

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 1899

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 7 NOVEMBER, 1899.

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

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table of the House:—

Return to an order, relative to barristers employed by the Crown in the Queensland National Bank prosecutions, made by the House, on motion of Mr. McDonald, on the 2nd instant.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

Report on the geology of the West Moreton or Ipswich Coal Field.

Report of the Chief Inspector of Distilleries.

Return to an order, relative to fees paid to Mr. W. F. Wilson, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Dawson, on the 1st instant.

Return to an order, relative to block of land on Lansdowne Run, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Kerr, on the 26th October last.

Return to an order, relative to valuation and rents, Blackall and Tambo districts, made by the House, on a motion of Mr. Kerr, on the 26th October last.

Return to an order, relative to proposed sale of lands on Balnagowan Run, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Curtis, on the 26th October last.

Reports to the Land Court relating to the Safforth Estate, land agent's district of Mackay.

REMOVAL OF GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM AND OFFICERS.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) asked the Secretary for Mines, without notice—Is it the intention of the Government to shift the Geological Museum and the officers of the Geological Department out to the Exhibition buildings?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—The matter is now under the consideration of the Government.

MASTER OF TITLES.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) asked the Attorney-General, without notice—If he has appointed anyone to act in the place of Mr. Gore Jones, who has recently been appointed Acting District Court Judge, and if he is aware that the legal profession is very much embarrassed at the present time?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Maranoa*) replied—No one has been appointed in Mr. Jones's place, and no communication has been received by me from any member of the public complaining of any inconvenience arising from his absence. I may say his judicial duties have now been completed.

Mr. DAWSON: Don't you think someone else should have performed his duties while he was absent?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not think it was necessary. The rush of work is not such as to necessitate anyone being appointed for so short a time as Mr. Gore Jones was absent.

QUESTIONS.

ALLEGED DESERTERS FROM QUEENSLAND CONTINGENT.

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

1. How many volunteers belonging to the Queensland Contingent have deserted from that body during the fortnight preceding embarkation?

2. What are the names and nationalities of the deserters?

The PREMIER replied—

None.

NATIONALITY OF MEMBERS OF QUEENSLAND CONTINGENT.

Mr. LESINA asked the Premier—

1. Is it true that two stranded Swedish tourists at Bundaberg were specially naturalised to enable them to join the contingent of Queensland Volunteers for the Transvaal?

2. Did any natives volunteer in the Bundaberg district?

3. How many Germans, Frenchmen, Dutch, Swedes, Jews, Russians, and Danes volunteered?

4. What is the percentage of native-born Queenslanders in the contingent compared with all other nationalities?

The PREMIER replied—

Information not available.

NUMBER OF MARRIED MEN IN QUEENSLAND CONTINGENT.

Mr. LESINA: I would like to ask the Premier, without notice—

The PREMIER: Give notice.

Mr. LESINA: I have already given notice a week ago without getting the information to the question with reference to the number of married men in the contingent.

The PREMIER: I will reply to that question.

Mr. DAWSON: Why did you say "give notice" before you heard the question?

The PREMIER: The information has been obtained that there were forty-five married men in the contingent.

DEEP LEVELS (CHARTERS TOWERS) DEVELOPMENT BILL.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*), it was resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to assist certain persons to test, open up, and develop at deep levels certain auriferous lands situated on the goldfield of Charters Towers.

DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL'S ACCOUNT CURRENT.

On the motion of Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*), it was resolved—

That there be laid on the table of this House a return showing the several items of expenditure, covered by the sum of £26,340 2s. 10d., described in Agent-General's report for 1898 as "disbursements from the Queensland Government Agent-General's account current for the year."

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

THURSDAY ISLAND GARRISON.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*) moved that £9,568 be granted for the Thursday Island garrison. As hon. members were aware, this vote was contributed to by the colonies under an agreement made for the maintenance of a garrison at Thursday Island. As there appeared to be some want of clear perception as to how that garrison was maintained and how it originated, if it was not trespassing too much on the time of the Committee he would explain how the matter now stood.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The total expenditure to date upon construction, armament, etc., was £23,876, and the expenditure for maintenance to date represented £40,768.

Mr. GLASSEY: What period do those amounts cover?

The PREMIER: The period since 1891. South Australia had never contributed to that, although it was understood she would contribute. Her deficiency was £5,292 12s. 3d. A conference of commandants, which met in 1896, recommended that the following troops should be regarded as the war strength of the garrison:—Artillery, 170, all ranks; infantry, 200, all ranks; medical staff corps, 18, all ranks; total, 388.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: War strength?

The PREMIER: War strength. In April, 1898, Sir Hugh Nelson wrote to the contributing colonies suggesting that the then existing establishment at Thursday Island, which consisted of fifty permanent artillery and forty-five militia artillery, should be increased to the limit recommended by the conference; and as the additional troops could not be raised in Thursday Island itself, he suggested that the reinforcements necessary to bring the garrison up to war strength should be provided from the Queensland Defence Force, the idea being that the establishment of the force should be increased by the number of men required for service at Thursday Island. These men, although forming part of the ordinary Defence Force of the colony, would be paid by the contributing colonies and would be held in readiness for transfer to the island on the outbreak of war. The annual expenditure estimated to be necessary to cover the cost of the garrison on the increased basis was £11,774, a difference of £4,877 on the cost of maintenance of the smaller garrison. In consideration of the contributing colonies agreeing to the increased expenditure for main-

tenance, Sir Hugh Nelson offered, on behalf of Queensland, to pay the whole cost of the additional armament required, estimated at £7,300. The principal colonies having agreed to the proposal, provision was made on last year's Estimates for a considerable portion of the increased expenditure, while on the current year's Estimates nearly the whole sum is provided (£11,483, including contribution of Queensland). There appeared to be some uncertainty among hon. members on the subject of the object in occupying and fortifying Thursday Island. Frequently statements were made that some new passage had been discovered through the Barrier Reef or among the islands, which would render all their preparations useless and nullify the power of the island as a fortress for the protection of their shipping trade. Thursday Island might be called a strategic base of secondary importance.

Mr. GLASSEY: Secondary importance. Where is the port of first importance?

The HOME SECRETARY: Gibraltar or Malta, for instance.

The PREMIER: He should say Malta. It was of value both as a possible coaling station, and as a rendezvous and harbour of refuge for ships during war; where they might obtain such water and provisions as might be stored there, and protection from pursuit by hostile cruisers. It was therefore necessary to hold the island with a permanent garrison and a suitable armament. It was also of the greatest importance to deny the use of this strategic point to any hostile nation, to whom some such point would be essential for the success of any raiding expedition on a large scale. The garrison was now provided under an arrangement with certain other colonies, and consisted, during peace, of fifty officers and men of the Queensland regiment of the Royal Australian Artillery, of a small local corps of Garrison Artillery, the establishment of which is fixed at forty-five of all ranks, and the members of the local rifle club. During war the garrison would be increased by twenty-five officers and men of the Queensland regiment of Royal Australian Artillery kept in Brisbane during peace as a depot. The whole of the officers and men of the Queensland Regiment of Royal Australian Artillery were interchangeable as regards service in Thursday Island. The Infantry garrison in war time would consist of three companies from the Queensland Defence Force. These, during peace, were borne on the establishment of the Infantry of the Defence Force, and such companies would be selected for this duty as might be convenient at that time. There was also a small section of the Army Medical Corps provided for on the establishment; but this corps had not yet been raised. If, as seems probable, there should be a considerable development in the goldmining industry on Horn Island, a local infantry corps may be raised which would be more immediately available in case of war. He thought this information would be acceptable to the Committee. As this vote was to be contributed to by the other colonies, it might safely be passed without any drain on the finances of this colony.

Mr. GLASSEY (*Bundaberg*): He gathered from the remarks of the Premier that Thursday Island was regarded as of secondary importance, and he had interjected where there was another place of first importance. He thought the Home Secretary replied, but he was not able to catch what he said.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said such a place as Gibraltar or Malta.

Mr. GLASSEY: He did not think any hon. member would cavil at any reasonable expenditure in order to keep the Thursday Island

garrison or any such place of importance in the best possible state, so as to protect the colony from any hostile force which might threaten its shores. He was going to ask whether the Premier had had any recent report from the Commandant as to whether he was satisfied that Thursday Island, as at present equipped, was armed and equipped with the very best weapons procurable at the present time. He believed there was a report from the Commandant, but he said very little about it. That did not imply that it might not be perfectly safe. At page 9 he said—

A considerable amount of work has been performed during the past year by military labour under the superintendence of Captain W. A. Coxen, R.A.A., viz.:

- (a) Communications;
- (b) Cable for electrical communication;
- (c) Improvements on the rifle range and roads.

A wire entanglement to enclose the fort and D.R.F. No. 1 is to be put in hand forthwith.

BUILDINGS.

These have been well looked after.

The building of the drill-shed for the Torres Strait Garrison Battery is being delayed at present until the site can be permanently settled.

COMMUNICATIONS.

A foreman and gang of civilian labourers are now engaged on the construction of military roads, and a total length of 156 chains of road has been completed during the past year.

A scheme of electrical communication has been approved, and will no doubt be completed during the coming financial year. A portion of this cable has already been laid by military labour as previously stated.

It was a very meagre report; but it might be all that was required. It would be satisfactory to the Committee if the Premier could tell them whether, in the judgment of the Commandant or in the judgment of military authorities, it was in as perfect a state of efficiency as it was possible to make it, whether it was desirable that the present armaments or guns were old or out of date, or whether it was not better that it should be equipped with the very best weapons procurable, and put it in the strongest position it was possible it could be put in. He was sure that every hon. member of the House, and the country generally—and Australia generally—would not grudge any increased expenditure in order to make this important place as strong as it was possible to make it with a view to guarding their shores.

The PREMIER: From a conversation he had had with Colonel Gunter, who not long ago visited Thursday Island, he gathered that, as far as finances had been advanced for the purpose of providing for the efficiency of this military station, he considered everything in a very satisfactory condition. He (the Premier) was not prepared to say that the mode of equipment was such as to constitute it a first-rate fortress, nor did its position demand it. He thought the position secondary related not only to the equipment but to the location of the station.

As the Home Secretary interjected,

[4 p.m.] Gibraltar or any other strong position commanding the passage of fleets, as a key to an entrance to any strait, would be regarded as a first-class fortress, if properly equipped. It was not pretended that Thursday Island commanded Torres Strait; but it commanded the harbour of Thursday Island, wherein was established a coaling depôt, which would be of very great importance in case any international complications arose. As far as the equipment at Thursday Island was concerned, he understood that all the guns were up to date; in fact the Imperial authorities had supplied them quite recently, and as a fortress on a moderate scale, Thursday Island was considered satisfactory. The sister colonies did not seem inclined to increase the contribution; but it should be borne in mind that the deficiency caused by the recalcitrancy of South Australia

was being made good by the contributing colonies, and, as he had said, Queensland had contributed over £7,000 in war material and in other ways improving the condition of the fort. In reply to the hon. member for Bundaberg, he could only say that the Commandant had informed him that, so far as means had been placed at his disposal, the money had been spent judiciously, and that Thursday Island was in a fair condition of defence. Negotiations with the other colonies with regard to Thursday Island and King George's Sound were in progress, as to whether the armaments at these places might not be increased for the benefit of the whole of the colonies, but that was a matter which could be more fully discussed by the Federal Executive, when all the colonies would take a deeper interest in Port Albany and Thursday Island than they did at the present time.

Mr. SMITH (Bowen): He had asked the Premier on a former occasion what the different amounts spent at Thursday Island and King George's Sound had been, but he was not aware that the Premier had replied to the second question—as to the amount expended for the fortifications at King George's Sound. A conference was held in 1891 or 1892, and at that conference it was recommended that both Thursday Island and King George's Sound should be fortified. He thought it was of the utmost importance that attention should be given to this question, because they were on the verge of finding out that it was necessary to be prepared for war, in case of an invasion of any description. He would like to know what had been done towards fortifying King George's Sound. Another question arose as to South Australia's contribution. She was morally bound to pay her contribution, but nothing had been obtained from her with regard to the expenses connected with these fortifications. If the other colonies were prepared to pay their contribution, he thought some steps should be taken to endeavour to get South Australia to come in in a federal spirit, and pay her portion of the expenses. He would like to know if any further steps were to be taken in that direction. Of course, from a strategic point of view it was absolutely necessary that Thursday Island should be fortified, and that it should be kept in our hands in such a condition that the colonies would be able to hold it against any foe if necessary. There had been some talk about fortifying Port Darwin, and he believed South Australia wished that, but nothing had been done in the matter, and he did not know whether, under the agreement, the non-fortification of that port might leave South Australia a loophole to creep out of any expense with regard to the other fortifications mentioned. He thought that would be a great pity, and he would like to know what had been done in the matter.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman would see by the Estimates that £800 was Queensland's contribution in the matter of the King George's Sound fortifications, and it was on the basis of population. West Australia contributed a-quarter of the total cost, and the contributions of the other colonies were based on population. With regard to South Australia, he had already mentioned in the debate under the head of "Federal Garrisons" that the proportion this colony had to pay through the failure of South Australia to contribute was £25,292. The circumstances were these—

On the 30th September, 1892, a letter was received by the Premier from the South Australian Government containing an estimate of the cost of the works at Port Darwin—

That was after the first agreement came into existence.

Mr. SMITH : After the conference.

The PREMIER : After a later conference, where it was agreed that all the colonies should contribute towards the expenses connected with King George's Sound—

and confirming a statement conveyed in a telegram received previously, to the effect that that Government had agreed to recommend Parliament to join with the other colonies in defraying the cost, on a population basis, of giving effect to the proposals for the defence of Thursday Island, but on the understanding that the proposals respecting King George's Sound and Port Darwin was similarly treated.

Mr. GLASSEY : That was laid down by South Australia.

The PREMIER : Yes, that was their request.

Sir Samuel Griffith, who was then Chief Secretary, replied to this communication, stating that Queensland was prepared to join with the other colonies in contributing upon a population basis to the cost of the Port Darwin defences; and it does not appear that this colony ever departed from the agreement, nor does it seem that the other colonies concerned refused to contribute to the cost of the Port Darwin defences.

From this it seemed to him that there were no reasonable grounds why South Australia should refuse to contribute towards the cost of the garrisons at Thursday Island and King George's Sound, in the absence of their own construction of works at Port Darwin.

Mr. GLASSEY : That will be a debt against them under the federal arrangement.

The PREMIER : Probably it would. The other colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and West Australia were honourably joining in the expense of providing for the deficiency, as Queensland had been the paymaster. It seemed to him an extraordinary thing that South Australia should have taken up such a position; but he thought Mr. Lyne, the Premier of New South Wales, was about to open up negotiations with South Australia, with a view of ascertaining what reason, in addition to that already given, why that colony withheld her contribution.

Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*) quite agreed with the hon. member for Bowen that our military expenditure should be such as to place our defences in a thoroughly satisfactory position. Considering the amount expended in connection with coastal defence at Thursday Island and elsewhere, and the amount of expense connected with the various branches of the Defence Force inland, they should have the very best man available as organiser at the head of our military forces. The present salary given was £700.

Mr. GLASSEY : No, £900.

Mr. J. HAMILTON thought that £1,000 a year was little enough. The cheapest plan was to get a good officer, and £1,000 a year was not too much for a scientific man of high attainments.

Mr. GLASSEY : He is really drawing £1,000 a year. There is £200 for lodging and £100 for forage.

Mr. J. HAMILTON : His horses got that. They paid chief engineers £1,500 a year, and they could not expect to get a man of high scientific attainments without a high salary. Since there was to be a change of commandants, he hoped the Government would take steps to ascertain who were the best men available. In the first place they wanted a man who had seen service. The man who had seen service would be looked up to and trusted by our force if called upon to defend their country. One of two men he would like very much to see as commandant, if it was possible to get either. One was Colonel De Voux. He was a really good man, and liked by officers and men.

The PREMIER : He is in Africa.

Mr. J. HAMILTON : More power to him. He had only heard of that gentleman's military

tactics being once unfavourably criticised, and that was by his little son of eight years of age. The colonel was surrounded in the fort, and a short distance from it a man set fire to a house, after which the colonel shot him from the fort. The little fellow said, "Daddie ought to have shot him before he set fire to the house." Then again there was Colonel Matthius, of the 75th Highlanders, a good organiser and a brave soldier, of whom he heard the other day a story told by a Gordon Highlander who had just left for the Transvaal. Two regiments had attempted the Heights of Dargai and been repulsed. Sir William Lockhardt then sent instructions to Matthius that the 75th Highlanders must make the attempt—

The CHAIRMAN : I would remind the hon. gentleman that the vote for the Commandant's salary has been passed.

Mr. J. HAMILTON : They were discussing now the federal garrison, and the Premier referred to the report of the Commandant regarding it.

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. gentleman is discussing the salary of the Commandant, and that salary has been passed.

Mr. J. HAMILTON : He would refrain from discussing the salary, and point out how desirable it was that they should have a commandant whose reports upon Thursday Island garrison would be thoroughly reliable. Possibly it might be desirable to have an artillery officer. He thought he was in order in referring to Colonel Matthius, as he was trying to show his efficiency for the post in connection with Thursday Island by the tale he was telling. The Colonel said to his men, "The General says the Gordon Highlanders must make the attempt—the Gordon Highlanders are going to take it." When he got up to the top of the hill to which he had led his regiment he was quite out of wind, and said to a soldier beside him, "Sergeant, I am quite done, I am getting old." The sergeant replied, "Well, Colonel, you have done very well for an old man." The kind of man they wanted was a man who was *en rapport* with his officers and men—an officer whom the men would love and respect. For that reason he hoped when the Government were taking into consideration the appointment of a new commandant, they would take great care to get a man in whom the men had implicit confidence.

Mr. GIVENS : Does the present Commandant not give satisfaction?

Mr. J. HAMILTON : That was not the question. He had made no reference to him. They should adopt every means in their power to get a thoroughly good man for the position, especially as the increasing importance of this colony rendered it all the more necessary.

The PREMIER : He went with the hon. member for Cook to the extent of saying that it was desirable, from time to time, to introduce as commandants men who had the latest acquaintance with military tactics and organisation. It was no disparagement to any gentleman to say that being situated on this continent of peace he could not perhaps keep himself so well abreast of military organisation as he would do if he had taken part in some of Great Britain's little wars, and thus become fully aware of modern military organisation and equipment. He should be very sorry if his remarks or those of the hon. member for Cook should be construed into any disparagement of the gentleman at present holding the position of Commandant. He did not accept the hon. member's remarks in that light, and should resent them if he thought that had been intended, because he was sure that General Gunter had

done all in his power to put the Queensland Defence Force in a thoroughly sound condition, and when he left he would leave the force in a much better position than that in which he found it. That was his full belief, and he believed General Gunter was desirous of doing the fullest justice to the colony. Still, as his time was expiring, he had told him that it was desirable in the interests of the colony that they should have as Commandant a gentleman who had been more lately in touch with military affairs. He had accepted General Gunter's intimation that he desired to relinquish the position, which he would do according to his agreement within three months of the expiration of that agreement. The Government had been in negotiation through the War Office for the purpose of obtaining the services of an officer of high military distinction, and one who would comply with the conditions set forth by the hon. member for Cook; but since the war in the Transvaal negotiations seemed to have been suspended, and he was afraid that at present it would be somewhat difficult to get a first-class officer, owing to the sad havoc that had been wrought amongst officers serving in the Transvaal, and to the opportunities for active service which were now presenting themselves. He could assure the hon. gentleman that the Government would endeavour to get the best officer available for the position. The Defence Force was expanding now to such dimensions that it should be governed by a thoroughly competent officer, up to date in all military organisation and tactics. If it was necessary to increase the salary of the Commandant, he for one would have no hesitation in doing so. Up to the present there had been no demur as to the salary, however, and he did not think that any increase would be asked. He could assure the Committee that whoever might be Commandant, he would be a man of good military reputation, if possible a Royal Artillery officer, and one who had seen service in some of the recent wars of the Empire.

Mr. GLASSEY did not think the hon. member for Cook had intended to make any reflection upon the present Commandant, although some of his remarks might bear that inference.

The PREMIER: I do not think so, or I should have resented it.

Mr. GLASSEY was not in a position to express an opinion as to the ability of the present Commandant. It required someone like the Premier—who came in contact with the Commandant, and was in a position to review his work—of course only from the point of view of a layman—to express such an opinion. But from all he had heard, the Commandant had done excellent work. The force was efficient, and, seeing that the Commandant was about to take his departure, he would be very sorry if any remarks were made in that Chamber which in any way reflected upon his ability. With regard to the gentleman who was to be appointed to fill Major-General Gunter's place, while he was anxious that the military affairs of the colony should be kept as efficient as possible—and that could only be done by having first-class, up-to-date men in command—till it would be as well at the present moment to pause, seeing that in a short time they anticipated there would be federal action taken in reference to defence. He presumed they would get the most capable man they could to take general command, and it would be for him to select his subordinates, and locate them in the several colonies. It would therefore be unwise for Queensland to attempt to deal single-handed with the question at present. They should certainly make the defences of places like Thursday Island as effective as possible, and they should be provided with the best possible weapons. In the report from which the Premier had quoted,

some reference was made to the discovery of some new passages in the vicinity of Thursday Island a little while ago. If the rumour was true, those passages would render the fortifications and garrison at Thursday Island quite useless. He did not quite gather from the report whether there was any tangible foundation for the rumour, and he hoped the Premier would be able to enlighten the Committee, because it was a matter of some importance.

Mr. GIVENS: There are plenty of open passages there.

Mr. GLASSEY: Then those passages should be guarded in the most effective manner.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It is only the Japs who say that.

The PREMIER: The question of the discovery of new passages had been raised by some hon. member on Friday evening last, but he had not been able to discover whether there was any foundation for the rumour. He had referred to the Port Office, but he could get no information with regard to passages leading into Thursday Island Harbour. He did not know about the straits. The straits were a wide expanse, and, of course, Thursday Island did not control them by any means in the same way that Gibraltar controlled the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. The Commandant's report referred to what had been said in the Committee on Friday evening—

There appears to be some uncertainty among hon. members of the Legislative Assembly on the subject of the object in occupying and fortifying Thursday Island. Frequently statements are made that some new passage has been discovered through the Barrier Reef or among the islands, which will render all our preparations useless and nullify the power of the island as a fortress for the protection of our shipping trade.

Thursday Island was simply fortified to protect the harbour as a coaling station, and was not intended to act as a key to Torres Strait.

Mr. LESINA (*Clement*): He referred to this matter on Friday evening. After the visit of the Mining Commission to Thursday Island he interviewed Mr. Dawson with respect to his trip and his impressions of Thursday Island. Speaking of Thursday Island, the hon. member said that it was common talk among the Japanese storekeepers—who had practical control of the island—that the Japanese had discovered a new passage through the straits, which would not bring a Japanese war vessel within thirty miles of the Island. He merely gave the statement for what it was worth, but if it was true, the discovery would enable a Japanese fleet to come through passages now unknown to the military authorities, and the expenditure upon the fortification of the island would be practically wasted, although the Premier said it was fortified for the protection of the harbour. Whether it was true or not, the matter had been talked about among the people who had practical control of the Island. He certainly looked to the Government to make some searching inquiries.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Some time ago a machine rest had been purchased for the purpose of testing the shooting of rifles. He would like to ask the Premier why it was not used?

The PREMIER understood that the machine rest had been purchased, but had not been used so far because it required a solid concrete foundation, and until it had that it was inadvisable to use it. He believed the reason it had not been placed in a more permanent situation was owing to the absence of funds; but it was intended this year that a permanent place should be provided for it.

Mr. J. HAMILTON said that the machine rest had been put on the ground. The Queensland military authorities had stated to him that it was

utterly useless, and that they could make better shooting off the sandbag rest. This arose from the fact that they had simply dumped it on the ground, and then shot from it; and they were actually unaware until he informed them that they were not doing the machine justice, and that it had to be screwed on to logs bedded in concrete. They had paid a big price for it. It should be put down in a proper place. It ought to have been down long ago, and he hoped it would be made use of as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

MARINE FORCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*) moved that £16,389 be [4.30 p.m.] granted for the Marine Force of Queensland. The increase in the vote represented the comparatively small sum of £1,728. The staff salaries were increased by £646. The salary of Acting Naval Commandant Captain W. Drake was increased from £400 to £500; Staff Paymaster E. V. Pollock, £250 to £300. Those increases were paid from contingencies last year in the shape of an entertainment allowance granted owing to the re-commissioning of the "Gayundah." There was an increase to the staff surgeon, Dr. Keibell, from £50 to £75. The salary paid to this officer was originally at the rate of £100 per annum, but was reduced to £50 when the gunboats were out of commission. The clerk, G. L. Macandie, was increased from £90 to £100; chief torpedo gunner and storekeeper, W. B. Miles, from £200 to £225, this increase being on account of special work in connection with torpedo classes. The amount for drill instructors was increased from £560 to £990. One instructor at Cairns was increased from £100 to £180, being promoted from class B to class A, in consequence of an increase in the Cairns Naval Corps; there was provision for an additional instructor at Rockhampton, £150; also for a relieving instructor at £150; one instructor at Maryborough was increased from £100 to £150, being promoted from class B to class A, and there was an increase from £30 to £36 for a messenger. He did not think the moderate increase in this very popular vote would be objected to. It was a force which he would like to see considerably increased, but he had not had time this year to devote his attention as he would have liked to the question. The fact of the matter was that the Naval Commandant had at all times shown a great spirit of self-abnegation. He had twice stated that he thought the control of the force should now devolve upon a man more thoroughly in touch with recent naval developments in the Royal Navy, and it had been matter of consideration as to who should be appointed. He was sure hon. members and the country recognised that Captain Drake had done excellent service. He had kept the force well in hand; even with the very small means at his command he had brought it to a position which was highly creditable, and his retirement would be regarded with regret; at the same time he recognised the necessity of a proper reorganisation, which could not be brought about without having a man more in touch with the requirements of a naval force at the present day. He might say, as was well referred to by the hon. member for Bundaberg recently, that it was a question whether the reorganisation of the force might not be deferred till after federation, when the whole thing would devolve upon a central executive; therefore he had not brought the matter forward in a different shape from that in which it appeared last year. He did not think the Committee would object to such a small increase, which he trusted would maintain the force in efficiency until it was absorbed by the federal authorities.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) thought hon. members would agree with the Premier as to the comparatively small increase. Though the hon. gentleman said it was on account of the near approach of federation that he had made no alteration in this branch of the Defence Force, a great alteration had been made in the land force. He had not a word to say against the land force, but he had urged year after year that the naval force should be the first line of defence in a colony with such a coast line as ours. The increase this year for the land force was £31,000, while the increase for the naval force amounted to the comparatively modest sum of £1,728. In view of the complications in South Africa they should consider what they were going to do in the event of these colonies being assailed. They saw by the wires to-day that, despite the rather disastrous calamities that had overtaken the other force, at Ladysmith, a handful of blue-jackets had been the salvation of that city and the army there. Time after time it had been pointed out that the first line of defence in this colony should be naval brigades along the coast. If any attempt was made on these colonies it would not be by an army going to the interior, but by a naval force attacking our commerce and our towns along the coast. There had recently been a conference of naval officers held in Melbourne to discuss the whole question of naval defence from the federal point of view, but the conclusions at which they arrived and the statements made were more applicable to Queensland than to any of the other colonies. The report was signed by Francis Hixson, captain, commanding New South Wales Naval Forces, president; W. R. Cresswell, captain, naval commandant, South Australia; Robert Collins, captain, Secretary for Defence, Victoria; Walton Drake, commander, acting naval commandant, Queensland; and F. Tickell, commander Victorian naval forces. The statements and conclusions referred to in the report of the conference were in confirmation of the statements made year after year in that House by himself and other hon. members on that vote. They had referred to the large proportion of the population not of Queensland alone, but of the whole of Australia, that consisted of seafaring men, and to the splendid shipping now running along their coast, and they had pointed out that there they had the nucleus of a first-rate marine force. The report of the conference of naval officers was in direct confirmation of that contention. They recommended the formation of a large naval force, and they said—

There exists already a valuable nucleus of trained men, and from an examination of the returns of the sea-going and fishing population, the conference consider that under effective organisation a reserve force of 3,000 men could be raised in time of need.

Further on they said—

The ability of the naval establishments in the Australian colonies to raise and train naval forces has long been proved, as shown by the reports of the Admirals commanders-in-chief on the station.

He had referred to the same thing on one occasion in that House. They were paying something like £14,000 as their contribution to the subsidy paid to the Australian squadron this year, and it had been suggested by men like himself, who did not profess to be experts, that it would be a far better plan for them to train men to man those ships instead of paying money to fetch men out from the old country to man them. The report he had referred to showed that that had been pointed out at the Premier's conference in London in 1897, presided over by the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, when it was proposed by the Right Hon. C. C. Kingston, Premier of South Australia, to sub-

stitute a force of trained men for the payment in money now made for the maintenance of the auxiliary squadron. The conference also said that that principle received some support in a letter received by the conference from Lord Brassey. That had been the contention here all along, and it was now confirmed by the opinion of the experts present at that conference. The report further stated that—

When the auxiliary squadron was first established by agreement between the colonies and the Admiralty, it was generally understood, in Australia at any rate, that the ships would form a means of drilling and training Australian seamen.

This expectation has never been realised, the vessels in reserve having always been laid up in Sydney, and no attempt has been made to utilise them for the benefit of the local naval force.

It was further pointed out—

It has been the invariable policy of the motherland to encourage all her colonies and dependencies in self-defence—i.e., to encourage the organising of forces suited to meet and to resist the particular danger to which they are exposed. The Cape, Canada, and India are all cases in point—all have land frontiers requiring military defence.

Australia having no military frontier requires for her defence a sea or naval force.

That was what anyone with common sense could see, and the conference ended up their report by saying—

Every consideration both of defence and our position of influence, which will be that of the "new power in the Pacific," demands from those responsible for the organisation of federal defence the recognition of the primary importance of naval defence for Australia.

Those words were applicable to all the colonies at the present time, and especially applicable as things were looking just now. Appended to the report was a letter from Lord Brassey, who from his official connection with the Admiralty and the great interest he had always taken in naval matters, was an acknowledged authority on the subject. He thoroughly endorsed all those gentlemen at that conference said as to the necessity for raising a naval defence force, and speaking of forming the force he said—

In lieu of service in the fleet, it might be considered sufficient to put in drills afloat in colonial-armed vessels, such as the "Cerberus" and "Protector," or on board one of the ships not in commission in the Sydney Harbour.

He might say they had taken one little step in that direction last session in putting the "Gayundah" into commission, and on that he congratulated the Government. It might be considered only a small matter, but it at any rate gave their men some little opportunity of being trained. Lord Brassey in his letter went on to say—

In this connection it may be urged that if service in the Colonial Naval Reserve is made attractive, we should be able to raise men from a comparatively educated class. The steamers in the coasting trade of Australia are manned by crews of exceptional qualifications.

Those were the very words which had been used year after year in that House, and those were some of the reasons why he thought they should spend a great deal more upon the naval branch of their Defence Force. That force had been starved all the time, while there had been immense increases in the vote for the Land Defence Force. He was prepared to give that branch all credit for what they did, but without casting any reflection upon them they could only be considered the second line of their defence. There was one little matter upon which the Premier might give them some information. Prior to 1893 all branches of the Defence Force had sixteen days' drill for which they got paid during the year. On account of the depression in 1893 that had been cut down to twelve days. Since

then, as things were looking brighter, the Land Defence Force had again been given sixteen days' drill, for which they are paid, but the Naval Brigade had still only twelve days' drill in the year for which they were paid. He thought they should be put on the same footing in that respect with the Land Defence Force. The Premier had said that the Federal Government would most likely shortly take the matter of naval defence in hand, and he hoped those who would represent Queensland would urge that the naval force—being the primary defence of the colonies—should be put on the footing it ought to occupy in a country like this.

The PREMIER: He would answer the last remarks of the hon. member first. Though the Naval Defence Force only got twelve days' pay they also got deferred pay under the old system, which really gave them more than the sixteen days' pay received by the Land Defence Force. He did not know why the system for each should not be assimilated as he thought they should be, but it would be a satisfaction to hon. members to know that the members of the Naval Defence Force were not worse treated than their brethren of the Land Defence Force. The remarks of the hon. gentleman with regard to the availability or capability of their seamen, he quite agreed with, and he might say that the conference to which he referred, and whose report he read, was based on the view of these men manning the auxiliary squadron—not the officers, he believed, but merely the men—and no doubt they would be very excellent material for the purpose. Of course it took up time to effect a change; but Lord Brassey, who had taken very great interest in this matter, had been collecting statistics as to the number of seamen available on the coast of Australia in the different States, and he dared say that would be the basis on which something would be done under federation. In the meantime their own boats had not been idle. As hon. gentleman would see from the report of the Commandant, the "Paluma" had been in commission during the year.

Mr. BROWNE: And done good work.

The PREMIER: He quite recognised that; she had done very excellent work. She had been in Brisbane and visited Townsville, Rockhampton, Maryborough, and Cairns, and had been employed in training at those places; so the spirit of her nautical vocation had been kept alive well by the Naval Commandant. As he had already stated, when they came to deal with the naval defence of this great island continent it would be a very large thing. There was no question about it, that the Federal Executive, looking at the large extent of the coast line they had to control and protect, would have to frame very much larger estimates than the isolated States had been doing up till the present. He merely looked upon their defence as port defence, not as coast defence in the sense of the word, or say that they were up to date. Although they answered the purpose of training ships, they could not consider the "Gayundah" or "Paluma" vessels of such power as would justify them in reposing their entire confidence in them as protectors in case of war with a maritime enemy. He believed that in the large ports of Australia the character of the population was such—for their boys were really amphibious; they took to the water as well as to the land—that there should be a large marine force established in time in coastal Australia; and when they had proper training, as he trusted they would receive, they would form the nucleus of a very useful force in the early future. The Government here had been in correspondence with the Admiral, to see if a

training vessel could not be obtained for Brisbane, so as to educate some of their boys, not only to the sea, but to the discipline on board a warship.

Mr. GLASSEY: What is the result of the correspondence?

The PREMIER: He did not think a vessel was available yet.

Mr. LESINA: That system was condemned in all the other colonies, except New South Wales.

The PREMIER: Very competent authorities seemed to think it would furnish a very excellent nucleus. He thought it would be admitted that a boy trained and disciplined was a very useful member of the community, even if he had to pursue his vocation on land. Of all classes of men, sailors were the most handy in a general sense. Nothing seemed to come amiss to them, and the inculcation of habits of discipline and obedience tended to form good moral character as well as give physical training. With regard to increasing expenditure in this branch, it would be better to await the action of the Federal Government, when the whole of Australia would see, not only that the proper force was provided, but that the ship which would employ such force was also provided. When they went into the expense of warships, as the hon. gentleman well knew, it would mean a very heavy expenditure, and it would be very unwise, he thought, for Queensland to do it for one year, seeing that the Federal Executive would be appointed to deal with it.

Mr. TURLEY: There has been trouble with the officers. Can you give us any information?

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*) was glad to see that the Premier was fully aroused as to the importance of naval defence; but it seemed that, although he was fully aroused as to the importance of the naval branch of the Defence Force, it was very niggardly treated as compared with the land force. The total sum set down for it was only £17,389, which was less than the total increase set down for the land force. Apart from what was set down for the purpose of the federal garrison and the expenditure from loan fund, the increase for the land force was £17,784. He thought the Committee must come to the conclusion that when the naval branch was provided for in that niggardly fashion, they were simply starving it and depriving it of any usefulness whatever. As had been pointed out by the hon. member for Croydon, the experience of experts and the ablest military authorities, whether on this continent or elsewhere, went to prove that it was the most efficient branch of the defence from any point of view. Further, it was the most efficient garrison they could have, because not only were they competent to man a battery or a fort, but more competent, because being trained to take effective measures for defence at sea. The land force could not do anything of that kind; they were only trained to act on land. The marine force could act both on land and sea, and, as had been pointed out by the hon. member for Croydon, they were doing most efficient service already in South Africa. Considering the strength of the argument that had been continuously brought forward in the House in favour of the marine branch, it was a shame for the Government to starve it in the way they were doing. £17,000 was very little indeed to maintain an efficient naval defence, having regard to the colony's long coast line. The naval brigades in most of the towns of the colony were the most creditable forces they had in the whole of the Defence Force. He had seen them drilling in Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns, and elsewhere, and everybody he had found com-

petent to express an opinion said they were the most creditable, not only to the force but to the colony as a whole, and the pity was that there was not a large number of them. How could they have a large number of them when they had not the necessary funds to maintain them? They got very little. They gave their services nearly free; they gave a large portion of their time to drill; they entered into the spirit of the thing with the greatest heartiness; and that spirit should be encouraged. As had been pointed out by the hon. member for Croydon, it must be evident to even the most casual observer that, situated as Queensland was, they could not be attacked by land—that if ever they were attacked, and had to repel an aggressor, it would be by sea.

For that reason, the marine branch [5 p.m.] of the defence force must be our first line of defence in order to keep any enemy from landing on our shores. He thought the position should be reversed; that instead of spending about £100,000 on the land force, they should spend that sum on the marine force, and the smaller amount on the land forces. If the Premier came down with a liberal policy towards this marine force, he would meet with the hearty support of the Committee. If there was to be any increase, it should be towards making the marine force more efficient rather than making the land force more efficient.

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*) would have been very glad to see the increase for naval defence larger this year than the previous year. The increase last year over 1897 was about £5,000, and the increase this year was certainly very small. There did not appear to be any difficulty according to the Commandant in the matter of increasing the naval force. He said in his last report: "No difficulty has been experienced in increasing the establishment." It was evidently only a question of funds. As had been pointed out by hon. members who had spoken, the experiences in the South African war recently showed that they ought to do everything in their power to increase the naval force, as it was the first line of defence of the colony. Hon. members would have noticed a cablegram in that morning's *Courier* stating that privateers were being fitted out in connection with the South African difficulty; and although it did not state that these privateers were likely to come down on the Australian coast, yet they might get a cablegram in a day or two, stating this. They ought, therefore, to take some steps to make this branch as efficient as possible. He did not take exception to the increase of £100 in the salary of the Naval Commandant, although he thought it rather singular that this increase should be given, when that officer admitted his incompetency—for that was what it amounted to—when he said that someone else more competent should be placed at the head of the Naval Defence Force. The gentlemen at the head of both branches should be paid high salaries, because he had come to the conclusion since the war in South Africa that more depended on the officers than on the men. While he did not want to disparage the men in any way, it seemed to him that more depended on the generals and officers, on their intelligence and scientific knowledge—both in the army and navy—especially when the present scientific weapons were being used, than on the rank and file. He would like the Premier to tell him what system was adopted in promoting the rank and file to the rank of petty officers, when any vacancy occurred? He believed that there was a feeling of some dissatisfaction amongst some of the men in this respect: that they were not told when there was any vacancy, and they thought that there was some favouritism shown in selecting the men to fill the positions of petty officers.

What was the system adopted, or was the matter left to the discrimination of the officers to select men from the rank and file?

The PREMIER: He had been informed that when any vacancy of this sort occurred an examination was held, and the man getting the highest marks was promoted accordingly. There was no such thing as the Commandant himself selecting the men.

Mr. JACKSON: Do I understand the man who gets the highest marks obtains promotion?

The PREMIER: Yes. That man was promoted to any vacancy open—he got the chance of promotion. He would like to contradict the statement of the hon. member for Cairns, that the marine force had been starved. It had not been starved, because the naval vote had not been cut down one shilling. The Commandant had asked for this amount, and had he asked for more it would have meant the reorganisation of the whole service. He was carrying on under the same conditions as last year, and the only change that could take place would be after the appointment of the new Commandant, or on there being a consolidation of the Australian forces. With reference to the resignations of certain naval officers, he might explain that four of these officers were old members of the Marine Force, and had shown a great amount of zeal in maintaining that force in the days of depression. They stuck to their posts with great enthusiasm, and did very good service, and he was very sorry that they had occasion to tender their commissions. It arose in this way: After they had attained their promotions as lieutenants, they got their commissions under the old form, under which they got certificates of competency, although they had never been at sea. Theoretically they might be good boatmen or seamen, but they had never been at sea in command of an ocean-going vessel. When the "Gayundah" was commissioned for the bay, the Commandant felt that, although they had got their commissions, they were not the men to take command of a sea-going vessel, owing to their want of nautical experience. Accordingly an officer who had the certificate of seamanship was put in command of the vessel, and it appeared that this gave offence to these gentlemen, and they accordingly tendered their commissions, which they thought gave them that position. There were some other matters connected with parade, but he would not refer to them now, as that would only confuse the issue. He was extremely sorry that these officers thought fit to tender their commissions back; but he also recognised the force of the view held by the Commandant, that men entrusted with sea going vessels should have had some sea-going experience. To satisfy these officers, the matter was placed before His Excellency the Admiral, and he was in favour of these officers, who had obtained their commissions, in which they were considered naval and executive officers, that such work should be performed by them, but, at the same time, he thought it would be extremely unwise for men not having any seaman's experience to be placed in command of any sea-going vessel. They were to take the position after permanent officers of the same rank. Upon receipt of the Admiral's decision they were therefore requested to reconsider their resignations, and it was distinctly pointed out that their commissions would be returned to them, but that they must not expect to be entrusted with the charge of sea-going ships except in cases of emergency. That was to say, if a vessel was sent to sea with a superior officer holding a commission and anything happened to him the command would only then devolve upon them. The officers appeared to have been satisfied with the position, and it was in contemplation, in

order to prevent future misconception, to amend the regulations so that officers receiving commissions as lieutenants under similar circumstances would have no right to take command of sea-going vessels unless under the circumstances he mentioned. He was pleased that the little trouble had been got over without the loss of those men to the service, but at the same time he thought the Commandant was perfectly justified in pointing out what seemed an anomaly, that men who were only efficient so far as their land duties were concerned should be entrusted with valuable sea-going ships when they were not in possession of certificates of seamanship.

Mr. ANNEAR (*Maryborough*): He was glad the discussion had been raised, because he was sure not only the Committee but the public outside were very anxious to know what determination the Government had come to with regard to the resignations of those officers. He might say that not one of the officers had ever waited upon him or requested that he should put to the Premier the questions that he asked a few weeks ago, but he had been informed that the acting Naval Commandant had informed the officers in question that their status in the Marine Defence Force was of no more account or of any higher standing than the status of the cabin boy on board the "Gayundah." Such being the case, how could those men with any degree of self-respect continue to occupy such a position? He was very sorry he was not present when the Premier introduced the vote, but he was present when the hon. gentleman referred to the Commandant of the land forces. He said then that it was the intention of the Government to get the best qualified officer possible to take charge of the Land Defence Force.

Mr. GLASSEY: He did not say so.

Mr. ANNEAR: He would ask the hon. gentleman whether it was his intention to get a thoroughly qualified man from the British Navy to take charge of the Marine Defence Force of the colony? It had been urged before that it would be impossible to get a competent man for the salary that was paid.

Mr. GLASSEY: So it would.

Mr. ANNEAR: He did not think so. The hon. member would not make that statement if he knew the pay which officers in the British navy received. The Acting Naval Commandant was a lieutenant in the British navy, and resigned in 1874, and at that time his salary was £200 a year. A gentleman holding the rank of commander in the navy would be fully qualified to take charge of the Marine Defence Force of the colony; what was he paid? According to Whittaker's Almanac for 1899, he found that a commander in the British navy received £365 per annum without any extras whatever, and a staff commander received from £219 to £401 per annum, with no allowances. He wished to say that he had no ill-will towards the Acting Naval Commandant, but that gentleman admitted himself that he was not up to date, and he thought he was paid very fairly at present. He was drawing £645 per annum; £400 as salary; rent allowance, £100; ration allowance, £45; and entertaining allowance £100. He trusted the Premier would take the matter he mentioned into consideration, because he believed that there should be a thoroughly competent officer at the head of the force. He believed that, had a little more discretion been shown by the Acting Naval Commandant, those officers would not have sent in their resignations; and, on the whole, they had not been well treated. He had a case in his mind of a gentleman residing in the town of Maryborough. It was a case known as "The Dreyfus Case" in that town, because the man had been sent out of the service without rhyme or reason by the Acting

Naval Commandant. He thought that gentleman had not been fairly dealt with, and that the Brisbane officers had not received fair play. He would ask if those gentlemen had withdrawn their resignations and rejoined the service?

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*) felt more interested in the decision of the Admiral as regarded the officers who had resigned than he did in the resignation of the officers themselves. If one could believe what he was told, the Admiral's decision meant that a man who had never been to sea, and knew nothing whatever about seamanship, was qualified to take command of a ship. He never heard of such a thing in his life. That appeared a favourable opportunity to ask the Premier if he had any objection to laying all the papers on the table of the House in reference to that matter. He should like to know what case was submitted to the Admiral, because it was inconceivable that a man occupying the position of admiral in the British navy could have given a decision that would go the length of saying that a person under any circumstances whatever who had not the qualification of seamanship should have charge of a ship. He thought it would be to the advantage of the service, and possibly to the advantage of the Admiral—though probably he did not care what they might think of him—to have it known what were the grounds upon which his decision was based, and in point of fact what case was placed before him.

The PREMIER would be very pleased to lay the papers on the table of the House. The Admiral had replied seriatim to the questions addressed to the Naval Commandant by Lieutenant Weatherill—one of the gentlemen who had resigned. Up to the present two out of the four gentlemen who had resigned had withdrawn their resignations, so that they appeared quite content with the decision of the Admiral, and also with the action the Government intended to take. The hon. member for Maryborough was not present when he informed the Committee that in the meantime the Government were considering who should succeed Captain Drake. He agreed with the hon. member for Bundaberg that they would not get a first-class officer at anything like the remuneration which was paid to the present Commandant, because although the salary quoted by the hon. member for Maryborough might be greater than his pay in the Imperial service, there was his seniority to be considered—as any officer would lose his seniority in the Imperial service by accepting the post—and in addition to that there were other emoluments which considerably increased the pay. It was inadvisable to interfere much with the marine force, as no doubt the Federal Parliament would deal with the whole question of defence as soon as it was constituted. It would, therefore, be unnecessary for Queensland to import a highly-paid officer for twelve months. They would have to reorganise the whole service, and he said that with no wish to disparage Captain Drake's work. With the means placed at his disposal he had done excellent work for the colony, and he had the courage to say that he considered it would be better for the colony to get a man who was thoroughly up-to-date. That showed that he gave first place to the interests of the colony. Under the circumstances, it would be better to wait another year, at any rate, and see what action was likely to be taken by the federal authorities.

MR. JACKSON: In reference to the question he asked a few minutes ago, he quite understood that before the men were promoted to the position of petty officers they had to undergo an examination; but he wanted to know the system of selecting the men who went up for the examination.

The PREMIER: The system was that any man was at liberty to go up for the examination, and the most meritorious men were promoted to fill the vacancies.

MR. LESINA: It was perfectly true that the increase in that vote was not as great as the increase in the land force, but what concerned him most was the awfully low wages that were paid to able seamen on board the "Gayundah." They were much less than were paid by private shipowners, and the Government were setting a very bad example by paying ordinary seamen only £5 a month. Anyone would think they were lascars, and yet they were the first line of defence.

MR. GLASSEY: Do they not get food as well?

MR. LESINA supposed they did, but in any case the wages were awfully low.

The TREASURER: They are just the same as on the coastal steamers. They do not carry ordinary seamen now.

MR. LESINA: The Government should set a decent example to private employers by paying a fair living wage.

The PREMIER: They get rations as well. They are not compelled to join.

MR. LESINA: How were they going to encourage Australian natives to enter their first line of defence if they only gave such wages as £5 a month? The wages were almost as mean as those paid to the lascars on some of the Indian boats. It was extraordinary how hon. members could in one breath talk, with a vast command of adjectives, about patriotism and glory, and in the next breath propose to give seamen £5 a month.

MR. GLASSEY asked if any Queensland boys were trained on those vessels, or if there were any means of training them? The Premier spoke of being in communication with the Admiralty with a view to sending out a training ship. Facilities should be given to train their boys on board those boats, notwithstanding the opinion expressed by the authorities at home, and although some of the other colonies objected to that method of training boys, he would like to see some of the brighter and more active boys who now found their way to the reformatory at Lytton, as well as some of the schoolboys, trained in the naval service. If the training ships were allowed to remain in the various ports for some length of time, they could give a number of boys a training which would give them some knowledge of the marine service, and would also give them a taste for the work. The hon. member for Kennedy had referred to the report of the Acting Naval Commandant. It did not at all follow that because Captain Drake advised the appointment of a man of superior attainments that he therefore admitted his own incompetency. It only showed that the Acting Commandant was acting splendidly towards the country when he said that while he was quite competent to fill the place there was a possibility of procuring a more able man. Such a report was highly commendable to the Acting Commandant. He did not think that the salary they were paying was sufficient to secure the services of a first-class naval officer. During all the years he had been a member of that Committee he was sure hon. members would admit that he had never been an advocate for increasing the salaries of highly-paid Government officials. There were certain branches which required

special skill, and he was prepared [5 30 p.m.] at all times to pay a very substantial salary to secure the services of a good man. He would be sorry to see our men receiving the miserable pittance paid to the British soldier; he wanted to see a fair wage paid to both officers and men. Though he considered that it would be unwise to make any

particular change at present in the direction of reorganising the force, he thought the increase to the Acting Naval Commandant was not unreasonable. In the meantime he could not urge too strongly on the Government the necessity of seeing that a number of our boys got every facility consistent with reasonable expenditure to obtain a naval training that would enable them to render good service to the country in years to come.

The PREMIER: Something in the direction had already been attempted by the Naval Commandant, who said in his report—

The proposal suggested in my letter of 2nd June last, and approved by Government, has now been carried out, and two corps, consisting of fifty boys each, have been organised by the Marine Defence instructors at Maryborough and Cairns respectively. The movement has given much local satisfaction, and the boys are at present being disciplined and drilled in a similar way to the Naval Brigades. Regulations under the Defence Acts for the control of such corps will be submitted for your consideration.

Then he said, in addition to this, that he would be glad to have a training ship for the purpose of training a larger number of boys who would probably take to the sea as a profession. He was sorry that there was not a training ship at their disposal, but one had been applied for. A considerable number of people seemed to think that our youths were better employed in agricultural pursuits, and there was a great deal in that; at the same time, while some boys preferred the land others preferred the sea, and while they afforded facilities for good agricultural knowledge and training at experimental farms and at the colleges, they must also not lose sight of the advisableness of providing facilities for boys to receive a naval training and so establish the nucleus of a very useful force in the future. He was glad the vote generally met with approval, and he would have been glad to have submitted a larger application, but that would have meant a reorganisation of the whole service, which he thought was a little premature in view of federation.

Mr. GLASSEY hoped that some means would be devised by which a training vessel would be able to visit the different ports of the colony for the purpose of organising naval cadet corps in the different towns along the coast. He also hoped that at an early date our educational system would be extended in such a manner that all kinds of branches would be taught, more particularly agriculture to our boys and dairying to the girls.

Mr. LESINA was utterly opposed to the idea of having a training vessel. It was already on the cards that the "Sobraon," which replaced the training ship "Vernon" in New South Wales, would soon be a thing of the past, and that the boys on that sink of iniquity would be placed in properly fitted up reformatories on land. The boys on the training vessels in New South Wales were not put on war vessels. He had known scores of those boys in Sydney, and he knew that after spending several years in learning various small duties connected with ship life they were drafted to selections and farms in the country, and after getting £18 or £20 in their pockets they drifted back to the city.

Mr. JENKINSON: Are they any the worse for the training?

Mr. LESINA: No.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: They went to school there; they did not go to learn seamanship.

Mr. LESINA: He had spent twelve months on a ship as a lad between this and several of the islands, and he knew it was galling to the spirit of the Australian native to be ordered about on a ship. They wanted more freedom, and their ambitions were wider than was the case with men in the old country, who were

content to live on board ship; and to put boys on a ship with the view of training them for a naval career when there were no war vessels open to them was simply a waste of time. He thought the idea of a training ship was against the tendency of the times, and it was better to train youths in mining, agriculture, and other industries that were the mainstay of the colony. They objected to be cooped up on board a ship, and to have to work under conditions that were absolutely degrading. It was a fact that New South Wales at the present time was rent from the centre to the circumference by revelations concerning the internal management and morals on board the "Sobraon." They were talking seriously in the other colonies of abolishing such vessels at a time when it was proposed to start them here. He was strongly opposed to the proposal, and could bring evidence to prove that the system had been a failure, and had been set aside for a system by which the boys were taught useful trades and occupations on land instead of forcing them to take up an occupation they had no liking for.

Mr. BROWNE: The hon. member for Clermont had been confusing a reformatory ship pure and simple with a training ship. He did not think the experience on the subject in Australia was very much anyhow, but he could say that some of the best seamen England ever had were those who had been serving on the training ships at London, Liverpool, and other big ports. The hon. member had also made a mistake in saying that the Australian youth did not take to the sea, because hon. members generally were aware that some of the smartest and best captains they had, not only on their coasting boats, but on some of the boats running between Europe and Australia, were natives of Australia. He knew Australian natives who had the best—the old London—certificates, and in proportion to population the number of Australian natives who took to the sea was greater, and there were more certificated men amongst them than even Great Britain could boast of.

Mr. JACKSON asked how it was there was no naval cadet corps established at Brisbane when they found corps established at Maryborough and at Cairns?

The PREMIER: It appeared that the only places from which applications had been made for the establishment of such corps had been Maryborough and Cairns. It was just as well to see how they would develop. He was informed that Captain Drake had it in contemplation to form a corps in Brisbane, but the first applications had been first served.

Question put and passed.

PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD.

The PREMIER moved that £1,008 be granted for the Public Service Board. The vote showed an increase of £72. He would anticipate debate on the vote by saying that the Public Service Board as at present constituted expired at the end of December of this year, and it would be incumbent upon the Government to introduce a Bill to make provision for its reorganisation or continuance in some shape. The Government did not consider that there would be sufficient time this session to consider how its organisation might be improved, but they frankly admitted that there might be improvement in the board.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: At the same time the question required to be well thought out, and he could not pronounce that the Government would be prepared this session to introduce a Bill to constitute a Public Service Board on a different basis. Their intention was to introduce a short Bill this session to continue the board as it at present existed for another twelve months,

during which time the whole question might be fully considered. A great many phases of the question demanded full debate and criticism, but, on the whole, the board as at present constituted had done good service in relieving Ministers of patronage, and of a good deal of embarrassment from the numerous applicants who but for the board would have applied to them to fill vacancies. He did not wish to open up the whole question, but he thought it would be admitted that it would be an advantage to the public service if persons outside the departments could be introduced. New blood at times was good, and it would be an advantage if at times the board had power to go outside the narrow groove of appointment by seniority and from within the ranks of the service. The matter was one which demanded much fuller debate than could be devoted to it that evening, and, while recognising that it was desirable to reconsider the organisation of the board, it was only the intention of the Government this session to introduce a Bill to continue their functions under existing conditions for another year.

Mr. GROOM: You won't want the board after federation.

The PREMIER thought they would, but that was only another reason why they should extend the functions of the present board for another year.

Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): It was generally accepted that the Board had not given that general satisfaction all round that was expected. There was no doubt about that.

The PREMIER: That is very difficult.

Mr. McDONNELL: He admitted it was very difficult to please Parliament and give satisfaction to the public, and, he supposed, to the Civil Service. When this Bill was introduced he hoped provision would be made to meet what he regarded as very deserving cases. There were many young men who got temporary employment in the departments who were debarred, through being over age, from receiving permanent employment in the Civil Service. They were only employed casually; but they were good and able servants, and would be an acquisition to the service. He hoped the Premier would give some consideration to their case. He believed that some of the permanent heads of departments were anxious that some provision should be made whereby these people, who had been employed casually for a number of years, should have some preference for employment in the service. But the purpose for which he had risen was to refer to the entrance fee which was charged in connection with examinations by the Public Service Board. He wished to refer particularly to the case of the examination held some time ago for the position of female telephone assistants. Each girl who went up for examination had to pay an entrance fee of 10s. In many cases they were daughters of poor women, who had had a very hard task to educate them up to the point that they would be able to go up for the examination. A great many of them were not successful in passing the examination, and the fees were retained by the department. He did not know whether that was a regulation or a rule, but he did not think it was a good rule or regulation; and, in any case, the fees of those who did not succeed in passing should be returned. He hoped the Premier would be able to arrange that in future. Particularly in the case of telephone assistants the unsuccessful candidates should have the fees returned to them.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: He could not say anything about what was the custom with the telephone applicants for examination, but he understood that the Public Service Board charged an

entrance fee to defray the expenses of the public examiners, and he did not think it was unfair that a small fee should be charged. Why should the fees be returned to the unsuccessful candidates and the successful candidates mulcted?

Mr. JACKSON: They get the positions.

The PREMIER: They frequently had to wait for them. However, he did not think the matter was of great importance. Of course the Government should not make any profit out of it, and he would inquire if the fees paid left anything beyond the fees paid to the examiners. If not; if there was no surplus, he did not think there was any fault to be found with a moderate fee.

Mr. McDONNELL: He thought there was reason in bringing the matter up, because this was the only opportunity there would be of bringing it up.

The TREASURER: No. The Postmaster-General's Department.

Mr. McDONNELL: The Public Service Board made the regulations.

The TREASURER: Not for the telephone examination. That is the Post Office.

Mr. McDONNELL: They did last year. He inquired at the department and found that the examination was held under the Public Service Board.

The TREASURER: The last one was held under the Post Office regulations.

Mr. McDONNELL: Whatever reason there was for charging fees to successful candidates, there was none for retaining the fees of unsuccessful candidates. In fact he believed there should be no fees charged at all—that everybody should have free access so long as they were under the age which was prescribed. He was present at one of the examinations; there was a very large number of applicants; there were two examiners, and he did not think they were paid a very large amount for their services. He thought there was a large amount of reason in what he asked the Premier, particularly as there was a large number of those people to whom 10s. meant a large amount of money.

Mr. JENKINSON: They would probably have to pay for the coaching previously.

Mr. McDONNELL: There was a great deal of expense in coaching up.

The PREMIER: Do you expect the Government to pay for that, too?

Mr. McDONNELL: No, he did not; but he thought there should not be any fee charged. There was no fee charged in connection with scholarship and school examinations, and he thought the same principle should apply to public service examinations. This big difference between the fees should induce the hon. gentlemen to consider whether it would not be wise to dispense altogether with these fees, or, at all events, to return the fees of those who were not successful.

Mr. GIVENS: The question that troubled him in connection with the board was not so much the question of examinations, because he was perfectly convinced that a man or woman should be expected to prove their ability for the position, but that many gentlemen were appointed to positions in the public service, he assumed with the approval of the board, without passing any examination at all, or having to pay any fee. Further than that, they were appointed over the heads of people already in the service who occupied inferior positions, and who might justly consider themselves entitled to have a prior claim. It seemed to him altogether wrong that appointments should be made outside the

[7 p.m.] service, while there were men in the ranks of the service well qualified and deserving of promotion by their years of hard and arduous work. It was only natural

that these men should look forward to such promotion as was available, as a reward for their long and arduous service in their particular departments. He had several cases in his mind's eye, which had come under his notice, where men had been appointed from outside the service entirely, and the general impression amongst the public was that although the board had been appointed to do away with political influence, yet that influence was still rampant. These appointments from the outside were chiefly due to political influence. In his own electorate there had been one or two of these appointments. He was not going to quarrel with the character of those men appointed, or to in any way detract from their ability, but he did say that while there were men available in the service, especially in the particular branches to which he referred, that they ought to have been given the first chance of promotion. But men were taken from outside the service, and appointed without any examination at all—men whose qualifications were scarcely equal, decidedly not superior, to the qualifications of men already in the service. They had also had some new appointments during the last twelve months. He did not know what particular routine was observed with regard to these appointments, but it appeared that political influence was as rampant as it was before the appointment of the Public Service Board. If that was so, it was a waste of money to have this board—while political influence was allowed to obtain. Several new appointments had been created during the last twelve months, and men had been put into positions from outside the service. He would like to point out to the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who spoke about the examination fees being remitted to unsuccessful candidates, that as far as he knew in connection with some of these appointments, there had been no examination at all and no fees had been taken. For instance, the new appointment of Inspector of Totalisators—he did not know whether the gentleman appointed to that position had been appointed or recommended by the Public Service Board or not. It was certainly generally considered——

The PREMIER: That is not on this estimate.

Mr. GIVENS was not going into the merits of the case, because he would have a more fitting opportunity by-and-by. It seemed to him that if such an appointment, which carried with it a handsome salary, was necessary, it should have been filled by someone from inside the service. That appointment was not at all free from the suspicion of political patronage, which the board had been created to do away with. These appointments might only be coincidences, but when he saw coincidence on top of coincidence, it naturally created a suspicion in the minds of many people like himself who, under ordinary circumstances, were not suspicious. He objected to money being wasted on this board if they did not do their duty, and he hoped the Premier would stick to his idea that the board needed reforming. He could assure the hon. gentleman that the system under which the board worked needed reform very badly.

Mr. McDONNELL: In support of what he had said previously, he would mention that in the Railway Department, in the clerical and mechanical branches, there were no entrance fees. Some years ago fees were charged, but that had been done away with in recent years. There was, he understood, a medical fee charged—a fee for the medical examination before successful competitors were admitted into the department. He hoped the Premier would see his way to cause these fees to be remitted to the unsuccessful candidates, particularly to the

female applicants for positions of telephone attendants. It was not justice that these fees should be retained.

Mr. GLASSEY: Why charge any fees at all?

Mr. McDONNELL: He was in favour of the abolition of fees, but if any were charged it should be very small, and it should be remitted to unsuccessful candidates.

The PREMIER explained that the fees had been fixed by the Public Service Board. They had fixed, for instance, a fee of 10s. for examining switchboard attendants, and he understood all the fees were handed over to the examiners to pay the cost of examination. If no fees were charged, the number of unsuccessful candidates would be very much larger than it was.

Mr. JENKINSON: Are all the fees paid over, no matter how many candidates there may be?

The PREMIER: Professional men conducted the examinations, and he understood that the whole of the fees were paid over to them with the exception of the cost of hiring a room in which to hold an examination. He hardly could see how the views of the hon. member could be met unless all fees were abolished. He would inquire into the matter.

Mr. McDONNELL hardly thought the Premier was correct in his statement that all fees were paid to the examiners. At the last examination for the Post and Telegraph Department there were 150 candidates who paid 10s. each. If the examiners got all the fees, then they were paid £75 for two days' work.

Question put and passed.

IMMIGRATION.

The PREMIER moved that the sum of £2,406 be granted for immigration. That covered the departmental expenses, and there appeared to be an increase of £1,363 upon last year's vote. There were increases to two clerks, half of whose salary was paid from the Pacific Islanders' fund. The same applied to two messengers. There was an increase in the number of wardsmen at £80 a year each, amounting in the aggregate to £332. The item of contingencies was increased from £325 to £1,200 which was necessitated by the increased scope of the work to cover cost of fuel, light, and provisions. He understood that some hon. members had expressed a desire to discuss the whole question of immigration under that vote rather than upon the Loan Estimates, which really made the provision for carrying on immigration on a larger scale.

Mr. BROWNE: When the Agent-General's department was under discussion he spoke about taking the immigration debate upon that vote. It was suggested that the debate should be postponed until the Loan Estimates were under consideration, but his reason for desiring to take the discussion now was that there was really no fair opportunity of discussing it on the Loan Estimates. Last year the trust and special funds, the loan vote, and the Appropriation Bill were all disposed of at one sitting very late in the year, when a great many hon. members had gone to their homes and were tired of the session, the consequence of which was that there was no fair discussion on either side. If there had been a possibility of carrying any reduction in the vote or carrying an adverse motion to the Government it was quite impossible to do it then on account of the paucity of attendance. Whatever steps might be taken towards securing a reduction of the loan money proposed to be spent on immigration, he at all events thought that hon. members should now at that stage express their views briefly upon the immigration policy of the Government. As he had said before, there was room in this country for millions of people where there were now only thousands, but at the same time he believed, as the Treasurer

pointed out in his Financial Statement, that the proper way to bring people here was to make the conditions such that they would be attracted here of their own free will. As far as his opinion went there was no necessity to spend a large sum of money in bringing people out from the old country. That had been going on for two years past, and according to the testimony of the Agent-General and various agents who had represented the colony it had been an absolute failure, and yet they were asked to spend a great deal more money upon immigration. If hon. members would look at the Agent-General's report they would find that the first twelve pages were taken up entirely with immigration matters. There was also a very long report from Mr. Randall, a gentleman whose appointment for a second term he had opposed, although he was bound to admit that he was a very industrious man and did all he could to push the interests of the colony in England. In his reports he wound up paragraph by paragraph by saying he had "a lot of inquiries"; he had "many inquiries"; he had "inquiries on every possible subject"; then that he had "frequent inquiries"; but right through he confessed that the inquiries had resulted in very little and that the people did not go out to the colony. In one place he spoke of an old man and his son who made great inquiries and expressed their wish to come to Queensland, and it was hardly worth their while voting large sums of money for the sake of that sort of thing. They were told time after time that the object of the Government was to get farm labourers, and domestic servants in particular, to come to the colony, and that they would not countenance the immigration of other classes of people. Now, on pages 5 and 6 of the Agent-General's report there was a copy of a circular letter which had been sent to nearly 1,000 emigration agents in Great Britain, giving them all particulars with respect to immigrants for Queensland. That circular letter informed them that they would receive a bonus of 10s. 6d. per head for every third-class adult passenger over twelve years of age, and half that amount for every child over the age of three years, whom they secured. Further than that the letter stated that all immigrants would get their passages for £13 13s. and a ship's kit provided by the Queensland Government, and went on to say that "all persons who are mentally and bodily sound are eligible, without regard to occupation, age, or sex." He was not certain whether he was right, but he believed that in addition to the £13 13s. the Government had to pay something to the steamship companies to make up the passage money.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. BROWNE: The Committee should pause before it allowed a big lot of money—taking the various immigration votes it would amount to something like £70,000 or £80,000—to be spent in bringing out people "without regard to occupation, age, or sex." Only a few weeks ago it was brought under his notice that shortly after the "Duke of Portland" arrived, three men—whom he thought were Scandinavians by their names—were put to work as labourers in the Telegraph Department. They were only temporarily employed, but that was no reason why they should pay to bring people from other parts of the world to work as labourers in the Telegraph Department when they had any amount of men at the present time who would be only too glad to get those jobs. There was just one other matter he wished to draw particular attention to. Hon. members on the other side had been rather rough on hon. members on that side—in fact, last session the lie direct had been given to one or two members on that side when they spoke of the rates of wages at home and the condition of farm labourers. Some farming

representatives on the other side resented very strongly the statements of some hon. members on his side—not himself, because he did not know anything about the farming industry in the old country, and did not know much of it in this colony; but some hon. members on that side had stated that farm labourers got better pay at home than they could get in Queensland, arousing a storm of indignation from hon. members opposite. The Agent-General himself wrote a report, supplementing the reports of the immigration lecturers, and on page 41 of his report he said—

I would like to add some observations of my own on the subject of emigration. The figures supplied by Mr. Dickon are of course only made up to the end of December last, at which date all that could possibly be done in anticipation of parliamentary sanction had been completed, but the results will only appear in the present year. Directly your cablegram arrived, the liberal provision of Parliament was not only widely advertised, but all the agencies were advised, and Mr. Randall, with several temporary lecturers, has been addressing the agricultural classes with a view to their migration to Queensland. The results are not very encouraging, but I do not feel it my duty in consequence to extend the assistance beyond those specially particularised, otherwise I should easily fill many ships with unskilled labourers, who would, I am sure, only tend to presently swell the numbers of your unemployed.

Then came the part to which he wished to draw particular attention—

It is indeed a difficult problem to attract to Queensland farmers, farm labourers, and domestic servants. Not only have the conditions changed in this kingdom materially within the last ten years, and the very classes you require receive better wages here, but there is an admitted scarcity in the farming districts of England for their requirements, and it requires very great inducements to get people to go anywhere.

In the face of that report of the Agent-General, in the first place it was a sin and shame to ask people to come here to work for less pay and under worse conditions than they enjoyed at home; and, in the second place, it was unfair to ask the taxpayers of the colony to spend large sums of money in bringing people here to compete with them in the labour market where they were not required. The Agent-General went on to say—

But the worst factor—almost amounting to a deterrent—is the almost constant stream of warning letters from residents in Australia, cautioning people not to migrate there under any circumstances. I have had to deal with many of these, the worst of which are those containing half truths.

He had read some of the letters which had appeared in the Press, and in some cases he had not agreed a little bit with them. They had attempted to degrade the colony, and had told a lot of untruths. But there were others which contained the truth, and he would draw attention to this passage in the Agent-General's report—

For everyone published, many similar were received by private persons, who circulated the information.

He could quite understand the man who thirsted for notoriety writing letters to the papers over his signature, and stirring up trouble, but the man who wrote private letters to his friends and relatives, advising them not to come to Queensland, and telling them that the conditions of life were worse here than in the old country, would hardly do that unless he believed what he was writing. He did not think there was any sense in moving a resolution of the

[7.30 p.m.] vote, but he thought the matter to which he had referred was one which should be seriously considered by hon. members before they voted the sum of £50,000 on the Loan Estimates, especially when the Agent-General told them that the very class of labour they wanted in the colony was unobtainable, because it was better paid in the old country than in Queensland, and that in order to get people to come here they were paying a bonus of 10s. 6d. a head for adults and half that amount for

children over twelve, and the Government were providing them with ship kits without any restriction as to age, sex, or occupation.

The PREMIER: The hon. member appeared to be mixing up two phases of immigration. In the letter of the 21st of December, which was reproduced in the Agent-General's report, it was stated that—

Third-class passages may be obtained for £13 13s. each by the Queensland Royal Mail steamers leaving about every four weeks for the principal ports in the colony, and the Queensland Government provide the ship kits for these passages.

That applied to part paying immigrants, and not to the class of immigrants who were paid for by the State.

Mr. GLASSEY: You do not pay a bonus for such persons?

The PREMIER: Yes, 10s. 6d. a head was paid to the shipping agents in Great Britain for inducing those people to come to Queensland. But the class of persons whose passages were paid were farm labourers and female domestic servants, which was made clear by the advertisement issued by the Agent-General. The Government were not, as he understood the hon. member to imagine, endeavouring to attract artisans and others of that class by giving them free passages.

Mr. BROWNE: I know that, and I made the distinction.

The PREMIER: He believed the colony was languishing for want of population, and if it was a fact, as alleged, that in Great Britain, where they had a population of 40,000,000, better wages were obtainable in certain occupations than in this colony, where they had only 500,000 people, the obvious inference was that they wanted a larger population here to encourage that industrial and commercial activity by which better wages would be provided. But he was very much inclined to take with a grain of salt the statement that better wages were paid in Great Britain, except for experts in certain branches of industry, than were obtainable in Queensland. He did not think farm labourers got better wages there. If they did, why was there such a stream of immigration to other parts of the Empire? The Agent-General, in his report, said that, on his way to Penzance, Mr. Randall stopped for a day or two at Newport and Plymouth, and visited the Royal Cornwall Society's show.

He was much impressed with the fact that the Cape was the great and favourite field for the Cornishmen. The men go backwards and forwards time after time, at different seasons, and talk as familiarly of South Africa as if it was the next country. A railway official told him that a single train from Penzance often collected as many as 200 passengers, chiefly miners, on its way to Plymouth, for a single Cape steamer.

Then, hon. members knew that the Dominion of Canada and the States attracted a large amount of agricultural labour from the mother country during the harvest season on account of their proximity to Great Britain. At the beginning of the harvest season large steamers crossing the Atlantic conveyed numbers of agriculturists to those countries, and when they had harvested the crops those people returned to the old country, bringing with them sufficient money to keep their families in reasonable competence during the period when work was not to be found. The nearest fields for labour were always the most attractive. The immigration agent here spoke very hopefully on the subject of immigration. He said—

The satisfactory tendency to increase of immigration, especially under the nominated system, has been well sustained during the past year. Nomination of relatives or friends in the old countries by permanent Queensland settlers becomes a most effectual advertising medium, as well as being the most desirable agency for obtaining the right classes of immigrants.

That officer also stated that—

The proportions of arrivals landed at the several ports during the current year were as follows:—Thursday Island, 47; Townsville, 273; Rockhampton, 96; Cairns, 28; Mackay, 10; Maryborough, 29; Brisbane, 409.

So that it would be seen that there was a fair distribution of immigrants along the coast. And the reports he had received showed that at the present time there was still a strong, healthy demand for farm labourers and female domestic servants in the colony. Those were the classes for which the enlarged provision on the Loan Estimates was chiefly intended to provide, and he had no wish to encourage the introduction of people coming here as paupers. The classes to which they were now confining immigration had been all absorbed, and there was great demand for more; and the colony was to be congratulated on presenting a better field for the employment of labour than it had done for many years past.

Mr. BROWNE: With regard to full-paying passengers he had made a distinction when he spoke and had asked whether the Government were paying a subsidy to the steamship companies in addition. The hon. gentleman said they were not, but the fact was that the Government were paying 10s. 6d. a head to the recruiting agents, and providing a kit in addition. It was not a large amount per head, still it was bringing people here assisted by the Government.

The PREMIER: Don't you think every unit added to the population is worth that amount to the colony?

Mr. BROWNE: Of course he believed that it was a good thing to add to the population; but he did not believe in bringing out people assisted by the Government without any restriction as to age, sex, or occupation. He believed the 250 men sent to South Africa were worth more than 500 of the sort for whose selection a bonus was paid to agents in the old country. With regard to the migration of Cornishmen to and from the Cape, everyone knew the reason of that. They were miners following their occupation. There was a large migration backward and forward between Australia and the Cape, and he knew scores and scores of Australian diggers who were just as familiar with the Cape fields as with the Queensland fields. The hon. gentleman said that the chief reason why we were not getting people eligible for farming was because they were absorbed by Canada and those places, but the Agent-General differed entirely from the hon. gentleman because he said in his report on page 41—

I notice Canada, which colony by its nearness has already skimmed the cream of the agricultural emigrant population here, and is still a competitor, finds itself at present driven to prospect fresh fields, and is largely devoting its energies to inducing colonies of European aliens to migrate in swarms—a policy which, I understand, has not your approval in regard to Queensland.

If the hon. gentleman would read the report of the Agent-General, he would see that the agents could not get the class of people required here, and it was unfair to tax the people here to bring out immigrants who were not of an eligible class. When they knew that countries so advantageously situated as Canada as a field for immigration could not procure them, what was the use of putting £50,000 on the Estimates here for the purpose of getting people that could not possibly be got to come here?

The PREMIER: The 10s. 6d. was not paid as a subsidy to the immigrant; it was paid to induce the shipping agents to advocate the attractions of Queensland as against other fields for emigration from the old country, and, therefore, it was money that might very fairly be expended. As to the kit, that was a small

matter that he need not discuss further. The statement of the Agent-General sustained his view, because he said—

I notice Canada, which colony by its nearness has already skimmed the cream of the agricultural emigrant population here, and is still a competitor, finds itself at present driven to prospect fresh fields, and is largely devoting its energies to introducing colonies of European aliens to migrate in swarms—a policy which I understand has not your approval in Queensland.

Certainly not. He would prefer if possible to get as many as they could of their own kith and kin. The report went on to say—

In view of all these facts, so well known here, I am content to largely rely on the system of payment by results through the many agencies actively operating, which, if it fails by reason of circumstances to presently secure the people you require, has this merit that it does not involve the colony in any expense. Sympathising most heartily with your desire for emigration of that class of people only whom I know Queensland can absorb without displacing labour already there, no effort shall be wanting on my part to carry out your wishes in the best interests of the colony. Under these circumstances I find no new shipping facilities are either practicable or presently necessary, and as the British India Company have intimated their intention to run a steamer every fortnight, this would enable me to land 1,200 emigrants within the year, a consummation greatly to be desired. They have promised an extra steamer if a full number, say 200, is provided, and I hope the first of these will leave in May next.

In connection with the enlarged vote for immigration, he had expressly advised the Agent-General that he did not want to see large shiploads dumped down in the colony, so to speak, at one time, but that he wanted them to arrive in small numbers. Every three months a vessel would bring from 200 to 300, and the other boats would bring something like sixty, certainly less than 100, and he considered that under those circumstances, if this immigration was confined to farm labourers and domestic servants, they would be readily absorbed on their arrival, and the result would be beneficial both to themselves and to the colony.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): He believed that no young country could prosper without having a good yeoman population, and thought it would be beneficial to this country if we could get a number of the class of immigrants now going to Canada and the United States. He believed that if further inducements were held out that class of people could be attracted to this colony, but unfortunately we did not hold out inducements to those people to come here. Immigrants to Canada have land set apart for them, and were met on landing by parties who took them to land, and saw that they had sufficient good land to settle on. Not only that, but they were actually provided with the necessaries of life for twelve months, to give them an opportunity of making a start on the land. Why should not such inducements be held out to persons coming to this colony? If they were they would have a stream of immigrants of the proper class coming to the colony. It was advisable that they should hold out even better inducements than Canada, because it was so much easier for people to go to Canada and the United States than to come here. This was the furthest away portion of the British Empire, but he had no hesitation in saying that they had land here as good as any under the canopy of Heaven to-day, and without exaggerating in the slightest a population of many millions could be supported in this colony, and it would be far better for those here now to have a large number of people to share the burden they had to bear. Some hon. members who spoke adversely on the question were not totally opposed to immigration, but to the immigration of certain classes, and he was with them in that. Some time ago when immigration

was at its top, plenty of people came here who were no credit to the colony, but a great many who had been brought here by Dr. Lang and by Dr. Quinn had settled upon the soil and were a credit to the colony. If the hon. member for Toowoomba were present he could bear him out in the statement that a great many of the best immigrants who had been brought to the colony had been brought out under the auspices of the late Dr. Quinn, and at the suggestion of the archbishop of the colony at the present moment. If such immigrants as those could be introduced it would be beneficial to the colony. The hon. member for Croydon had referred to the Scandinavians who had come out, and he might say that out of fifteen of those men he saw only five knew anything at all about agriculture.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. KEOGH: Those were not the only parties at the depot at the time, but though he had employed five or six men he found afterwards that only one of them knew anything at all about farming. So that what his hon. friends had said was perfectly correct, as the class of men who were coming out were no good for agriculture. They might be induced to enter upon some employment more congenial to them, but what they required more than anything else was agricultural labourers and domestic servants. He asserted that in Ipswich to-day you could not get a girl that was worth her salt to work for you.

Mr. LEMNA: They get better treated in the factories than by their mistresses. That is the reason.

Mr. KEOGH: With regard to the factories, he was thoroughly well aware that the reason they went to the factories was that they went to work between 8 and 9 in the morning, and got away between 5 and 6 in the afternoon, and they could "do the block" at night. He believed that good girls would come from home if good wages were offered them. He asserted that good domestic servants were not to be got in Queensland at the present time, and he would be glad to see immigrants of that class brought to the colony. He agreed with the statements that had been made that it was found very difficult to get good immigrants, but he found fault to some extent with the way in which the immigration department in England was carrying out its duty. They were circumscribed in their work, and confined their operations to England, while there were people in other portions of the United Kingdom who would be glad to come to the colony. Friends of his own had written to tell him that there was a field for the immigration agent in the part of the world he came from if proper inducements were held out. He hoped they would be, because it was only by immigration of the proper class of people that the colony could hope to prosper.

The PREMIER: It had been brought under his notice that some of the Scandinavian immigrants did not fulfil their representations as to their ability as farm labourers, and the Agent-General had been written to in that connection, to see that greater care was exercised in the future. Sir Horace Tozer in his report stated in connection with Scandinavian emigration—

I appointed Mr. August Larsen, on the 1st May, to continue this work actively, and directed him to proceed to the countries abovenamed on a three weeks' tour to personally interview emigration agents there, and report on the best way of conducting operations.

He also said—

I am convinced that Scandinavia is not only an excellent, but the best, field for our colony to obtain emigrants from in future. There are no people in Europe who emigrate so

[8 p.m.]

largely as the Scandinavians, because it is hard for them to get on in their own countries, where the soil is poor; they are familiar with the idea of emigration, nearly every man having friends or relatives abroad.

So he hoped—in fact he was sure—that in future the Scandinavian immigrants would be more carefully selected in order to fulfil the conditions of agricultural labourers. He did not think the hon. gentleman had any reason for finding fault with the Agent-General for selecting immigrants from any one country.

Mr. KEOGH: They have got no lecturer in Ireland.

The PREMIER: The Immigration Agent reported—

From the application books in this office containing the names of the "nominors" and the "nominees," I find, taking the average for the last three years, that the Irish number 47 per cent.; English, 29; Scotch, 9; Italians, 7; Scandinavians, 5; and Germans, 3 per cent.

Therefore, he was sure there was no desire to exclude immigrants from the Emerald Isle.

Mr. KEOGH: I did not say that.

Mr. LEAHY: He says there are too many of them coming.

The PREMIER: He understood the hon. member to say there were none coming. He did not think there were two many of their own countrymen, whether they came from England, Scotland, or Ireland. Certainly he would rather have a shipload of them than half-a-dozen of another nationality. He thought their fellow-countrymen had built up this grand country, and, as far as any instructions were given in this direction, he endeavoured to impress upon the Agent-General that, over and above all, he must see and obtain supplies from the mother country. He did not wish to say anything against the Scandinavians or the Swedes; but they wanted their own kith and kin, their own blood relations. He was glad to hear the commendation of the hon. member for Rosewood, because it seemed to him a justification and endorsement of the action which had been taken and an endorsement of the fact that the agricultural districts of the colony were in want of a very much larger number of immigrants than even they had on the sea. Still, as he had said, he did not want an excess of immigration supply by introducing too large an amount at once and see men going from town to town seeking employment and finding none. He wanted the demand always to exceed the supply, so that, as the supply came gradually along, it might be absorbed without disturbing the industrial or other interests of the colony.

Mr. LESINA: He might say straight away that he strongly protested against this system of assisted immigration which was being carried out by the Government. He did not see what benefit it was to the great mass of the working people of this colony, who comprised 85 per cent. of the population. So far the results had only been to impose additional taxation on the mass of the people, who were already as heavily taxed, if not more heavily taxed, as the people of any other colony in the group. The competition which had resulted from this assisted immigration had resulted in a reduction of wages in many industries. He would give reasons which would convince members that most reprehensible means were being used by the Agent-General and his satellites in Europe to inveigle people to leave comfortable employment and comfortable homes in European countries, to come out here to do battle with the flies, and the sun, and the sin, and the sweat, and the sorrow under the rule of the present Government. Some of the democratic papers in the

old country, like *Reynolds's Newspaper*, have been doing their best to discourage the people of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales from coming out by publishing facts with regard to the number of unemployed and the colony's great national debt, and by publishing the fact that Queensland has the biggest national debt per head of population of any country on the face of God's earth. This fact had scared a good many away. The fact that they had men who were working for lower wages on the hot tropical plantations than even kanakas had also convinced a lot of square-headed Irishmen, Englishmen, Welshmen, and Scotchmen that Queensland was not the glorious country it was cracked up to be in the literature issued through the Agent-General's Office. What was this literature? They had in the Agent-General's report reference to the fact that advertisements were being inserted in the papers, and that leaflets were being sent out in half-a-dozen different languages, and in lots of 10,000, 5,000, 3,000, and 2,000. These bunches were being sent out to the various centres and distributed amongst the farming population, amongst the population working at the secondary industries, and amongst the people generally who desired to better their lot. It was set forth that Queensland was a perfect paradise—a promised land flowing with milk and honey; and that if they come here and settle down they could get land on the most ridiculously easy terms, and find constant employment. The conditions were so favourable that any man, be he Swede, Scandinavian, Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, or Welshman, could, in the course of a few years, drive his buggy and pair, and go out with a tall hat and a suit of broadcloth. That was the tenor of the literature he had got; and if the Committee would allow him, he would read extracts from this beautiful Tozerian literature, which would go to prove that the Agent-General in the old country was keeping up the reputation he earned in this country, and which had distinguished him in political life in Queensland—the reputation of postponing the truth for the purpose of the moment. There were three leaflets; and he would quote extracts from the three to show the kind of lies being retailed by the official representative of the colony in London for the purpose of inducing or inveigling honest citizens, who were at present obtaining a fairly decent livelihood and who were in fairly decent employment, to come out here and compete with the wretched bush-workers—the shearers and rouseabouts—and the men who were working on the sugar plantations, and who were being ground down by the system of competition which prevailed to the lowest level. Leaflet No. 1 affirmed that the demand for all classes of agricultural labourers and female domestic servants had been very great during the past season, and was not only likely to continue, but would increase. It also affirmed that "both men and women would be at liberty to go where they choose and do what they please on landing; and that ploughmen and wagoners could easily obtain 25s. a week, with board; shepherds and cowmen, 18s. and 20s.," and it concluded with the following plausible peroration:—

Those who desire to accept this most favourable opportunity for a free passage to the most delightful and progressive of our British colonies, should, to prevent disappointment, lose no time in making up their minds, as the concession is liable to be withdrawn at any moment.

Did not that remind hon. members of an advertisement in the *Courier* or the *Telegraph*, notifying the sale of a bankrupt stock—"Ladies and gentlemen, roll up; here's the chance of a lifetime; if you don't grasp it now, if you let it flit

past, it will be gone for ever." Note the quack nature of these advertisements! Then Mr. Rumsey, the Government agent, went on—

Think seriously, decide promptly, and carry out your resolution boldly. Bear in mind that Queensland is only England over the water, with English people, customs, and religion, but with greater freedom, cheaper food, and higher wages.

Mr. LEAHY: Have we given that man a rise?

Mr. LESINA: No.

Mr. LEAHY: Then we ought to.

Mr. LESINA: An Irishman's rise. Then this was issued under the auspices of the Agent-General's office. It was from a pamphlet headed "More people wanted in Queensland," and a smaller heading to the effect that the Agent-General of Queensland is affording farmers, dairymen, market gardeners, orchardists and their families free passages to Queensland, where they might obtain "freehold homes in a sunny land." It was illustrated with choice views of Canning Downs and Merivale Stations. It boasted of "the great demand for farm and female labour being the cause of this absolute gift of free passages by the colonists of Queensland to a few hard-working British people." "The demand for labour," it affirmed, "is kept up by the farm labourers of to-day becoming the farmers of to-morrow, and in their turn waiting to hire men, and in the case of single women through a large proportion leaving their situations to get married." "Wages are high," it shrieked, "land cheap, provisions abundant." "A working farmer in Queensland actually requires no capital to start on a small Government selection. The first twelve months may be safely passed in a tent, the climate is so mild, while at odd times a house is being built." Here were English citizens brought from the old country under this specious false pretence that they would require no capital. It was said that for twelve months they could live in a tent, and at odd times, when they were not fencing or clearing their selections, of which many hon. members had had a painful experience, they could put up a wattle and dab humpy or a lean-to of some description. Fancy the audacity of a paid official of Queensland trying to deceive the people of England by saying that they would require no capital to go on a selection! It was for these lies that the people of the colony and the hon. members sitting in the Chamber were taxed to the tune of £27,000 for passage money to bring these people out under these false pretences. Was it any wonder that one of the "Duke of Portland's" immigrants recently committed suicide by throwing himself into the river? These facts should go to the people in the old country, and if they did not go through *Hansard* they would go in some other way, and let them know that these paid liars were inducing these people to leave their comfortable homes and billets to come out here under these false pretences. At any rate, it was just as well that one member representing a working man's constituency should stand up and hurl these facts in the teeth of the Government—facts which they were only anxious to blink, and which had been blinked too long.

Mr. LEAHY: Ben Tillett would not say that.

Mr. LESINA: It was a scandal and a disgrace. In juxtaposition to all this he would read an extract from the report of the Labour Bureau, an institution for which they would shortly be asked to vote a large sum of money—

In some of the Northern sugar districts kanakas were demanding 16s. and 17s. a week and tucker, and refusing to work for less. Yet the report of the Government Labour Bureau just published, quoted white men as offering, in each of the following classes of labour, to work at from 10s. to 15s. a week and found, viz.:—Axemen, bushmen, butchers' assistants, cooks (men),

dairymen, engine-drivers, farm labourers, fencers, fire-wood-cutters, gardeners, grooms, handy men, horse-drivers, harvesters, teamsters, and plantation hands.

In the Northern plantations kanakas had struck and would not work for 16s., and they were inveigling men from the old country to come and work for wages that the kanakas would not work for. They have the effrontery to do that, and then hon. members were expected to vote this additional £27,000 for immigration! Then he noticed in the Treasurer's statement this sentence, which should also go before the people—"That the prosperity of our own people is the greatest inducement." If men were willing to work for 10s. or 15s. a week, could we honestly and conscientiously ask workmen from England, Ireland, and Scotland to come and work here, and accept wages which even kanakas refused? It was scandalous! The Premier had explained that 47 per cent. of those who came here were Irishmen. Why? It was largely due to the fact that prosperity in Ireland was not so marked as in England; and they felt that any change must be a change for the better. That was the reason why Irishmen were going to America, Canada, Capetown, and the colonies—to seek a livelihood which they were not permitted to earn in their own country. It was the misrule of that unfortunate country during the last fifty years that had reduced its population from 8,000,000 to 4,000,000. It was on account of the curse of English landlordism and English misgovernment. A conference had been held recently at Plymouth—a trades' union congress—which was attended by delegates representing hundreds of thousands of trade unionists in various parts of the country. A home newspaper says:—

The leading spirits of the Trade Union Congress, which met at Plymouth on Monday, even concede that trade was never better than it now is, and assuredly one could not find more reliable testimony than this, for if business were bad the union leaders would quickly announce the fact. On the contrary, everyone is said to be making money. Workshops and factories are so crowded with orders that work is being sent abroad to be done by our foreign competitors. The coal and iron trades are booming. Shipbuilding yards are crowded with ships. Even the British farmer, who is an object of solicitude for many politicians, is reaping an abundant harvest, and if rain comes soon to save his root crops, he will probably soon forget his past distresses. A well-informed newspaper man attending the Trade Union Congress says: "The congress meets in the midst of what is probably the greatest boom in trade that this country has ever seen. Every delegate you speak to tells of constant employment and high wages. So great is the demand for labour that all disputes are settling themselves in the most comfortable fashion. The Derbyshire miners have not a single unemployed man on their books. The textile trades are just as busy as the miners, while the iron trades are working overtime in all directions. The building trades meet the same condition."

Could the miners of Queensland say that? Could the Government say that there were any unemployed miners in Queensland? Yet the Derbyshire miners could say that there was not a solitary unemployed miner in the industry there. It was a crying shame that this sort of thing was permitted to be done, considering such an enormous sum of money was voted in this connection. He would tell hon. members what happened to these men when they came out here. First there was the case reported in the *Courier*, about the second week of last July, of a State-assisted immigrant who came out on board the "Duke of Argyle." That man's body was picked up in the river.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There are a good many picked up in the Thames, too.

Mr. LESINA: That was true. That man stated on one occasion that if he was not successful in getting employment he would tie a stone round his neck and throw himself into the river.

He was brought out at the expense of the people of Queensland; he was put into the Labour Bureau, and after a time he was turned out and lost, just as a man might turn out and lose a useless canine. That was another victim to the system of State-aided immigration. Then there were the men who came out in the "Duke of Portland." A certain benevolent member of the Legislative Assembly, who would probably vote for that immense sum of money to bring out cheap labour from Great Britain to stock his farm with them, got a whole family off that vessel. What did he give them a week? The father and three able-bodied sons had to work ten hours a day for a lump sum of 32s. per week, with rations consisting of 20 lb. flour, 4 lb. sugar, 1 lb. tea, 20 lb. meat, and an odd tin of condensed milk. A number of others had been engaged, to work on plantations and farms at wages ranging from 12s. 6d. to 15s. a week, and ploughmen at 18s. a week. That was the inducement offered to men to emigrate from England, lured by silvery-tongued orators like Ben Tillett, assisted by a limelight exhibition, and with the Agent-General in the chair—lured by all sorts of specially cooked statistics, such as that they would obtain a freehold farm of from 160 to 240 acres for 2s. 6d. an acre, payable in yearly instalments of 3d. an acre, and extending over a period of ten years. That is another story told by this pamphlet. He had one final word to say about the Scandinavian immigrants that the "Duke of Portland" emptied on the banks of our beautiful river, and engaged to work at various occupations at miserably low wages. Some of them, after vainly seeking for employment, called in at the *Worker* office, and were interviewed by the editor of that paper. That interview was published; it had been sent home, and would very probably go the round of the Scandinavian Press, and prevent other Scandinavians from being seduced into coming to Queensland under the conditions which brought those now here. Since their arrival they said they had only had three weeks' work, and now they felt like outcasts in a strange land. Questioned as to their reasons for leaving Norway, they said it was not because they could not get work; on the contrary, there was plenty of it to be had there. But they were led to believe that Queensland was a country in which money could be made very quickly. That inducement, with a free passage, was the reason which brought them here. Unlike Queensland, they said that in Norway a man need not go long unemployed, and when he got work it was steady, and wages compared favourably with what was paid for spasmodic work here. The agricultural labourer was paid from £20 to £25 per year and found in Norway, and servant girls received 15s. per month. Their food was good, and the places provided for them to sleep in were far better than employers provided in Queensland. Altogether, everyone who worked for wages in Norway had the comforts of a home, but all that was different in this country. Neither of the two immigrants had ever worked on a farm. They said they were never questioned on the subject before they left Norway or England, and that there was no trouble in getting a free passage out. They were spending the taxpayers' money in bringing out men ignorant of the language of the country, who never saw a farm, and who never even pretended that they were Scandinavian farmers, to develop that particular industry in Queensland. Those men were never even questioned on the subject. They were "shanghied" into coming out, and the men who "shanghied" them got 10s. 6d. per scalp. The interviewer in the *Worker* went on to say—

They related the experiences which others of their shipmates have had since landing in Queensland, and

from what they heard several of the girls say they were inclined to believe that a certain private labour bureau in Queensland was making a good harvest out of the fees wrung from girls in search of employment. Also, that someone not unconnected with the immigration offices in England was very likely co-operating with the particular labour bureau to exploit the pockets of the immigrant girls. Altogether, they said that the immigration system of Queensland was a cruel fraud on honest people in other countries who, like them, may be deceitfully induced to break up comfortable homes to come out to a country in which there is no better wages, less work, and worse conditions of life and treatment.

Facts of that kind should induce people in the old country, when made known to them, should warn people not to trust the specious statements of immigration agents and the specially cooked accounts of the colony that were sent to the United Kingdom. Again, the Hon. George Thorn, during the federation debate, pointed out that he knew of a sawmill in Victoria at which, out of twenty-two men employed, eighteen had come to Australia at the expense of the Queensland taxpayers. The Queensland taxpayers had brought those eighteen men out at a large expense, and had received nothing whatever in return. How long was such a system to continue? It was doing harm, not only to the country but to the wretched people who were being induced to break up comfortable homes, and sever home associations and risk their chances of employment in a country with such a Government as Queensland had. If the Government was any kind of a Government he would not mind. If it had a character worth defending; if the people who came out could recognise the fact that they were coming to a country where there was a liberal system of government, where political rights were more easily obtained than in the old land, and where the chances of employment were better, he would hold out the right hand of fellowship to them. But that was impossible under the present system, and he for one entered his protest against it, not only on behalf of his own constituents, but on behalf of those people in the old world who were finding out that when they came to Queensland to make their homes they were making a most grievous error.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, Mackay)

[8.30 p.m.] would have been a little more convinced by the hon. member if he had not wound up his speech in such an extraordinary manner, by admitting in fact that the whole of his speech was unnecessary. He came to the conclusion finally that he would welcome people from the old country in spite of the fact that they would be ruined when they came, or would ruin others, always provided that we had another Government. That was the burden of the hon. member's song, and apparently it was all a political trouble. The hon. member advertised himself for about an hour at the expense of the unfortunate persons in the gallery, but after all what he chiefly aimed at was a change of Government.

Mr. Dawson: Tell us something about the immigration vote.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: When the hon. member wanted to make a speech he could make his own.

Mr. Dawson: You are out of order.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Then why did not the hon. gentleman call his friend and colleague and assistant leader to order? The hon. member for Clermont was apparently the leader of the House, if they were to judge by the amount of time he occupied and the prominence he assumed in debate. He had been talking for about an hour on various topics.

Mr. Dawson: On the immigration vote.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS : On the immigration vote ostensibly. He was only following the hon. member, and the moment he endeavoured to refute some of the hon. member's fallacies the leader of the Opposition discovered that he was out of order. Fair play was a jewel. The hon. member could speak when he was done, but he did not see why he should want to interfere with him except he believed that all that had been said by the hon. member was merely froth, as he should endeavour to show. From the hon. member's arguments and those of his friends, it would appear that the ideal colony would be a colony with only one person in it, and that the moment a second person came along then there was competition and ruin, but they never thought that the moment others came along they added to the wealth of the colony. The hon. member quoted from a pamphlet containing an obvious platitude—that the man who comes here as a labourer has an ultimate chance of becoming an employer of labour. That was a fact, and there was nothing extraordinary about it. When he and other hon. members came here they were all labourers of a sort, in the sense that they had to earn their living. No doubt a certain number of people were always successful. Where would they find in any part of the world that everyone was successful? The hon. member said it was madness for people to come here. Did not his father come here? Did he not come here himself from New South Wales? Why did he come? He was not lured here by an immigration agent. There were no end of people here because they came from New South Wales and other colonies, and as a matter of fact there was no colony in the Australian group, not excepting New Zealand, where the population got so many accessions from the neighbouring colonies. What did that go to show? It seemed to him to show that this colony was fairly prosperous. Generally speaking it was assumed that in a country such as this, where the population was sparse, and where there was an enormous amount of superior land, there were more openings than in a densely populated country. That was true of America, and it was true of Queensland and the other colonies. If that was so it was not unreasonable to tell the people at home that certain things were; that wages were so-and-so; that land was so-and-so, and it was perfectly true that a man under certain conditions could obtain 160 acres and get five years in which to pay for it. It was fair to assume that the great majority of people in Europe could never hope to become landowners; but there were a great many people with that ambition. Perhaps they attached too much value to it, but the idea that a day might come when they would be their own landlords was distinctly attractive to them. Why, therefore, should the colony's agents not say that land could be bought at a certain price? It did not follow that because people came to this colony from Europe or the other colonies that they must be successful, but he was prepared to assert that the chances of a man who had nothing but his strong arm and natural intelligence becoming prosperous in this country were infinitely greater than they would be in a densely populated country. That was why the more enterprising people came here, and it was the most enterprising who listened to the lecturers at home. But a great many on the other hand did not come here. The hon. member pictured the lamentable state of things that was going to be brought about by some few people coming here from the other end of the world; that they were going to compete in the labour market and ruin the men who wanted employment here. That was one picture, but the hon. member, with a conveniently forgotten

memory, or an inability to square one side of his opinions with another, said, "Look at the United Kingdom, see what a wonderfully prosperous country it is; wages are higher there than they are here, employment is exceedingly plentiful, and not one unemployed man is to be found within the circle of a great trades union." But in order to bring about more prosperity in that wonderfully prosperous land the hon. member would, according to his argument, export nine-tenths of the people. Now, the United Kingdom had 40,000,000 of people, and its whole area was only one-sixth that of Queensland, but according to the hon. member's own argument there ought not to be one man who was not a pauper. According to him they ought all to be competing against one another, and eventually become beggars. If he said that by bringing more people here the country was going to be ruined, then in the United Kingdom, which was overwhelmed with population, everyone must be in a state of semistarvation. Let the hon. member explain that, and adopt one conclusion or the other. The hon. member also complained that we were heavily in debt—the most heavily taxed people in the world. What was his conclusion? Not that more people should be brought here in order to help to bear the burden, and gradually diminish it. That would be the conclusion of any rational person; but he wanted the small handful of people already here to continue to bear the burden. If the colony owed £60 a head of the population, one would think that if the population were doubled the debt would diminish to £30 a head, and if it were quadrupled the debt would become a mere bagatelle. Yet, instead of the hon. member trying to seek for a solution of the overburdened state of the colony by adding to the population, he was prepared to keep as many people as he could away from the colony.

MR. LESINA : When you fetch them here they will not stay.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS : He admitted that they could leave again, but seeing that more came from the adjoining colonies than went away it might fairly be assumed that this colony was considered to a certain extent attractive, and he ventured to say that there were no people so well able to judge of that as those who had lived in the adjoining colonies under exactly similar conditions. He really could not congratulate the hon. member upon the coherency of what he said, as one part of his speech entirely destroyed the effect of another part. The policy of the colony for a considerable time had been to assist immigration to a very small extent. Practically, all it came to was to endeavour to put Queensland on a level with other attractive fields for immigration in the world. On the Government side they did not believe that it was an injurious thing to secure a large population. They would prefer to get people who were able to pay their own passages, but there was merely a little lightening of the cost, so that a man was not compelled by his want of means to go to America, where he could get for £3, or perhaps to South Africa by-and-by, where he would be able to get for much less than he could get to Queensland. There were thousands of deserving men in the United Kingdom who would be a positive acquisition to Queensland, but who had not the means to come. Why should they shut them out, or drive them to the United States of America or some other place? It was not long ago that the United States endeavoured to attract immigration, and they succeeded. He would ask the late leader of the Opposition whether at some time in his life he had not passed under review the various parts

of the world which held out better chances for the future than the old country?

Mr. GLASSEY: Perfectly true. I did that when I was nineteen years of age.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: So had he, and there were thousands of others who had done the same. The hon. member was not the worst kind of colonist on that account. There were thousands of people in the United Kingdom whom he would be glad to see coming to Queensland, and he might say the same of some parts of Europe. He was perfectly prepared to welcome them, whether they were Scandinavians, or, in some cases, Italians—he had known some very good Italians who had come here. They might fairly assume that there were thousands of people in the United Kingdom who were looking around, as prudent men—perhaps not only desirous of doing better for themselves, but hoping that in the distant future their children would have a better prospect in a thinly settled country than they would if they remained there.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is exactly what brought me out to this country.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Just so. There were thousands of people who had been induced to come through precisely the same process of reasoning; but, unless they lessened the cost of the passage, those people would not come to Queensland at all, and that was what the Government were doing. It was a perfectly rational policy. As to what the hon. member said about silver-tongued orators, the hon. member was quite satisfied with Mr. Benjamin Tillett a short time ago.

Mr. LESINA: Never.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Mr. Benjamin Tillett had apparently become discredited because he happened to contradict what the hon. member wished to have believed. If Mr. Benjamin Tillett was credible twelve months ago, when he was a trusted friend and colleague of the extreme Labour section—

Mr. GLASSEY: He is still.

Mr. LESINA: Not on the immigration question.

Mr. GLASSEY: I certainly regard him as a very eminent Labour man.

Mr. LESINA: He was only five days in the colony.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: At any rate, he could safely place Mr. Tillett's opinion against that of the hon. member for Clermont, and it would carry a vast deal more weight than anything that had been said by hon. members on the other side.

Mr. LESINA: Would you say that if he attacked your immigration policy?

Mr. GLASSEY: As most hon. members were anxious to finish the Chief Secretary's Estimates in order to get on with the Elections Bill, which was of more importance, he would not say much on the question. He had listened with a great deal of attention to what the hon. member for Clermont had said, and he had also read what had been said with regard to Mr. Ben. Tillett's appointment on a former occasion, and regretted some of the statements that had been made. He was sure the hon. member for Clermont would pardon him if he said that considering the splendid services rendered in the past to the cause of labour and humanity throughout the world by Mr. Ben. Tillett, considering the elevated position he filled, and his absolute honesty and integrity, he certainly did not deserve the strictures which had been passed upon him in that Chamber. He had not read any account of Mr. Ben. Tillett's lectures, but he ventured to say from his knowledge of Mr. Tillett that his appointment did credit to the Agent-General's head and to his heart.

Sir Horace Tozer knew that Mr. Tillett was not a mere hireling lecturer, who would say what would please the Agent-General and the colony. Mr. Tillett had a perfectly free hand. It was not for the few paltry pounds he got that Mr. Tillett undertook the work. He believed that altogether he had only received something like £70 for delivering a course of eleven lectures, out of which he had to pay his own travelling expenses, to pay for halls, for bills, and for all the other expenses which were incidental to the delivering of his lectures. It would not pay him. Moreover, in his letter in reply to some of the criticisms passed upon him by hon. members, Mr. Tillett said that he was merely lecturing upon the colony as he found it—upon its people, and its condition. When he was in Queensland he was enabled to visit different parts of the colony through the concessions which were made to him by the heads of the Railway Department, as a distinguished visitor. In the letter to which he had alluded, Mr. Tillett merely mentioned the subjects he discussed. He would take the liberty of reading a paragraph from a letter by Mr. Tillett in the *Worker* of the 28th of October, to show what Mr. Tillett had been lecturing upon in England. Mr. Tillett said—

I have not advocated emigration, but have lectured on Queensland and her resources without reference to emigration, merely stating the policy of the Government, its franchise parties (parliamentary), its industries, its people, the races living there, with a rough notion given of the vicissitudes of life.

Surely that did not justify the strictures which had been passed upon that gentleman. At the same time, he must say that the question of immigration wanted careful handling, and that unless there was room for the absorption of any people brought here, whether they were farm labourers or domestic servants, or any other class, they should not be induced to come to Queensland.

Mr. BRIDGES (*Nundah*) supposed that the reason why hon. members opposite were in such a hurry to get that vote through was that they wanted to get to the bunch of carrots which was ahead. It seemed to be the general opinion of hon. members that they should bring farm labourers and servant girls to the colony, but why should those classes be singled out as desirable persons to bring to Queensland? If they talked about bringing out persons who would compete with miners and tradesmen receiving their 10s. a day there was a great noise all round the Committee, and he thought they should wait until farm labourers were getting something like the wages paid to miners and others before they proposed to introduce other farm labourers to compete with them. But it appeared that if farmers could not get labourers sufficient at 4s. a day they were to send home and bring out shiploads of farm labourers.

Mr. JENKINSON: What about the risk and difficulty in mining?

Mr. BRIDGES: There was quite as much risk in connection with farming as there was in mining. With regard to domestic servants he held that no matter how many servant girls they brought to the colony a great many of them would find their way into factories and other places where the work was not quite so hard, and where they were not so much tied in the evening as they would be as domestic servants. It was no use trying to regulate those things in the way proposed. They should rather give their attention to bringing out a good class of people who had grit in them, not minding whether they were farm labourers or anything else, and they would find plenty of work here even if they had to start at 4s. a day. He objected, however, to everyone seeming to

agree that they should bring out farm labourers, even if they brought down the wages of those labourers to 2s. or 1s. 6d. a day.

Question put and passed.

QUARANTINE.

The PREMIER moved that the sum of £788 be granted to defray the expenses of quarantine. That vote showed a decrease of £850 on account of the medical superintendents at Thursday Island, Townsville, and Rockhampton being transferred to the Home Secretary's Department. Otherwise the vote was identical with what it was last year.

Question put and passed.

STEAMERS "LUCINDA" AND "MINER."

The PREMIER moved that the sum of £4,372 be granted to defray the expenses of the steamers "Lucinda" and "Miner." There was an increase of £272 in that Estimate caused wholly by increases to the chief officer of the "Lucinda" from £96 to £120, the leading seaman from £84 to £96, the steward from £96 to £108; to increases in the pay of the master of the "Miner" from £168 to £180, and in the pay of two seamen from £60 to £72; and to an increase in the contingencies for repairs and overhaul of £200.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*) moved the reduction of the vote by £1,188, the amount [9 p.m.] for the steamer "Lucinda." He did not think the taxpayers' money should be spent to pay for the "Lucinda," which was employed for nothing else but to buy support for the Government in the Southern part of the colony.

Amendment put and negatived; and original question put and passed.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES (SUBDIVISION).

The PREMIER moved that £17,535 be granted for miscellaneous services (subdivision). It would be observed that the increases consisted of £8,000 for the expenses of the federal referendum; an increase from £750 to £900 for European telegrams, the amount last year having proved insufficient; £1,000 for the Queensland National Art Gallery, previously included in the vote for miscellaneous services, Home Secretary's Department; £100 for the Art Society, also included previously in the same vote; £50 for the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia; £50 for the Royal Society of Queensland; £200 for conditional endowments to Royal and Geographical Societies, at the rate of £1 for every £1 subscribed up to £100; £1,000 as a grant in aid of the proposed Antarctic exploring expedition.

Mr. BROWNE: Is that the expedition that is there now?

The PREMIER: No. It was an expedition on a much larger scale, and which had not yet started. A large amount had been subscribed by the Royal Geographical Society and other societies at home to subsidise the expedition, and it was expected that the results of the expedition would be of considerable scientific value. There was a sum of £1,000 for the Government Printing Commission, and £1,000 for the Police Inquiry Commission. With regard to the £3,000 required for incidental and miscellaneous expenses, when the Chief Secretary's Department was established last year on its present basis under his predecessor there was a division, and the appropriation for the incidental and miscellaneous expenses, the sum of £2,000 was put down, but was found to be insufficient. The departmental expenses in connection with newspapers, petty cash, stamps, etc., amounted to £760; expenses connected with Premiers' visits—his

predecessor and himself—for the twelve months amounted to £585; expenses of entertaining visitors, £697; funeral of the late Premier, £263; Federal Council, £389. The total amount expended last year was £2,837, so that the £2,000 voted was insufficient.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) asked for information with regard to the item of £1,000 for the public library of Queensland? He could not find any information as to the £1,000 voted last year having lapsed.

The PREMIER: He was informed that the full amount was expended last year in books.

Mr. JENKINSON: Are there no salaries in connection with it also?

The PREMIER: The only expense in the shape of salary was 10s. a day for a clerk to look after the catalogue.

Mr. JENKINSON supposed the hon. gentleman could give no further information than he had given in answer to a question as to when it was likely that the library would be open to the public. There had been a good many inquiries from the outside districts as to when the library would be open, and people were anxiously looking forward to the time when they would be able to use it. He hardly thought that there had been the expedition there might have been in getting it ready for use.

The PREMIER understood that the contents of the Museum would be removed within the next six weeks, but he presumed it would be well on to the beginning of the year before the place could be opened as a public library as some time would be occupied in placing the books in position and fitting the shelves.

Mr. JENKINSON: His reason for asking was that he noticed that only the same amount was asked for this year as last, though it would probably take much more to run the library after it was opened.

The PREMIER: Did he understand the hon. member to object that the provision for this year was not sufficient.

Mr. JENKINSON: Exactly, yes.

The PREMIER: He took it that £1,000 would be expended in the purchase of books and would not cover the expenditure on fittings, which would be found by the Works Department.

Mr. JENKINSON: And salaries also, that is what I refer to more than anything else.

The PREMIER pointed out that probably not more than six months' provision for salaries would be required, and no doubt the trustees would carry out their arrangements in that respect as economically as possible.

Mr. LESINA: There was an item there of £185 for the Imperial Institute. He had seen in some of the papers that the institute was dead or gone bung or insolvent, or that the bailiffs had got into it. What benefit would they get from the expenditure of that £185?

The PREMIER: The institute was undoubtedly being carried on under a new arrangement, but the other colonies were still contributing to it as well as Queensland upon an approximate population basis, and for the sake of £185 it would be rather undignified in the meantime for Queensland to withdraw.

Mr. JENKINSON asked whether the item of £8,000 represented the whole cost of taking the federation referendum?

The PREMIER: He believed it would be found to be rather an over-estimate. So far, the vouchers received represented a sum of £5,732. There were other vouchers still to come in, but he was in hope that a considerable amount of the £8,000 would lapse. The Auditor-General would see that nothing was paid that was not certified to by vouchers.

Mr. JENKINSON: The hon. gentleman had mentioned a sum of some £700 as expenses incurred in connection with visitors. That was very vague. He had no recollection of any distinguished visitors coming that would account for that expense, and perhaps the hon. gentleman would give some explanation of it.

The PREMIER: The amount covered the expense of entertaining the Admiral, Mr. Lindon Bates, the wool-buyers, and others.

Mr. JENKINSON: The wool-buyers?

The PREMIER: Yes, those who attended the first wool sales held in Brisbane had been entertained on board the "Lucinda." It was hospitality shown to the people who came here to open up a trade which was assuming very large dimensions.

Mr. LESINA: This was a most remarkable revelation. Public money was allowed to go through there in a most peculiar fashion, because hon. members were not sufficiently watch-dogs in the interests of the public. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were passed through there for incidentals and unauthorised expenditure of that character. The only hold they had was their hold on the purse strings, but if they were to spend money like that, they might just as well shut up the shop and go home. On wool-buyers, men who had come here to make money, they had been spending money, champagneing them, and boozing them up, and taking them down on the "Lucinda," and he could not get £1,000 for a waterworks for Clermont, where the people were drinking water that was thick. That was a scandalous way of carrying on the government of the country, and he entered his strong protest.

Mr. J. HAMILTON recollected some time ago members on the other side objected to the Government refusing free passes to people who came from South Australia to take up land. The visit of those wool-buyers had been of great benefit to the colony, and would be of benefit especially to small selectors who could not afford to wait for their returns so long as the large squatters. As a result of the encouragement of those wool-buyers, many hundreds of thousands of pounds would be spent in the colony that would otherwise be spent in Sydney. It had been the means also of giving a great deal of extra work to carriers and others in Brisbane, and if it was desirable to encourage men who wished to settle on the land by giving them free passes, it was equally desirable to give some encouragement to men who had done so much to benefit the colony.

Mr. BRIDGES asked for some explanation of the vote of £1,000 in aid of the proposed Antarctic exploring expedition.

The PREMIER: Hon. gentlemen must be aware that a very large sum of money had been subscribed towards the fund which was being raised by the Royal Geographical Society—and it was being very largely subsidised by the Imperial Government—for fitting out a very large expedition to explore the Antarctic Circle. It was expected it would result in the ascertaining of certain scientific facts which were as yet somewhat in the clouds; and considering the geographical position of Queensland in the southern hemisphere, this money might fairly be voted in the interests of science, especially as Great Britain had taken it up to such a large extent, and scientists in all parts of the world were deeply interested in the result. He believed the Antarctic Circle was about the only portion of the globe which had not been explored.

Mr. JENKINSON: When will this expedition start?

The PREMIER: This money, if passed, would be sent home to the Royal Geographical Society. He could not give any information as

to when the expedition would start, but they were keenly engaged at home in providing the necessary equipment.

Mr. BRIDGES: There was some doubt as to whether the Police Commission was likely to travel North.

Mr. DAWSON: This is not on this vote.

Mr. BRIDGES: Yes, it was.

Mr. DAWSON: It is on the Home Secretary's Estimates.

Mr. BRIDGES: This was a matter he was interested in.

Mr. DAWSON: So am I.

Mr. BRIDGES: If hon. members interrupted it would take him longer to get a reply to his question. He should not ask the question—there would not be any need for him to do so—only that hon. members on the other side were getting tired, and things were slipping through in rather a hasty manner, and next week they would be wondering how they came to vote such a large sum of money in a few minutes as they had done this evening. He should like to know whether it was the intention of the Government to allow the Police Commission to travel.

The PREMIER: He had already informed the Committee, and he now repeated the statement, that the Police Commission had full powers, if they chose to exercise them, to travel. He had told them—in fact, he had suggested—that they should appoint a sub-committee if the whole of the members did not choose to go North, and the Government would give them every facility to visit Rockhampton and Townsville if they deemed it necessary to do so. Up till the present they had made no sign. They had asked for an extension of time to send in their report, and that time would expire on the 30th of this month. If by that time they had not made up their mind to travel, they would have to send in their report.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: In connection with that—

Mr. DAWSON: What game is this?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Frequently, in fact, night after night, the Labour party had sat up till 12, 1, 2, and 3 o'clock in the morning, keeping the reporters and everyone else out of their beds, saying practically nothing—each man repeating what the other had said almost word for word. They thought nothing of eight hours for the *Hansard* men or anybody else so long as it satisfied their vanity to see their speeches in print. But when a single member on this asked a pertinent question they objected. No one was to say anything except members on the other side. A charge had been made against one member of the Commission, Mr. Unmack, and it was made in that Chamber—a place where he could not reply—that he was failing in his duty to see justice done, because he did not wish to go all round the country, as it would take him away from his business. He (Mr. Hamilton) met that gentleman in the street the other day, and he told him it was a deliberate untruth; that he had said nothing of the sort. He said the matter had been brought before the members of the Commission, but he really did not think it was necessary to travel all around the North, and the majority were of that opinion. At the same time, Mr. Unmack said he did not care if they travelled round for the next three years, because it would pay him well enough; but he did not think it would be honest if, for his own benefit, he agreed to do a thing he did not consider it absolutely necessary to do.

Mr. STEPHENSON (*Ipswich*): It was very rarely he found himself in accord with the hon. member for Clermont; but he certainly agreed with him in thinking that to-night, the members of the Opposition were entirely abnegating their functions. He did not know

how it had been done; but it appeared to him that some hypnotic influence had been exercised by the Premier, and the consequence was that they found hon. gentlemen on the other side, who were loquacious enough as a general rule in all conscience, were now perfectly dumb dogs. It did not matter how large a sum was proposed to be voted by the Committee, it was allowed to go through without any criticism at all, and the mere fact that that was so raised the suspicion that there was something wrong. (Laughter from the Opposition members.) He was pleased to think that hon. members on the Ministerial side were rising to the importance of the occasion, and beginning to see that it was necessary there should be some criticism of the Estimates. The hon. member for Clermont had very justly said that there must be something wrong with hon. members when they were induced to vote these large sums of money without a word of criticism. As the hon. member for Cook had pointed out, these hon. gentlemen had been willing enough for the last five, six, seven, or eight weeks to keep members there until 12, 1, 2, 3, and 4 o'clock discussing the most trivial questions imaginable; but now, when they were asked to vote large sums of the country's money, and place what might prove heavy burdens on the taxpayers, these gentlemen—for some reason or other, that he could not explain—were perfectly silent, and appeared to deprecate the bringing in of any grievances any hon. member might have before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to confine himself to the question.

Mr. STEPHENSON: Certainly. That was what he was about to do. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. DAWSON: It takes you a long time to do it.

Mr. STEPHENSON: He would abide by the Chairman's ruling at any time, or take any advice from him, but he absolutely refused to be dictated to by the hon. the senior member for Charters Towers. Whatever that gentleman might be on the other side, he was not his (Mr. Stephenson's) leader, and he refused to accept any expression of opinion from him at all, or from the hon. member for Bundaberg, who seemed to be very desirous that evening of bossing the show. He should like to know whether the £8,000 put down to meet the expenses of the federal referendum was the whole of the money that was required to meet the expense of the vote which was taken a couple of months ago? All he could say was that if the £8,000 was sufficient, then the vote was taken on a very much more economical scale than the majority of the people of the colony imagined. For his part, he did not think £8,000 would anything like recoup the country for the expense of taking the vote.

He would like to know whether the [9.30 p.m.] special trains which the Premier and some of his colleagues required in order to carry on the federation propaganda were included in this £8,000? He deprecated—and he regretted that he had not had an opportunity of bringing the matter up before—the action of several hon. members on his own side of the House in respect to the referendum on that question. He did not think the fight had been carried on on fair lines. The advantage had been all with the federalists, and every obstacle had been placed in the way of those opposed to federation, like himself. He did not think the £8,000 would cover all the expenses, and some more information should be given by the hon. gentleman in charge of the vote—all the information that was available up to the present time. The country was entitled to some further explanation than had yet been vouchsafed to the Committee by the Premier.

Mr. JENKINSON: The Premier replied to my question.

Mr. STEPHENSON: He had nothing to do with the reply given by the Premier to the hon. member. The hon. member might be satisfied with that reply, but he could not say that because that information was satisfactory to him, that it was also satisfactory to other hon. members or the country generally. For his own part, he desired to have a little more information—more than the hon. member for Wide Bay seemed to be satisfied with.

Mr. JENKINSON: I did not say I was satisfied with it.

Mr. STEPHENSON: He presumed from that hon. member's interjection that he was satisfied with it, but it was by no means perfectly satisfactory to such a humble member of the Committee as himself. It was not often that he asked for information, and he did not ask for this information so much for himself as for the people of the country, amongst whom there was still a feeling of soreness as to the manner in which the fight had been conducted. Concerning the query of the hon. member for Nundah, as to the vote in aid of the proposed Antarctic exploring expedition, the hon. gentleman in charge of the Estimate had stated that the exact location of the Antarctic Circle had not yet been settled; and while he (Mr. Stephenson) did not know whether the voting of this £1,000 would enable the expedition to settle it, he would like to know how much better off this colony or the world would be if the question were settled, and the South Pole exactly located?

Mr. MAXWELL: It might be good agricultural land.

Mr. STEPHENSON: Possibly much advantage might arise from the information; but he was not satisfied that it would, and he did not think hon. members on the other side could instruct him on the matter. He wanted the information from the hon. gentleman in charge of the vote.

Mr. JENKINSON: —

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. STEPHENSON wished the Chairman would maintain order on the other side. He was not in the habit of interrupting hon. members, and it was very rarely that the hon. member for Nundah, or he himself, troubled the House. He was only asking for information which he thought he was entitled to get, without continual interruptions from the other side. He would be pleased if the hon. member in charge of the vote would give the information he had asked for.

The PREMIER: He had already told the Committee that the sum of £8,000 would fully cover the whole of the expenses connected with the taking of the referendum. Up to the present they had got vouchers for about £6,000, and it was estimated that the balance would more than fully cover the outstanding liabilities. He had been asked something about special trains, but he was not aware that there were any special trains employed, except those necessitated by himself, visiting certain portions of the colony, where he had been asked to go to furnish information concerning the meaning and interpretation of the Commonwealth Bill. That was a matter of general interest, and he did not go to spread federal propaganda, but to throw light on the Bill to the best of his ability. He admitted that this was not included in the £8,000, but there were not many special trains, and the expense in connection with them was not heavy. He could assure the hon. member that the sum placed on the Estimates was quite sufficient for the purpose. He was sorry to see that the hon. member was still a little sore over the result of the referendum, but he thought they should now all unite and endeavour to make the movement a great success throughout Australia.

With regard to the £1,000 for the Antarctic exploring expedition, he had already explained that a large amount had been subscribed in England, which had been subsidised by the Imperial Government, for the purpose of forwarding this expedition to explore the Antarctic Pole, with a view to the discovery of matters in which science was particularly interested; and he did not think—considering the general advance of science—that we should hesitate to give our mite in the general cause of scientific information and knowledge which was expected to result from the proposed expedition.

Mr. BRIDGES asked if the other colonies had contributed anything towards this expedition? He thought this was a matter which should be left over till next year or to the Federal Parliament. No doubt the Government had a good reason for asking for this sum at the present time; but they should be careful how they were voting their money away. If the other colonies were going to contribute on the population basis, he had no objection to the £1,000 being passed, otherwise he might move a reduction in the amount.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*) would like to ask the Premier if the £1,000 asked for for the Government Printing Office Commission would cover the expenses of that commission?

The PREMIER: With respect to the Government Printing Commission, there was no likelihood of any additional amount being required. With regard to the increase in incidental and miscellaneous expenses, he had already explained that last year, when the offices of the Chief Secretary and of the Home Secretary were established, an apportionment of the sum was made, but it was discovered that the amount allotted to the Chief Secretary's department was insufficient for the expenses of the year, which ran into £2,837.

Mr. JENKINSON asked if the hon. gentleman would explain why the vote to the Art Society had been increased?

The PREMIER said he thought they ought to encourage art in their midst. There were a great number of rising artists who were acquiring proficiency, and the Art Society offered them the opportunity to exhibit their paintings.

Mr. JENKINSON: Have they made application for it?

The PREMIER: Yes; and hon. members would remember that the matter was favourably discussed last year on that vote.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW said he noticed two new items—Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, £50; and Royal Society of Queensland, £50. Were those beneficial objects?

The PREMIER said those were two new items, but he thought the country could very well afford to encourage the establishment of scientific bodies like the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia and the Royal Society of Queensland. They had each a considerable number of members, and had made application to the Government for some recognition. In that day of scientific development he did not think the Committee would grudge the small allowance to those societies, which were doing very good work.

Mr. BRIDGES said he noticed an increase of £150 in the item for European telegrams. It appeared that £750 was not sufficient last year, and that for this year £900 was required. Had any of the extra money been required for the purpose of sending telegrams home in connection with federation and getting congratulatory telegrams in return? If so, the expenditure would not meet with the approval of his constituents, and he should be compelled to move as an amendment that the item be reduced by that amount.

The PREMIER: He might relieve the hon. member's mind by saying that the increase had nothing whatever to do with federation. He might add that communication with the Agent-General's office now required the use of the cable much more extensively than formerly. Many matters had now to be dealt with expeditiously by cable which formerly could be conducted by correspondence. It was likely that the vote would increase year by year until the telegraphic charges were reduced, which would be the case when the Pacific cable was constructed.

Question put and passed.

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

ELECTIONS BILL.

SECOND READING.

On the Order of the Day being called—

Mr. BRIDGES: I rise to object to going on at this hour with such important business.

Mr. DAWSON: Order, order!

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Who is pulling his leg?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, *Carmarvon*): I rather regret having to commence the debate on such an important measure as this at such a very late hour.

Mr. DAWSON: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I am very much afraid that I shall not conclude much before midnight, and if I consulted my own convenience I should ask to be allowed to take the second reading to-morrow. Possibly that would be more convenient all round. However, I understand from my leader that my speech is expected to-night, and, of course, I am quite prepared to go on with the Bill, although possibly speaking to empty benches, which is not a very pleasant thing to do. Now, I wish to make an explanation to the House in regard to the Bill which is now in the hands of hon. members, and which is not, odd as it may appear, exactly the Bill as it was intended to be introduced. The variations are not very great, but it so happens that through some unfortunate mistake or misunderstanding the finally revised draft of the Bill was not the one which was introduced. I dare say hon. members who have gone through the Bill will have noticed that there are some obvious errors in it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I should like to explain exactly what did happen, because although technically I suppose I am responsible, yet I think personally it is not a matter for which I can be held responsible. It so happens that a mistake was made by someone, I think in the Government Printing Office, and when the final draft should have been returned to the Parliamentary Draftsman it was returned to me instead. He took no further action, because he thought it was still in the hands of the printer. I was under the impression that it had been returned to the Parliamentary Draftsman, and had then come back to me. In the meantime the Government Printer was quietly awaiting further instructions as to the adoption of the new amendments which he had had printed. Not having received any such intimation, he, when asked to send up to the Chief Secretary a copy of the Bill for His Excellency's message, sent up not the final draft, but the one which had been drafted before that, the final draft being actually in my possession at the time, and I being under the impression that it had gone back to the Parliamentary Draftsman. Two or three officers had a hand in the mistake, but who is really responsible I am not prepared to say.

Mr. DAWSON: What is everybody's business is nobody's business.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You were playing hide and seek.

The HOME SECRETARY: The incident certainly shows how very careful one ought to be in these matters. Possibly I was to blame in assuming that the Bill had come back to me after having been returned by the Parliamentary Draftsman.

Mr. GLASSEY: Will these amendments be circulated?

The HOME SECRETARY: I have them in print and I should be glad to circulate them before the second reading, but I find there is a rule that no amendments are permitted to be circulated before the second reading is agreed to.

Mr. GLASSEY: A very excellent rule.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are not of very vital importance, relating more to the matter of machinery and administration, except those which refer to the questions which are to be put to voters which do not agree with the previous enactment. I will just mention these as I come to them. I also wish to make another explanation. Hon. members will have observed that there are a number of clauses and numbers which are placed in brackets with a marginal reference to the Criminal Code. That means that if the Criminal Code becomes law before this Bill, it will be necessary, in whatever Chamber this Bill is last considered, to make these amendments, because they are already printed word for word in the Criminal Code, which we have recently passed, and which will very largely lead to the shortening and simplification of this measure. Now, the leading principle of this Bill is, of course, one man one vote. I little thought that it would fall to my lot to be the one to introduce a Bill of this sort in this Assembly.

Mr. DAWSON: You ought to congratulate yourself.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do most heartily, if no one else will.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You are making history.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a principle which I may say I have not violently objected to, but to which I have not given a very enthusiastic adherence in the past. I have never personally advocated our present system of representation so far as the franchise is concerned. I have always declared it to be anomalous and illogical; but I certainly did think that it was possible—and the late Premier, Mr. Byrnes, was of the same opinion, for I had many conversations with him on the subject—to devise something which would really be more in accord with what should be advanced views in regard to this question than the principle of one man one vote. For instance, I may mention the Belgian system, which is a matter of recent adoption, and which may very fairly be considered a highly democratic measure.

Mr. McDONALD: And brought about civil war, or if not civil war, riots at all events.

The HOME SECRETARY: In my opinion there is very much more to be said

[10 p.m.] in favour of that—or if I may not go so far as to say that—there is more in something on the lines of the Belgian system than anything I have come across. However, we are not here to discuss the different principles upon which members should be elected to the representative Assemblies of Australasia. That has practically been settled by the adoption in five colonies of the Commonwealth Bill.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: It is in deference to the expressed will of the people in the adoption of that Bill that this measure is now introduced, in order that Queensland may be brought into line with the other colonies in

regard to this very important question. I believe it is a fact that a considerable majority of the members of this Assembly were pledged to support the principle of one man one vote, and, since it is the corollary of the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill, I take it there is very little doubt as to its passage through this Assembly—possibly not in the form in which it stands at the present time; possibly with certain modifications. It may be asked by some hon. members why it is that female suffrage has not been introduced into this Bill? Well, I may state the reason for that at once: The country has never yet expressed an opinion in favour of female suffrage. It has, on the other hand, expressed an opinion in favour of one man one vote—

Mr. BROWNE: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: By the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill. Hon. members may say, in reply to that, that the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill implies the adoption of female suffrage because female suffrage is permissible under that Bill; but that would be somewhat straining the principle which we are endeavouring to lay down at the present time—that we are merely doing that which the country has, so to speak, directed us to do, because no one has the right to assume that either manhood suffrage, with one man one vote, or adult suffrage, with one person one vote, has been adopted. The only principle we can be certain about as having been adopted in the passing of the Commonwealth Bill is the principle of one man one vote.

Mr. JACKSON: That was only for the Federal Parliament, practically. It was not an expression of opinion as regards one man one vote for the State Parliament.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am inclined to think it was.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not agree with the hon. member. As one who has not in the past set up one man one vote as a fetish to be bowed down to and worshipped, I certainly am prepared to accept the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill as an expression of the opinion of the people of this colony that they desire the acceptance of the principle of one man one vote in the colony of Queensland. There are other reasons why it would scarcely have done for the Government at the present time—no matter what their feelings on this point might be—to adopt the principle of female suffrage in this Bill, because I believe it is a question that can properly be decided by a poll of the people of Queensland in some shape or form, and after the principle involved in the Commonwealth Bill of one man one vote has also been adopted and has been put into practice at some election. I am not going into the various arguments for and against female suffrage. Probably that will arise—as I have no doubt will be the case—when some hon. member moves its adoption in this Bill.

Mr. GROOM: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: It will be hardly necessary, therefore, for me to do more than refer to the reasons why the Government have not proposed its adoption in the Bill. This is perhaps a fitting opportunity for me to also say informally that in no sense can this be regarded as a party measure.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: It is one upon which parties will be considerably mixed, and it is one upon which it is very desirable, after the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill, that occasion should be taken by Parliament to decide on non-party lines as to what particular form our electoral law should take. It is a distinct advantage that the opportunity should be of

such a character as to enable us to deal with it without the passions which are very often aroused by party strife. Another point that possibly may be raised in the course of this debate is why the Government have not embodied in the Bill a redistribution of seats. That involves a very large question, and one which must necessarily be relegated to the future. In fact, I do not see how it would be possible to redistribute the electorates until it has been ascertained how the adoption of the principle of one man one vote will affect the numbers in the various electorates. It will also be necessary to defer it until after a census has been taken.

Mr. GLASSEY : Hear, hear !

The HOME SECRETARY : I do not see how it is possible to do otherwise, unless we are prepared to go to the enormous expense of holding a census at once. If the question is to be dealt with in this Bill, it will be necessary to postpone this Bill till next session, at all events, and to pass a measure for the taking of an interim census, when we know that within a couple of years another census will have to be taken. Then, and not till then, will it be necessary for this Parliament to consider the question of one vote one value. I shall now deal with the various parts of the Bill *seriatim*, and possibly I may be compelled—it would be advantageous that I should do so—to refer to various clauses in detail—a privilege which, I understand, is usually accorded to the member introducing a Bill, and which, I believe, will conduce to the shortening of the debate. Hon. members will notice that at the bottom of page 2, under the heading of “naturalised subject,” “denizen” has been omitted. Well, I never came across one.

Mr. DAWSON : What is he, anyhow ?

The HOME SECRETARY : He is a man who has letters patent of denization, and I understand that it used to cost about £120 to get it. When a man can get naturalised for 2s. 6d. he is not likely to pay £120 for letters patent to become a denizen. Possibly there was some reason for introducing that into the Act which we are now about to repeal, but I propose to omit it from the present Bill. Now coming to Part II., which contains the crux of this Bill—that is, the qualifications and disqualifications of electors—it will be seen that all the qualifications, except residence, have been omitted. I know that there may be some difference of opinion with regard to the expediency of doing that, but I believe that if the principle of one man one vote is adopted, it is desirable that it should be adopted with regard to residence qualification only. I am aware that there is a great deal to be said to the contrary ; but the Bill in its present form, with one qualification only, makes for simplicity and ease in working and in administration. All the colonies of Australasia, with the exception of Victoria, have adopted the principle embodied in this Bill—that is to say, they have adopted residence as the only qualification. In Victoria there is still a provision for placing ratepayers on the roll, even although they are not residents in the electorate ; but so far as I have been able to study the Victorian Act, that appears to me to be somewhat cumbersome, and I should not be surprised to find that Victoria before long is following the lead of New Zealand, which in 1893 adopted the principle of one man one vote, but retained the property qualification, so that a man might elect to have a vote in the electorate where he held property rather than in the one where he lived. But in 1896 it was found necessary in New Zealand to alter that, as it led to certain abuses and inconveniences, and certainly the method embodied in this Bill tends greatly towards simplicity in administration. I know that there

are members who are compelled, against their will it might be said, to reside in Brisbane in consequence of their being members of Parliament, and who yet would desire to be electors in the distant electorates which they represent, but under this Bill they will not be able to do that.

Mr. FISHER : Is that so ?

The HOME SECRETARY : That is so.

Mr. FISHER : I think not.

The HOME SECRETARY : I have spent some weeks over this Bill, and have studied it more than the hon. member, and I think I know what it means.

Mr. KIDSTON : You do not seem to understand it in that respect.

The HOME SECRETARY : Well, I shall be glad to have the views of the hon. member for Rockhampton about it. Do I understand from hon. members that they think it would be possible for a man who resides in Brisbane, and has his residence here, to have a vote, we will say, for the electorate of Mitchell ?

Mr. KERR : If his wife and family reside there.

The HOME SECRETARY : It is time enough to talk about his wife and family when we get woman suffrage ; but I am speaking now of a man who resides in Brisbane, and I say that if a man has his legal residence in Brisbane he cannot have a residence qualification elsewhere under this Bill, which limits him to one part.

Mr. FISHER : It has been ruled that parliamentary duties do not deprive a man of his electoral rights.

The HOME SECRETARY : Then, in that case he does not reside in Brisbane, that is all ; his residence remains in the other electorate. But if a man who temporarily resides here has his legal residence in another place, of course he cannot have a vote for Brisbane. What is argued, and what will be argued—and there is a great deal of force in it—is that the whole of a man's interests may lie in an electorate in which he does not reside but in which every shilling's worth of property he possesses is situated. That may be in some distant electorate which he represents, and wishes to continue to represent, but yet, being a resident of Brisbane, he would not be able to be an elector for that electorate. It will be argued probably that a man should have a vote for the electorate in which his interests lie rather than for the electorate in which he happens to be residing. I may point out that in New Zealand three years after they adopted the principle of one man one vote, retaining the property qualification, they altered that qualification to the one contained in this Bill, and that fact largely influenced me in representing to my colleagues that it was desirable straight away to adopt the principle of residence as the only qualification.

MEMBERS of the Opposition : Hear, hear !

The HOME SECRETARY : It will be observed that our residence qualification at the present time is twelve months in the colony and six months in any particular electorate, unless a person has been, or states he has been, at some previous time an elector in some other electorate, in which case his qualification is reduced to three months' residence in that electorate for which he seeks to be registered as a voter. In the working of the Act it has been found that every man now who applies for the franchise states that he has had a qualification for some other electorate—he is not compelled to state when—and he gets on at the end of three months. I have thought it wise to retain in this Bill the twelve months' residence in the colony, as I believe that is a quite short enough time for any man to become thoroughly acquainted with our politics, and to adopt the principle of three months' residence in one

electorate. I have also gone further than that, and have provided that where a man is already on the roll and moves into another district he can obtain a transfer, not a transfer such as given under our present law, but a genuine transfer, after he has given notice that he desires to carry his vote from one electorate to another. In that case he has only to reside in his new electorate for one month prior to making application for a transfer. I do not think it is desirable to reduce the time below one month; and, in fact, I will very strongly oppose any attempt to reduce the time, because if it were reduced below that period it might lead to something like what happened in New Zealand. I may be doing the Government of that colony an injustice, but it is alleged against them that they sent a large number of men as workers into a particular electorate immediately prior to an election coming off, and that those men immediately acquired the right to vote in that electorate; and when the election was over they were withdrawn.

Mr. McDONALD: It is done in America now. The HOME SECRETARY: It is not desirable that it should be done. The underlying principle of our representation is locality—that a man represents the people who are bounded within a particular locality called an electorate.

Mr. FITZGERALD: How long will it take a man to get his vote changed from one electorate to another—one or three months?

The HOME SECRETARY: He can apply immediately after being one month in the electorate, and before he can vote it will take two more months—before his vote is confirmed—three months altogether, as distinguished from five at least which it would take him if there was no such provision for transfer at the end of one month.

Mr. FITZGERALD: In the meantime would he be kept on the old roll for three months?

The HOME SECRETARY: For two months the man who goes from one electorate to another will necessarily be disfranchised—during the time he is changing his residence from one electorate to another he will practically be disfranchised.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why should he be?

The HOME SECRETARY: Why should he vote for an electorate for which he has ceased to hold the qualification?

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Why not register him in one before he is struck off the other?

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. member comes to that, he ought to be transferred on the day he moves.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I pointed out the objection of that—that it would open the door to an unscrupulous Government to overrun any electorate; and you would find instead of an electorate of 1,000 voters, there would be an electorate of 10,000—each side would run men across the border of the electorate to simply record their votes and swamp the local residents altogether.

Mr. KIDSTON: Why not allow his qualification to be good only in the new one?

The HOME SECRETARY: It is impossible to adopt any such principle as that; therefore, you must have a certain period of probation in the new electorate before a man can be said to have become a resident.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Then moving is a disqualification.

The HOME SECRETARY: He certainly ought not to vote in the electorate for which he has ceased to hold the qualification. The question is now put whether a man has ceased to hold the qualification. We know that in the case of Carter—it was not residence, but the

same thing would apply there. He certainly held property within a particular electorate, but he ceased to hold the particular property in regard to which he was registered.

Mr. DAWSON: He never held it.

The HOME SECRETARY: He did hold it, but not in a particular way.

Mr. DAWSON: He voted on a wrong qualification.

The HOME SECRETARY: Nevertheless he was on the roll; and hon. members have said that though he was on the roll for that electorate he ought not to have voted, because he certainly had not the particular qualification for which he was registered. I say it is a sound principle that a man who leaves his own electorate and severs his connection with the electorate ought to leave the return of the representative of that electorate to those who remain in it. He is not an elector for the whole colony—that is the point I want hon. members to recollect—that the reason, the justification for disfranchising a man—necessarily disfranchising him under the circumstances during the time he is leaving the one and placing his name on the roll of another and the confirmation—the reason for that is that he is an elector for a particular district, and is registered as such, and not as an elector for the whole colony.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He is a citizen of the colony.

Mr. KIDSTON: And it is a civil offence to change his residence, for which he is to be punished.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, but he has to pay a certain penalty for changing his residence from one electorate to another. I do not see how it is to be avoided without running the risk of dangers which would be very much greater than the inconvenience which he has to suffer. It is provided that no person shall have a residence in more than one electorate—that is to say, as is very often the case, if a man has two or three residences he must elect as to which is his true and proper place of residence. I know hon. members who have really more than one place of residence, but they will be limited to one residence only as far as qualification is concerned. In clause 8, which I regard as a very important clause, an attempt has been made to define what is residence. It is the first occasion I think on which it has been attempted.

Mr. DAWSON: This does not follow the English Act. It is not actual squatting. Residence does not mean in the English law actual squatting; a *bond fide* intention is residence.

The HOME SECRETARY: Residence is a question of fact to be decided by the court. We endeavour to lay down here certain rules which shall guide the court in arriving at a decision on the question of fact. They are almost entirely on the lines of the opinion which was given by the late Premier, Mr. Byrnes, in regard to this question, and which was circulated amongst the various benches of the colony for their guidance, and I do not think that this definition can very well be improved upon.

Mr. DAWSON: That was his definition—*bond fide* intention.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. I think a man may be temporarily absent—he may be absent six, eight, or ten months, or he may be on a trip—he may be gone to England—nevertheless he is shifting about—he is a nomad for the time being—but his place of residence still remains his old home, to which he has the intention of returning after his journey is over. That is the principle to which we have endeavoured to give effect in this definition of residence.

Mr. DAWSON: The Willard case in New South Wales turned on that very point.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member probably knows more about the Willard case than I do. There is a paragraph in clause 9—the 4th paragraph, commencing with, “When a second place is so appointed for a district,” That is intended to meet such a case as arose, I think, in the Bulloo electorate, where certain men—

Mr. KERR: At Eulo and Thargomindah.

The HOME SECRETARY: Quite so—the hon. member recalls the case. This has been imported into the Bill for the purpose of meeting such a case as that, in which I believe certain injustice was done to certain voters. That, of course, is coming to Part III, which is under the head of “Preparation of Rolls.” In other respects clauses 9, 10, 11, and 12 are much the same, I think almost word for word, as the present law, which, in my opinion, cannot well be improved upon. I may mention that I had a look through the various Elections Acts of the different colonies, and I have arrived at the conclusion that our method of registration, though possibly in comparison with others a little more complicated, yet I believe is actually the best that is in existence in Australia. Therefore, I have, with certain exceptions, endeavoured to preserve them in [10.30 p.m.] this Bill. I propose that the bi-monthly courts shall still be held in the months of February, April, June, August, October, and December, as at present. The claim will be very much in the same form as that which has now to be filled up; but it will be noticed that it may be signed before and attested by—in addition to those who are now authorised to attest claims—the clerk of the local authority for the district in which the claimant resides.

Mr. McDONALD: That is not a bit of use to the Western men.

Mr. FITZGERALD: They may be seventy miles away from us.

The HOME SECRETARY: What induced me to think the clerk of the local authority would be a more valuable attester than hon. members seem to think is that he is very often clerk of works for the local authority as well as clerk, and as such does a great deal of travelling.

Mr. McDONALD: He will be absolutely useless out our way.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am sorry to hear that. I know that the clerk of a local authority is very often also clerk of works, and does a good deal of travelling. He generally has a junior clerk whom he can leave in the office, and he practically runs the divisional board.

Mr. McDONALD: Why not insert a “policeman”?

Mr. GLASSEY: Why have any attestation at all?

The HOME SECRETARY: Speaking for myself, I should not have any great objection to the policeman—in fact, in 1885 or 1886 I proposed that a policeman should be authorised to attest claims. But that, I think, would be a very strong reason why policemen should not be permitted to have the franchise—a principle which is continued by this Bill.

Mr. JACKSON: Better give him the vote and leave the other out.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think so, and I shall be able to give an instance or two in which it has come very prominently under my notice that it was a very fortunate thing not only for the constables themselves but also for the public that the constables were not possessed of the franchise. That is a point I shall come to presently, but I shall be quite prepared to discuss the question if it is raised in

committee. It will be seen that clause 16 is the one which relates to the method of transfer, and I would like to read it in order to call special attention to it. It provides that—

Any person, whose name is entered on the roll of any district, and who desires to have his name transferred from such roll to the roll of another district on the ground of his change of residence from the first-mentioned to the last-mentioned district, may deliver his claim for transfer, or send it by post, to the electoral registrar for such last-mentioned district at any time, or may personally present his claim at, or send it or cause it to be sent to, any bi-monthly court when the court is sitting.

Then the claim is to be in the form following in the Bill, and in which it will not be necessary for the claimant to give so much information as in the first instance. I may here point out, though I have not actually come to that part of the Bill in which it is provided, that an essential feature of the working of this Bill will be that for every claim there shall be a document. There shall be as little as possible left to hearsay. For every name which appears on the roll there shall be a document for the purpose of comparison. Of course it will be necessary that officers shall take very much greater care of claims than has been taken of them in the past.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: So far as I can understand, it has apparently been the practice of a good many electoral registrars to regard electoral claims, as soon as they have been finally dealt with, as so much waste paper. Hon. members will see that it is proposed by this Bill that they shall be regarded as rather precious documents, and I think it is very desirable that should be so.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONALD: What will become of the vote if they are stolen?

The HOME SECRETARY: Under this Bill I think the claims will not be stolen, as very much greater care will be taken of them. Claimants may be called upon to prove their claims in the way that is done now, but hon. members will notice in clause 21 a provision which, I think, a very valuable one if we are to make a point of having thorough purity with regard to our electoral rolls. It throws upon any person making a bogus claim—that is to say, making a claim for one electorate when he is already on the roll for another—the onus of proving that he did not know that he was on the other roll. It is his duty to know on what roll his name appears. The duty of knowing the law on all points is cast upon him as a citizen—ignorance of the law is no excuse for a breach of it—and when a man presumes to exercise the franchise and to negative the vote of somebody else who differs from him politically he should be responsible for having his name placed on the roll when he is not entitled to have it there. He should have the best knowledge as to whether his name is on a roll or not, and it is an excellent provision that the proof of his innocence in regard to his name being on another roll should rest with him. Provision is also made in clause 23 for facilitating transfer. That clause was recast in a later draft, and I mention that now that hon. members may look out for it when the printed amendments will be circulated. By clause 24 it is provided—

Any claim submitted at a bi-monthly court from an elector whose name appears to be already entered on the roll of the district shall be rejected if the particulars contained therein correspond with those already enrolled, but if any variance appears, such claim shall be held over for consideration by the court to be held for revising the annual lists.

So that an opportunity is given for the annual revision court practically to correct errors. If there is any error in a roll a man puts in a proper claim or his proper name, and the opportunity

is given to correct such errors. Then special care is taken that every page in the electoral register book, every entry in it, and every alteration made in it shall be initialled by the chairman of the court.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is the old country law. A very good thing too.

The HOME SECRETARY: That will prevent any manipulation by any person who might get access to the book. In clause 29, which relates to what I propose now to call the "additional roll," it will be seen from the provision that there will only be at any one time one "additional roll." That is to say, when the annual roll has been made up there comes, we will say in the following February, a new roll. Then the applications which come on at that are confirmed in April. The February list, it is provided, shall be embodied in the April roll. The June roll, when it is prepared, will be embodied into it, and so on, as it were a snow-ball gathering in size, until we come again to the annual roll. So there will be only at one time two rolls for any person to refer to—the annual roll and the interim roll in which all the names will be embodied.

Mr. KIPSTON: A very great improvement.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, considering we have six bi-monthly courts in the year. It is proposed in the draft I have, to cast upon an elector the duty of notifying to the registrar his change of residence, as a matter of form.

Mr. DAWSON: Where is that done?

The HOME SECRETARY: It is in a clause omitted from the Bill, but I have had it printed.

Mr. FITZGERALD: It is new altogether.

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course there will be no penalty for him not doing so; but if he is kept out through his own neglect, the answer is: "There is a duty cast on you to notify the registrar of the change of your residence; but you have failed to carry out that duty, and since you have neglected to carry out a duty cast upon you by the Act, you cannot complain at your name having been omitted." Another matter which I think is of great importance is that it is proposed, at the suggestion of the Principal Electoral Registrar—from whose advice I have derived a great deal of advantage in preparing the Bill—that the general electoral list shall not be a manuscript list. That is one of the amendments which I may just as well foreshadow here—that the old roll shall be taken as being the new electoral list, with a new heading so that you are certain it is correct. Mistakes often occur in copying, no matter how careful you are, and it seems a natural thing, if you have a thing printed, to take that as it stands, rather than copy it out in manuscript, and exhibit that copy. So the amendment which I suggest in lieu of portion of clause 33 would be to the effect that, in order to avoid mistakes in compilation, to take the old roll and the August list, together with the list of the changes of residence—which will be compiled by the registrar—and treat them as the annual list. There will be these three—The roll, the August list, and a small manuscript list of changes of residence. I do not think there will be any more difficulty in examining them; but I certainly think, with the Principal Electoral Registrar, that it will lead to much more accuracy than has existed in the past. Hon. members must often have seen names misspelt on the rolls.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: "U's" have been turned into "n's," and so on. Then the revision court has, in addition to the powers which it already has on page 14, the power to put the word "left" or "disqualified" against any name on the list. Then there is "Changed

residence from this division," or the possibility of his changing his residence within a division. All these things may be dealt with by the court.

Mr. GLASSEY: What is the necessity of having "disqualified"?

The HOME SECRETARY: Well, a voter may become insane, or he may get into gaol.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Registrars at present use the word disqualified in a very wrong sense.

The HOME SECRETARY: It will have quite a different meaning now. Then at the top of page 15—

In the case of any person whose name appears on any roll, and as to whom the court is satisfied that he has changed his residence within the division or district assigned to the court, the court shall alter the particulars of his place of residence so as to make the list conform to the facts of the case.

That is at the annual revision court.

Mr. DAWSON: That ought to be done by the registrar.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think it is desirable the registrar should interfere with the roll.

Mr. DAWSON: If a man changes from Queen street to George street, he surely ought not to have to go before the court?

The HOME SECRETARY: By clause 46 it will be seen that a special duty is cast upon the electoral registrar to take care of claims—

All claims shall be so kept by electoral registrars as to be immediately available for reference, that is to say, in alphabetical order corresponding with the rolls.

Every alteration effected in a roll in respect of any elector shall be noted on his original claim.

When any name is erased by the court the electoral registrar shall set aside the original claim of the elector in question, and all claims so set aside shall be filed in alphabetical order in a separate packet for each year, to be endorsed as follows:—

and so on. Then it will be necessary also to provide that where a man claims a transfer by reason of change of residence that his claim shall be forwarded to the electoral registrar of the new electorate, so that it shall be dealt with in future. That is to say, his original claim will follow him about from place to place. If he changes from electorate A to electorate B, his original claim will follow him to the electoral registrar of the division to which he goes.

Mr. KERR: Does an officer of the Crown forward it?

The HOME SECRETARY: The electoral registrar will forward it. It will now be the duty of the Principal Electoral Registrar to see that all these matters are properly carried out. There is one slight alteration in clause 49. I have omitted therefrom the police magistrate and clerk of petty sessions, so that the clause reads: "No Principal Electoral Registrar or deputy of the Principal Electoral Registrar shall, while he holds such office, be entitled to vote at any election."

Mr. FITZGERALD: What about subsection 2 just above?

The HOME SECRETARY: It reads—

No person whose name is entered on the roll shall be entitled to vote at any election for such district unless at some time within five months next before the election he has been *bona fide* resident therein for a period of two months.

Mr. FITZGERALD: It used to be seven.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, and it has been reduced to five.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Why?

Mr. DAWSON: Is it not an error of the draftsman?

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. DAWSON: Yes.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; it is not. At any rate it is not my mistake.

Mr. FITZGERALD: No, certainly not. It is two months in the seven now.

The HOME SECRETARY: It has been reduced to five.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Why?

The HOME SECRETARY: A man could get his name on another roll.

Mr. DAWSON: Look at clause 75.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; unless you asked a man those questions, he might be absent five months from an electorate, and still retain his right to vote there; and I question whether anyone would be right in objecting to that.

Mr. KIDSTON: Is it not six months?

The HOME SECRETARY: If you made it two months and seven—and it must be remembered that the present qualification is six months—a man might have left an electorate for the whole five months and still claim to be entitled to vote in regard of that electorate.

Mr. McDONALD: There is a contradiction.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is a contradiction, and you cannot avoid a contradiction here. If hon. members will work it out, they will find there is really no means of avoiding the contradiction.

Mr. KIDSTON: There is a contradiction between this clause and clause 75.

The HOME SECRETARY: I explained that that is one of the mistakes in the Bill due to the wrong draft being used. The 4th subsection of clause 75 reads—"Have you during the last preceding two months possessed a *bona fide* place of residence within this electoral district?" I mentioned in the opening of my remarks that this was one of the clauses—

Mr. DAWSON: We have not got it correct.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Mr. Tozer made the same mistake some two years ago.

The HOME SECRETARY: The correction intended to be made will make it read with subsection 2 of clause 49. To that extent there is a contradiction. The clauses with regard to nomination continue the same. The ballot-paper I propose shall only contain the surname of the voter. I do not think it is necessary to distinguish a man by long christian names. I am burdened with three myself.

Mr. McDONALD: What if there are two men of the same name—two Smiths, for instance?

The HOME SECRETARY: In that case the christian names will be put in. That is provided for. It is not necessary for me to deal with the clauses taken from the Criminal Code, which hon. members fully understand. With the exception of clause 75, there is very little alteration in matters dealing with the taking of the poll, which are familiar to all hon. members.

Mr. DAWSON: What about the 6th subsection of clause 75?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is new. I propose to retain the contingent vote. I think the principle is being better understood now; and in consequence of it some hon. members are now sitting in this House representing the majorities of their constituents, whereas under the old law someone sitting here now might be representing a minority.

Mr. GLASSEY: I think it is a mistake to retain it.

The HOME SECRETARY: I don't think so. It was difficult to understand, but I think the electors understand it pretty well now. At all events we can argue that later on; it does not require any explanation at present. Now we come to an entirely new principle, which I trust will commend itself to hon. members, and that is the question of absent voters. It commences with clause 97, which is largely adapted from, and I think is an improvement on, the South Australian system. In New Zealand something of the same sort obtains, but it only relates to commercial travellers and seamen.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And it is not so effective.

Mr. KIDSTON: This is far better.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. I think these clauses are an improvement. They run on the lines of the South Australian system. A certificate may be given to any person who believes he will be absent from the district after the issue of the writ, and before or after the nomination day, either personally or by post.

Mr. DAWSON: After the issue of the writ?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: There are many parts of the colony where men would not [11 p.m.] be able to send to the electoral registrar and get their certificates in time to allow them to vote until after the writ is issued.

The HOME SECRETARY: They cannot get them before the writ is issued, because there is no election before then. This does not impose any disability upon a man. Having got his absent voter's certificate he can vote at the post office alongside the polling booth on the very day he gets it if he thinks fit.

Mr. KIDSTON: It does not take the power of voting from him.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, it gives him increased facilities for voting, and he need not go to the polling booth unless he likes. For instance, a man in North Brisbane who has reason to believe that he is not very popular and will be booed if seen at the polling booth—there is nothing to prevent him applying to the returning officer in his own electorate, and then walking down to the Vallev and posting his absent voter's voting paper. There would be no occasion for him to attend the polling booth at all. It is provided that if any elector who has reason to believe that he will, on the day appointed for taking the poll in an electoral district, be absent from the district may, after the issue of the writ, apply to the returning officer for an absent voter's certificate. The application is to be made in a particular form which is set forth, and the applicant must make a solemn declaration that the same is true.

Mr. DAWSON: Can he apply by wire?

The HOME SECRETARY: I take it that he can apply by wire. In any case he can apply by letter, or if that is impossible he is no worse off afterwards anyhow. Of course he could not vote unless he gets a voter's certificate. Under those circumstances he would really depend upon the possibility of his being able to get to the polling booth on the polling day. The process will perhaps be best understood by my reading the instructions which are printed on the absent voter's voting paper, which are as follows:—

INSTRUCTIONS.—In the presence only of the postmaster, the voter must write the name of the candidate or the names of the candidates for whom he votes, or if he wishes to use the contingent vote he may write the names of the candidates one below the other to denote the order in which he desires his vote or votes to be counted. The voter must then sign his own name on the counterfoil. The postmaster must not look at the names of the candidates for whom the voter votes, but the postmaster will witness the signature and stamp the voting-paper, without unfolding the same, with the post-office letter stamp for the day and date, and return the voting-paper to the voter. The elector will then insert this voting-paper in the envelope, on which the certificate is signed and marked "For voting-paper," and fasten. Then, after sealing up or fastening the letter in the envelope, addressed to the Returning Officer, will hand it at once to the postmaster for posting.

There is his signature under it, but that is torn off when the votes are counted, and all that is put into the ballot-box with the other absent voter's votes, is the portion which bears on it the names of the candidates, like the ordinary ballot papers. It is absolutely necessary that there should be some automatic method of proving

that a man shall vote on or before the day of the election; that he should not hold his vote over until after everybody else has voted, and then cast his vote; and the only way that that can be done, as far as I can see, is to follow the South Australian system, according to which the postmaster uses the stamp which he employs for letters on that particular day. Of course if a man is so far away from a post office that he cannot avail himself of it, his absent voter's certificate would be of no value to him, but in most instances, in outlying districts he would have pretty well a month in which he could go to vote at the post office; and he can vote on any day that is convenient to him, even, it may be, on a Sunday; but it must be on or before the day appointed for the holding of the poll. Then the question arises, how long a time should be allowed for those absent voters' papers to come in. Some of them might be coming in right up to the day on which the writ is to be returned; but it is provided that if the number of absent voters' papers which are out is less than the majority which is obtained without them by one candidate over the next to him the poll may be declared without waiting for them to come in. That is to say, that if the circumstances were such that if the whole of the outstanding absent votes were cast for the losing candidate, that is the candidate next lowest on the poll, and they still would not give him a majority, the candidate at the head of the poll may be declared elected without waiting for them. Of course there can be no objection to that, as it is desirable that the result should be known and declared as soon as possible. Perhaps some hon. members will be inclined to advocate the adoption of the principle of voter's rights for all electors. Now, I have been very carefully into that. We had it many years ago, though some hon. members may not remember. That was away back in the seventies, and it was found not to answer then. It is in vogue in Victoria and New South Wales, and, as far as I have been able to discover, it must necessarily tend to complicate rather than to facilitate matters. In fact, the voter's right is nothing more than the counterfoil of the application form which the man fills in. When he fills up his form he is given a voter's right, which contains certain particulars taken from his application form. That is merely a certificate that he has applied to be put upon the roll. It does not put him on the roll necessarily. It does not give him the right to vote unless he is on the roll, but it has this effect: That if he is on the roll he cannot vote if he has lost his voter's right. It tends to complicate matters, and I shall be prepared to meet anyone who proposes to adopt that principle. I am perfectly satisfied it is not a good one, and that our system is better without it. The question has arisen—I have not put it in this Bill, but I believe it would be an advantage, and I have had a clause drafted—whether it would not be well to provide for regulations. It is a principle which is adopted in most of the other colonies, and hon. members will be astonished to find the extent to which forms have to be adopted. They have hitherto, unless provided for in the Act, been formulated as a matter of departmental detail and administration. Many of them, I think, ought to be embodied in regulations, and it is desirable that regulations, which must necessarily be approved by Parliament at the earliest possible date after being passed, should be framed, because they are very much better than departmental directions, even though they may proceed from the Principal Electoral Registrar. The temporary provisions are at the end of the Bill.

Mr. DAWSON: There is something before that. Section 154.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Yes, why not give the right of appeal?

The HOME SECRETARY: I think that is best left to the Justices Act. However, we will discuss that afterwards when we come to it in committee. It is not a matter which affects any other portion of the Bill. Now the temporary provisions may be regarded by some hon. members as being of a somewhat drastic character, but I think myself, when we are making a change such as this, that it is desirable to purify the rolls as much as we can.

Mr. DAWSON: This creates a new roll.

The HOME SECRETARY: An absolutely new roll, and there are many reasons for it. One object is that it is proposed now that for every name on every roll throughout the colony there should be a written claim. It is a fact that a very large number of claims have been carefully preserved in the past, while others have been lost. That is one reason why it is desirable to start afresh. One very important reason is that we are getting rid of three different kinds of qualification, and there are, I know, thousands upon thousands of men who really are possessed of a residence qualification, but who are on the roll in respect of a different qualification. A man, although he resides in an electorate, if he happens to reside on his own freehold, likes to appear on the roll as a freeholder. Residence is supposed to be the lowest qualification at present. I believe I myself am on the roll of the electorate I reside in as a freeholder, and not in connection with residence at all.

Mr. BROWNE: Leaseholders and householders, too.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, they are in the same condition. We are going to strike off every name on every roll in regard to those three qualifications—freeholder, leaseholder, and householder. We must do that, because we are going to wipe out those qualifications altogether. Those three qualifications we must wipe off and treat as nullities, and while we are doing that it is desirable that we should take the opportunity of cleansing the rolls, and making a clean sweep. That is exactly the way in which it was done when our last Elections Act was passed in 1885.

Mr. HARDACRE: There will be a big outcry of public feeling against that.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think so. One very strong reason I have urged is that if we are going to have a written document with regard to every claim and every qualification which will appear on our rolls for the future, then, this is the only way you can secure that; that is to say that every man throughout the colony should receive a notice to say that unless he makes a claim within a certain time his name will disappear from the roll, no matter what his qualification is. By that means you will secure a most important point—that is, that there shall be a claim, with his signature to it, which will be available for purposes of comparison in the event of his trying to get on some other roll with that name, or possibly with some other name.

Mr. HARDACRE: There are thousands of properly filled up claims quite recently, and why should they be knocked off?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FITZGERALD: Why challenge the present residence men on the rolls?

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not see why any distinction should be made at all.

Probably 75 per cent. of the electors on the various rolls will have to go off, because their qualifications will be destroyed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

The SPEAKER: Order! Although not quite in order, I have allowed, within limitations, interjections to be made, so long as they did not seem to interfere with the course of the hon. member's speech. Interjections have been freely allowed, because it seemed to be the desire on both sides that information should be given fully as the hon. gentleman proceeded. I trust that that latitude will not be carried beyond reasonable limits.

The HOME SECRETARY: The great proportion of electors will entirely disappear from the rolls, as their qualifications will necessarily go, and they must put in another claim for residence, if they happen to have it. If they are put to this trouble, I do not see why every elector should not be put to the same trouble, in order that we may secure a thorough cleansing of the rolls, and have an entirely new start. If a man's vote is not worth that trouble under the new system which we propose to adopt, he does not deserve a vote. Some people want to be regularly spoonfed with votes. They need to have their votes crammed down their throats, and unless there is some organiser who is prepared to go round the country and cram their claims and their votes down their throats, they are not prepared to exercise them. I believe there are large numbers of people throughout the country who do not care twopence about their votes. However, every man who is on a roll will get a notice through the post. If he is on half-a-dozen rolls, he will get half-a-dozen notices, enclosing a form of claim to fill up, and surely it is not too much to ask him to take the trouble of filling up that claim. If he is listless in the matter, his name will disappear. I propose that he should get some further latitude. After he has failed to put in his claim the first time, he will get further notice.

Mr. LESINA: That is what they are doing now; sending notices like that. Four hundred were knocked off the other day in that way.

The HOME SECRETARY: That reminds me that under this Bill men will not be knocked off the roll for change of residence. An entry will merely be made in the roll that they have changed their residence. I think that is all I need say. I am bound to say that I have not dealt as fully as I should have liked, especially with regard to matters connected with transfers from one electorate to another, from one division to another, and transfers of residence within the division. I hope hon. members have been able to understand those provisions without the explanation which I should like to have given. The hour is very late, or I could easily have taken another half-hour in dealing with that. The measure is one that should commend itself to hon. members. As one who was not enamoured very much of the principle of one man one vote, I am prepared to submit to the decision of the people as expressed in the adoption of the Commonwealth Bill. I believe the desire of this colony is to fall into line with the other colonies. As to whether we should go still further, and fall into line with South Australia by adopting woman suffrage, I do not know. For my own part, I think it is desirable that we should take one step at a time, and leave it to the "Reform Parliament"—if I may use the expression—to deal with the larger question. I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. DAWSON: You have done very well.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty-eight minutes past 11 o'clock.