that House. Directly the Speaker had left the chair, that Chamber was no more the House than the lobby or the balcony outside, and he should like the hon. member when he made a charge like that to be accurate.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It was in the House. The Speaker had not left the chair; members were in their seats.

Mr. GIVENS: It was in that Chamber, but the hon. member distinctly said it was in the House. When cheers for her Majesty were properly called for members might be expected to give them, but when any political buttoner chose to advertise his loyalty, which no one knew of unless it was advertised, by calling for cheers, it was not in consonance with the dignity of a cool-headed man to throw up his cap and shriek himself hoarse on an occasion of that kind.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot see what the hon. member's remarks have to do with the question before the Committee.

Mr. GIVENS: He contended that when a distinct charge was made against him—

The CHAIRMAN: I have allowed the hon. member time to refute the charge, and he cannot further continue the discussion of that subject.

Mr. GIVENS would not pursue that line of argument further on the present occasion, but would probably take an opportunity of doing so at some future time. He wished to again emphasise the fact that not only the representatives of the Irish race in that Chamber, but also the Irish race outside the Chamber in all parts of the country, most seriously resented the gross and wanton insult which had been hurled at them by Sir Horace Tozer, who was a public servant paid to represent in London, not merely

one section or one nationality in the community, but the whole community and every nationality in Queensland. Being a paid public servant it was extremely bad taste on his part to wantonly insult the whole of one nationality in the community, and his utterance was calculated to excite racial bitterness, and engender national antipathies and hatreds. It was one of the most injurious utterances that had ever been made by any man in the position of Agent-General, or any other public position in the colony. Of all things they wanted good feeling to exist among all the colonists, no matter what their nationality might be, and his experience had been that, except on occasions of that kind, there had been the utmost good feeling between all sections and all nationalities composing the community of Queensland. The Premier had said that the utterance had been made too much of; but not being an Irishman it did not appeal to the hon. gentleman with the same force as it did to him (Mr. Givens) and his fellow-countrymen in Queensland. The insult was one which should not go without a reprimand. The Premier had stated that, in private correspondence, he had told Sir Horace Tozer that the remark was indiscreet. But hon. members did not want to know what the hon. gentleman had done in his private correspondence; they wanted to know whether he had thought fit in his public and official correspondence with the Agent-General to reprimand Sir Horace Tozer for his indiscreet utterance. The fact that the Premier might or might not have expressed disapproval in a private letter was nothing, because he, in his private capacity, was no more than he (Mr. Givens) was. What they wanted to know was whether the Premier, representing the colony, would call upon Sir Horace Tozer for an explanation. The Irish people in Queensland had been insulted, and the public officer who presumed to insult them should be officially reprimanded. The Premier admitted that that had not been done, and if he did not do it, he failed in his duty. If an amendment on the vote was moved, he should give it his most hearty support.

Mr. McDONNELL regretted that the explanation of the Premier was not more satisfactory, so that he would be justified in withdrawing the amendment. The hon. gentleman had said that in private correspondence Sir Horace Tozer had made an explanation. The statement had, however, been made publicly, and a public retraction was necessary. There was no use in Sir Horace Tozer writing to his private friends and explaining the statement away. The demand was for a public retraction, and if the Premier was prepared to ask Sir Horace Tozer for an explanation, and promise to lay the papers on the table of the House, he would be satisfied.

The PREMIER: He will see this *Hansard*, and that will doubtless elicit some reply.

Mr. McDONNELL: If the hon. gentleman resented anything of that nature, then he should do the proper thing, and call upon Sir Horace Tozer for an explanation or retraction. That was his duty. The hon. member for Cook, in trying to justify Sir Horace Tozer, seemed to imply that the Irish people were so densely ignorant that they did not know the difference between a compliment and an insult.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Do not put words into my mouth that I did not use.

Mr. McDONNELL: The hon. member practically said that his (Mr. McDonnell's) vote on the matter of the Transvaal contingent was a justification of the statement made by Sir Horace Tozer.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I did not. Quote my words.

Mr. McDONNELL: What were the facts? The statement of Sir Horace Tozer was made

three months before the contingent question ever came on. The statement was made last July in London; it was published throughout the British Islands in the principal papers, and cabled out here. What was the use, therefore, of the hon. member, by a side wind, trying to justify Sir Horace Tozer, and telling them that he was simply paying a compliment to the Irish people?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Do not put words into my mouth that I never used.

Mr. McDONNELL: He was stating practically what the hon. gentleman had said. He might say that personally he had not a word to say against Sir Horace Tozer. He believed that as Agent-General he was a good officer, but in this case he had overstepped the bounds of reason and duty. He went quite out of his way to make a statement which was resented strongly in this colony, and particularly in the city of Brisbane, by the Irish people. He thought they ought to have a promise from the Premier that he would demand an explanation and a retraction of the statement. That was not asking the hon. gentleman to do anything unreasonable or unfair, and it was necessary in view of the serious statement of a gentleman holding such a high position as Agent-General.

Mr. FISHER (*Gympie*) had just a few words to say, though not in relation to the Irish people. The statement of Sir Horace Tozer was not only an insult to the Irish members of that Chamber and to Irishmen outside, but it was calculated to retard the best interests of the colony in London. The Agent-General was sent home to represent Queensland as a wealthy colony, with a population that was not only loyal but industrious, and who desired to work together for its best interests, but instead of doing that he embraced the first opportunity—either from spite, or malice, or ill-will—to injure the interests of the colony. Supposing the people in Great Britain believed Sir Horace Tozer—which happily they did not—that 25 per cent. of the population were disaffected, what would be the effect of that on the granting of loans in the future? He was sure that they would not get them on as favourable terms as heretofore. He held that if the Premier refused to demand a retraction and apology he would utterly fail in his duty and be unworthy to hold his present office.

Mr. ANNEAR: Anyone would think to see the excited state which hon. members had worked themselves into that they were on the eve of a general election, but such was not the case. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley said that Irish people throughout the colony resented the words used by Sir Horace Tozer. Then the Irish people must be within the walls of that Chamber, because he believed that no true Irishman would for a moment believe that Sir Horace Tozer ever desired to insult the Irishmen of Queensland.

Mr. McDONNELL: I have as good an opportunity of judging what the Irish people think as you have.

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. gentleman took upon himself to represent the Irish people of Queensland, but he would guarantee that he had ten times the number of friends among the Irish people that the hon. member had, and he did not believe they took what had been said in an offensive sense.

Mr. McDONNELL: They are very fine fellows at election times.

Mr. ANNEAR: He had known for thirty-five years the greatest Irishman living in Queensland, and was sure he would not make so much of what had been said. He was as good an Irishman as the hon. member for Fortitude Valley.

Mr. McDONNELL: I thought you were a Cornish man.

Mr. ANNEAR: He contended that Sir Horace Tozer would not for a moment insult their Irish fellow-colonists by act, word, or deed.

Mr. McDONNELL: He has already done it.

Mr. CALLAN: He can lie by the yard.

Mr. ANNEAR: Sir Horace Tozer referred to the Irish section of the population who believed in Home Rule.

Mr. McDONNELL: No.

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. member might not know, but he could tell him that Sir Horace Tozer married the daughter of one of the most distinguished Irishmen who ever lived in Queensland.

Mr. McDONNELL: That is nothing.

Mr. ANNEAR: He was certain that the Irishmen of Wide Bay, and indeed all over the colony, knew that they had no better friend than Sir Horace Tozer, the present Agent-General.

Mr. McDONNELL: All the more shame to him.

Mr. CALLAN: Nonsense! Talk some sense! Talk about Cornwall; you know more about it than you do about Ireland.

Mr. ANNEAR was as proud of Cornwall as the hon. member, or the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, were proud of Ireland; but they were all Queenslanders. Had the hon. member for Fortitude Valley remained in Ireland, and had he (Mr. Annear) remained in Cornwall, they would have lived lives of obscurity; but they had come to the free colony of Queensland, under the British flag, where they were both respected by their fellow-colonists, and where they had been elected members of that House.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. ANNEAR did not want to be out of order, but he said in all friendship that he was a Queenslander, and knew no section of the community—

Mr. McDONNELL: Except at election times.

Mr. ANNEAR said at all times. He had employed thousands of men in this colony, and no man could every say that he had asked him his nationality. The man who could work was the man for him. He trusted they would all be Queenslanders, and that those irritating questions would not be raised in the Chamber. No man respected Irishmen more than he did. He was going to make a "bull." He was about to say that his wife was an Irishman. She was the daughter of an Irish family, which was highly respected in that portion of the colony. In fact, he had no better friends in the colony than Irishmen. The question had been raised for electioneering purposes, and there was no need for it, because there was no election coming off, so far as he knew.

Mr. DAWSON: It had been sought by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley to get a statement from the Premier as to his intention to call upon Sir Horace Tozer, who represented the colony of Queensland in London, to give some explanation or to make a retraction of the insulting words he had used against a large section of the people of Queensland. Any private letter that Sir Horace Tozer might send to a friend in this colony was not a sufficient explanation of the deliberate insult that he had offered to the Irish people. The hon. member for Maryborough might protest with that stentorian voice of his, and whirl his arms like windmills.

Mr. ANNEAR: You used yours to some extent last night. In fact, you pumped yourself out, while I can keep it going.

Mr. DAWSON: He tried to put ideas into the hon. member's head, as he knew he was poverty-stricken in that direction.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order in using language that will be offensive

to hon. members. I would call the hon. member's attention to Standing Order 112, which says—

A member shall not digress from the subject-matter under discussion, or comment upon expressions used by another member in a previous debate of the same session; and all imputations of improper motives, and all personal reflections, shall be deemed highly disorderly.

Mr. DAWSON was just telling the truth. At any rate, he was not aware that he had used any offensive expressions. The hon. member for Maryborough had smiled with delight at what he had said. The hon. member might rise and use his lusty lungs, and give them to understand that he was a friend of Irishmen, and that Irishmen were friends of his; but that was not the question before the Committee at all. He certainly believed the hon. member had friends among Irishmen. He respected them, and they respected him, but the question they were discussing was the unwarrantable insult that had been offered to Irish colonists by the Agent-General in London.

The PREMIER: What you are doing is stonewalling.

Mr. DAWSON: What they were doing was not stonewalling at all. What the hon. gentleman might do was to immediately accede to the very reasonable request of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, and do his duty as Premier of the colony by calling upon the Agent-General to make some explanation or retraction of the words that he had used against the 23 per cent. of the colonists of Queensland who happened to be Irish. If the hon. gentleman was not willing to do that, they wanted to know the reason why. There was nothing that he knew of to induce Sir Horace Tozer to make that gratuitous attack—that vile attack—on their fellow-colonists who happened to be Irishmen. Surely to goodness the wave of jingoism had not gone that far that they were going to protect everybody who unwarrantably insulted such a large number of the people of Queensland! The statement was unmistakable? It was not an accidental reference. It was in no way in reply to an interjection. It was something that had been deliberately done—written—sent to the leading newspaper of the world, over the signature of their Agent-General. He was particularly careful to make it pointed. He pointed out that there were two classes of people in Queensland who might object to the contingent going—the one class consisted of those people who did not believe in interfering in Imperial disputes, and the other consisted of the 23 per cent. of the people who objected because they were Irish. At the very least the Premier should afford protection to the large number of people in the colony who happened to hail from Ireland. If the hon. gentleman would not take the very reasonable course of demanding an explanation or a retraction from the Agent-General, he counselled the hon. member for Fortitude Valley to emphasise his protest by moving a small reduction in the salary of the Agent-General.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Altert*): The speeches of the last hour would have been as well left unsaid. He would not offer any apology to any person for the remarks he was going to make. He believed that the remarks made by the hon. member for Cairns, the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, and the leader of the Opposition were pretty warm. He (Mr. Plunkett) never considered what Sir Horace Tozer had said as an insult, but he knew very well that a great many of his fellow-countrymen did consider it as an insult. They thought it unwarranted on the part of the Agent-General to single out their nationality, but if Sir Horace Tozer were in Queensland he believed that neither the Premier nor any Minister could compel him to make use

of the words he had used in England. No man could be a better friend to the Irish in Queensland than Sir Horace Tozer.

Mr. GIVENS : When he wanted their votes.

Mr. PLUNKETT : He would not say "when he wanted their votes." No man could be kinder to the Irish, and even greater kindness was shown by Lady Tozer. He believed—as the leader of the Opposition had suggested—that jingoism had got hold of Sir Horace Tozer, and he thought that he had used those words for the purpose of pleasing some people in England. If he had been in Queensland, he would never have said it. No kinder-hearted man could be found, but at the same time he believed that the demand of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley was a reasonable one. The Agent-General was paid £1,500 to attend to the business of the colony, and he should do his best for all nationalities. He thought the Chief Secretary might accede to the request of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, and endeavour to get some explanation from Sir Horace Tozer regarding his statements. He did not believe in these debates with regard to nationality.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Mr. PLUNKETT : They were all Queenslanders.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : All Australians.

Mr. PLUNKETT : He was a Queenslander all the way, and he thought that all racial and religious difficulties should be left alone. The remarks made by hon. members only went to show that the request made was a reasonable one.

The PREMIER : He had already stated that he was not in sympathy with the expressions made use of by Sir Horace Tozer. They were, in his opinion, exceedingly indiscreet ; but he refused to be dictated to by hon. members on the other side as to what course he should pursue in the matter. He would vindicate as far as possible the honour of the colony and the honour of all sections of its citizens, but he declined to be dictated to as to the form in which it should be done.

Mr. CALLAN (*Fitzroy*) said he was an Irishman heart and soul, but he did not think the Committee should be led away with such trivialities. With regard to Sir Horace Tozer, he had not the least respect for him. He had known that gentleman for many years, and he did not give that [*snapping his fingers*] for what he said. He was prepared to lay on the table a pamphlet published about fifteen years ago by Mr. Knox D'Arcy, containing statements which, if untrue, would have enabled Sir Horace (then Mr.) Tozer, to have obtained a verdict for perhaps £50,000 damages. Irishmen who paid any attention to what Sir Horace Tozer said were very poor Irishmen indeed. He did not regard anything that that gentleman said.

Mr. GIVENS : But he is the official agent of the colony.

Mr. CALLAN : The people know all about that. What he said might affect people who did not know him, but he (Mr. Callan) knew him too well. But it was not worth the while of the Committee bothering about any statements of Sir Horace Tozer with regard to Irishmen or anything of that sort.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) : He had heard the several speeches delivered, but he did not think Sir Horace Tozer intended to cast a slur on Irishmen, as the hon. member for Fortitude Valley tried to make out. Perhaps he might be wrong. He was one of numerous others in Brisbane who gave Sir Horace Tozer a send-off. There was a great difficulty in getting the picnic

up, because there was a half-flood in the river, but they got up an entertainment for him and presented him with an illuminated address.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! The hon. gentleman's remarks have nothing to do with the vote before the Committee.

Mr. PETRIE : He was talking about the Agent-General, and he felt very sore on the point, because after all the trouble that had been taken, and after he had written a letter to Sir Horace, he had not the courtesy to reply. No doubt he was too busy in the old country to attend to it.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! The hon. member is not in order dealing with a private matter.

Mr. PETRIE : He had always stuck up for Sir Horace Tozer, but he thought that if Sir Horace had been here, the ex-leader of the Labour party would have been one of the members of the Ministry. He believed that Sir Horace Tozer's intentions were good, and a lot that had been said was in direct contravention of his wishes. But he was sorry that he had not replied to his letter.

The CHAIRMAN : Order ! The hon. member is not in order in referring to a private matter.

Mr. PETRIE : Perhaps he might have been wrong ; but he said that when hon. members opposite abused Sir Horace Tozer for what they thought was a grievance, he (Mr. Petrie) did not abuse that gentleman though he had a greater grievance. He did not believe the ex-leader of the Opposition would abuse Sir Horace Tozer, because those gentlemen were in accord with one another, and if Sir Horace Tozer had remained here and formed a Government the hon. member for Bundaberg would have been one of the Cabinet.

Mr. DAWSON : He might state that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley was perfectly satisfied with the last statement made by the Premier. He could assure the Premier that there had been no intention during the discussion to dictate to him in any way.

The TREASURER : The member for Cairns insisted.

Mr. DAWSON : There had been no attempt at dictation, but they wanted some redress for a genuine grievance, and if half-an-hour before the Premier had made the statement he had made recently, the matter would have been dropped then.

Mr. GLASSEY had not the slightest fault to find with the hon. member for Toombul for what he had said respecting him. The hon. member had not received the letter from the Agent-General that he expected, and regarded that as a grievance. He was not by any means anxious to increase the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General, as he thought the increase proposed was absolutely unjustifiable and uncalled for. He took up the same position now as he had taken before when that matter was before the Committee, and he should certainly take the same action. The hon. member for Toowong had said that as others whose salaries had been retrenched in 1893 had not had them restored when that proposal was previously before them, that was a justification for refusing it at that time ; but that reason did not exist now. He had himself always held the opinion that £700 was a very fair salary for the position ; and he knew something about living in the old country, and the salaries paid there. The Premier had told them that Mr. Dicken was a barrister-at-law, but that did not necessarily make him any more fit to occupy that position, and they had barristers-at-law in this city who would fill the position with equal integrity and ability for much less than £700 a year. The question was—

was £700 a year sufficient for the duties performed by that officer? He thought it was, notwithstanding the strong recommendation of the Agent-General. With respect to what had been said about Sir Horace Tozer, they knew that gentleman had sometimes been unfortunate enough to make indiscreet remarks, but they knew after a lengthened experience of him in that House that Sir Horace Tozer had many excellent qualities. He did not know a man who would more readily withdraw expressions made use of without calm consideration than Sir Horace Tozer, and no man would regret more than that gentleman that the people of the colony were taking exception to his remarks. With regard to Sir Horace Tozer's intentions in forming a Cabinet, he knew nothing whatever about them, and no hint had ever dropped from his own lips in connection with anything of the kind so far as Sir Horace Tozer was concerned. They had differed seriously on political matters, and had sometimes used angry words, but he could say that, so far as he was capable of judging, no man had ever filled the position of Home Secretary with greater ability or with more consideration and humanity than Sir Horace Tozer, and he wished they had him to-day, in preference to the gentleman who was there now. He had never known Sir Horace Tozer refuse an application for assistance for an aged or sick person or a person requiring aid. He had been always ready and willing to render assistance personally and officially, and he would fail in his duty if he did not say that in modification of some of the strong statements which had been made against Sir Horace Tozer. As he had said, he by no means agreed to the proposed increase to the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General. With regard to the inspecting engineer, he had endeavoured to get information as to whether Mr. Dick was really a first-class officer or not, as far as concerned the special duties he had to perform. If he was a first-class officer certainly £600 a year was by no means a sufficient remuneration. He would here remark that they were now on page 12 of the Estimates, of which there were 115 pages altogether. Besides that, there were the Supplementary and Loan Estimates to be considered. Between now and Christmas there were only seven weeks, and if they intended to get through them and then pass the Electoral Reform Bill before Christmas—with which he should be perfectly satisfied—it could only be done by curtailing the discussions as much as possible consistently with fair criticism. He would now move that the item "Secretary to the Agent-General, £800," be reduced by £100.

The PREMIER said the proposed increase was in line with the policy of the Government to restore retrenched officers to their original position. He considered that Mr. Dicken had been kept out of his own for the last two years. When he had referred to Mr. Dicken as being a barrister-at-law, he did so not only to show his professional status, but to imply that if that officer were practising in Queensland he would make a great deal more than £800 a year; and, if his services were required by the State in his professional capacity, he would expect a larger salary.

Mr. FISHER: You have got the best of them—the new Crown Solicitor—for £800 a year.

Mr. BROWNE: Each year that proposed increase had been brought before the Committee he had voted against it, and he intended to do so on the present occasion. No doubt Mr. Dicken was an excellent police magistrate in Queensland, but he contended—and the point had not been mentioned before—that a man who had been living in London for fifteen or twenty years was not in touch with the present condition

of Queensland. They wanted a man in that office who was up to date in Queensland affairs, and certainly a man who had been away so long could not be familiar with the conditions existing in the colony at the present day. Without saying anything disrespectful of Mr. Dicken, he would sooner give the proposed salary to a younger man going to London fresh from the colony with all the details of the colony's position at his fingers' ends; and if the Government would find a position for Mr. Dicken in Queensland commensurate with his abilities, and offered him the salary now proposed, he would not vote against it. But he would vote against any increase to a man who had lived out of Queensland for so long a time, and who was necessarily out of touch with the existing condition of things here. He noticed that the Agent-General, in his report, said he had to be constantly in his office meeting people. How he could do that when he was in Philadelphia he (Mr. Browne) could not understand. The secretary to the Agent-General was like the Under Secretary here, who, as they all knew, were the moving spirits in every thing that concerned their departments. A Minister new to office could not know as much as the under secretary of many

[11 p.m.] matters with which he had to deal, and the same remark applied to the Agent-General, who in a great many matters had to depend on the secretary to the Agent-General. He was going to oppose the increase, because Mr. Dicken had been too long in London, and the position should be occupied by a Queenslander who had not been long out of the colony.

Mr. BOLES (*Port Curtis*): For some years there had been a desire on the part of the Government to increase this vote, and he had hitherto opposed the increase, not because he did not think Mr. Dicken was worth the money; because he had personal knowledge of that gentleman when he was police magistrate at Charters Towers, and knew that he was as good a public servant as it was possible to have; but on the principle that the Government should begin by giving increases to the lower paid officers. Now that increases were being given to many of the lower paid officers, and they had already agreed to an increase of £100 to the salary of Mr. Dutton, he did not see why he should oppose this increase any longer.

Mr. GLASSEY had no hesitation in justifying his action in opposing this increase, and supporting the increase to Mr. Dutton. There was no man in the colony or out of it more severely taxed than Mr. Dutton, and had there been opposition he would have gone for the increase to Mr. Dutton's salary. He did not question the ability of Mr. Dicken, but in his opinion £700 was sufficient for the office. But considering the enormous amount of work—delicate, difficult, private and confidential work—Mr. Dutton had to perform, he did not think that gentleman was paid even at £700 a year. No man, unless he was an exceptionally strong man, could keep on long working at the high pressure Mr. Dutton was now working at, and had been working at for the last few years.

* Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) said that one of the most extraordinary arguments advanced in favour of the increase was that Mr. Dicken was at one time an eminently satisfactory police magistrate in Queensland, and it followed that he must get £800 a year in London for acting as secretary to Sir Horace Tozer, who could find time for a refreshing holiday in Philadelphia just now. It was said that because he was at one time a success as a police magistrate in some obscure country town, he must now receive a salary of £800 per annum. To carry that argument further, because a man was at

one period a house painter and had distinct success in that line, and he dabbled in scene-painting, he should get £800 a year. There did not seem to be any logic in the argument. He thought it had been said that because this gentleman at one time sentenced men to seven days or fined them five bob, he was well qualified to draw £800 a year as secretary to Sir Horace Tozer. If that was the sort of flappedoodle logic which was going to be used for the purposes of education in this country, the sooner it engaged a specially-paid logician to instruct it in the elements of logic the better it would be for it and for the Treasury. He noticed that there was an increase for the best paid officers—the men at the top of the tree. As he had already said, the fat sow was to be further greased. He objected altogether to starting at the top of the tree. When they had to cut presently, where would they start? At the bottom of the tree—with the men who were low paid. He would vote for the reduction. Whether the House would carry it was a different matter. The House was evidently in a good humour to vote increases, seeing what an immense amount of wealth the country was possessed of at present, because of the extraordinary financial ability of the Treasurer, and the immense amount of taxation imposed upon the people. The country was simply revelling in wealth, and could afford to throw it about. But the little men, where did they come in? Yes, there was actually an increase of £18 in the salary of the messenger in the London office of the Agent-General! This was a record in benevolence. If the Government was going to lavish wealth on messengers in that fashion, the country would go to headlong ruin. There was another point he desired to refer to. That was that the Hon. Sir Horace Tozer who at one time was a Minister in Queensland, and now Agent-General for Queensland, and in receipt of a magnificent salary for representing this colony in London, and putting in his spare time in Philadelphia, was also to get an increase.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to remind the hon. member that there is an amendment moved on the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General, and I would ask him to confine his remarks to that amendment.

Mr. LESINA: He would confine his remarks to that; but when the amendment was disposed of he would deal with Sir Horace Tozer.

Question—That the salary of the secretary to the Agent-General be reduced to £700—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 19.

Messrs. Dawson, Lesina, Ryland, W. Hamilton, Kerr, Turley, Givens, Hardacre, Dunsford, McDonald, Fisher, Maxwell, McDonnell, Dibley, Browne, Glassey, Jackson, Fitzgerald, and Jenkinson.

NOES, 26.

Messrs. Dickson, Foxton, Rutledge, Philp, Dalrymple, Chataway, Murray, Bartholomew, J. Hamilton, Hanran, Newell, Moore, Lord, Stodart, Auneor, Callan, Pinney, T. B. Cribb, Story, Curtis, Campbell, Groom, Petrie, Stephenson, Tooth, and Boles.

PAIRS:

Ayes—Messrs. W. Thorn, Plunkett, Stewart, and Fogarty.

Noes—Messrs. J. C. Cribb, O'Connell, Mackintosh, and Smith.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) noticed that there was an increase of £300 in the salary of the inspecting engineer. The Premier, when moving the vote, stated that that officer received £800 per annum prior to 1893, but that he was then reduced to £300 a year and given the right of private practice. He would like to know if

the hon. gentleman could in any way show that the work performed by that officer was worth £600 a year to the colony.

The PREMIER: The hon. member must have been absent earlier in the evening when he fully stated the reasons which had induced the Government to alter the status of that officer. Mr. Nisbet, who had recently come to the colony to take up the position of chief mechanical engineer to the Railway Department, was requested when in London to furnish a report on the working of the inspecting engineer's department. That gentleman had made a long report on the subject, and he (the Premier) had read it to the Committee. It showed that the average value of material on account of the Government passed under review by the inspecting engineer during the past two years was £135,000.

Mr. DAWSON: How much of it has been condemned after it has arrived here?

The PREMIER was not aware that any of it had been condemned. But in addition to that material on account of the Government there was a quantity which had been inspected on account of local contractors, representing about £21,000 per annum. Mr. Nisbet pointed out that if the Government were to employ a firm of consulting engineers to inspect that material their charge would be 2½ per cent., and that charge on £150,000 would be considerably over £3,000 per annum, whereas the whole expense to the colony at the increased salary to the inspecting engineer, including travelling expenses, additional inspectors, etc., would not amount to more than £1,200 or £1,500 a year. He had not heard that Mr. Dick had been deficient in his work, and Mr. Nisbet strongly recommended that he should be paid an increased salary, and not be allowed private practice, but be required to devote his whole attention to the work of his office. Of course they could quite understand that Mr. Dick having been so long in the Government service, and not having had an opportunity to establish a professional connection, would be likely to fill the office at a smaller remuneration than a man from outside who had obtained distinction in his profession. He thought the proposed arrangement was a good one, and hoped it would be approved by the Committee.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): The Premier had stated that he was not aware that any material passed by the inspecting engineer had been condemned. The Agent-General in his annual report stated that he had "to represent the various departments of the Executive Government of the colony in all matters specially referred by them to me, which this year have included the arbitration in connection with the 'Casuarina' dredge; negotiations for the settlement of the disputes connected with the steamer 'Premier.'" There was no doubt that if they had to pay commission for the inspection of material, it would cost the colony a great deal more than it did to pay an inspecting engineer a regular salary, but it was a question whether the cost of the arbitration in connection with the "Casuarina" and of the settlement of the disputes connected with the "Premier" would not cost the colony a great deal more than if they had paid commission to a competent man to supervise that work.

The PREMIER: These are two distinct things; they arise out of a contract.

Mr. BROWNE: The hon. gentleman stated earlier in the evening, in reply to an interjection, that the inspecting engineer would have to inspect the dredges supplied by Mr. Lindon Bates; and he would like to know, if he was not competent to report on matters like the "Casuarina" dredge and the little steamer "Premier," what sort of a

report he would make on a new style of dredges like those supplied by Mr. Lindon Bates? He did not want to delay discussion; [11:30 p.m.] but when Sir Horace Tozer showed that there were no less than two disputes on hand which had cost the colony a lot of money, then he could not understand the explanation which had been given by the Premier.

The PREMIER was surprised at the hon. gentleman raising such a discussion. They might have the most competent engineer in the world superintending the construction of a railway or a ship, but if there were alterations in the specification they naturally led to arbitration before payment was finally made. That had nothing to do with professional supervision. There was hardly a railway built in the colony over which there was not an arbitration case, although the Government employed highly skilled engineers. Exactly the same thing applied to dredges and other works. If there was any deviation from the original specification it naturally led to arbitration for the final settlement of all disputes.

Mr. BROWNE: Will that not apply to the Lindon Bates dredges?

The PREMIER: It referred simply to the "Casuarina" and the "Premier," and to the arbitration proceedings connected therewith. One was a professional matter and the other a commercial matter.

Mr. LESINA: No doubt Queensland should be congratulated on its remarkable luck. It seemed that this country was served by patriotic persons who could earn ten times as much if they would only leave the service of the Queensland Government. He did not believe that kind of rot. He did not believe those persons served the colony out of pure patriotism, and when the Premier talked such a lot of tommy-rot he must be under the impression that he was talking to a lot of fools or school-boys. He did not believe that the person who worked for £300 a year did so simply on account of the notoriety which he gained by being connected with Sir Horace Tozer in his London office, when by going outside the service he could earn £3,000 a year. And yet that was precisely what the hon. gentleman stated. The Premier had given no satisfactory reason why the person who could earn £3,000 a year in commissions was willing to serve the colony for £600 a year. The man must be a remarkable person indeed who would stay in the public service if he could earn more money outside of it. Those persons were very seldom indeed met with in everyday life, and in his experience he did not know of one man who would leave a job where he got big wages to take a job where he only got small wages. But it seemed that this country was overrun with patriots of that description who would take £600 a year instead of £3,000, merely for the pleasure and honour of serving the Government. There was more behind that vote than appeared on the surface, and not being in the secrets of the Government they could only make a guess at the reason which had actuated them in increasing the salary of the inspecting engineer from £300 to £600 a year. It had been said by the Premier that it was easily understandable that a man of high capacity might join the service of the colony, and be willing to accept £600 a year, first because of the public notoriety attaching to the position, and, secondly, because of the business connection he would establish; but was it reasonable to suppose that a competent engineer, a competent professional man in the city of London, could not earn more than £600 a year, and that because of the business connection and the notoriety attaching to the position he preferred rather to remain in the

service of the Government? In his opinion he joined the service because he thought he could make more in it than out of it, and it resolved itself into this, that if he was a competent man he could make more outside of the Government service than in it, and if he was incompetent then he had no business to be in the employ of the Government as inspecting engineer. And what had the gentleman done for his money so far? According to the report, there had been repeated difficulties with respect to work undertaken for the Government. Dredges, boilers, and sundry other kinds of work which had been turned out for the Government had proved themselves to be magnificent failures, and although passed by the inspecting engineer they had been rejected when they arrived in the colony.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House do now adjourn. The business to-morrow will be the Estimates, and as soon as the Chief Secretary's Estimates are through we shall at once proceed to the Elections Bill.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): Seeing the Estimates are coming on to-morrow, there is certain correspondence which the hon. gentleman has promised to lay on the table. Will that be ready to-morrow?

The PREMIER: It will all be printed in the morning.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to 12 o'clock.