

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 20 DECEMBER 1899

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WEDNESDAY, 20 DECEMBER, 1899.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Arthur Morgan, *Warwick*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1898-99.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, transmitting the Supplementary Estimates for 1898-99.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*), the Estimates were ordered to be printed and referred to the Committee of Supply.

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid upon the table of the House, were ordered to be printed—

Despatch, dated 1st November, 1899, respecting adhesion of Japan to the International Convention for Protection of Industrial Property.

Return to an Order, relative to Gowrie Railway Junction to Roma and to Warwick, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Bell, on the 12th October last.

Return to an Order, relative to Gowrie Railway Junction to Dalby, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Kates, on the 3rd November last.

Further correspondence relating to the Seaforth Estate.

QUESTIONS.

EXPORT OF HAY TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. KATES (*Cunningham*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

In the event of the farmers of the Darling Downs providing from 3,000 to 4,000 tons of wheaten hay for export to South Africa, will the Government be prepared to provide transport and pay freight in advance of sale?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. V. Chataway, *Mackay*) replied—

If the farmers of the Darling Downs will provide from 3,000 to 4,000 tons of wheaten hay or chaff in a form suitable for export to South Africa, the Government will be prepared to favourably consider the question of obtaining transport and paying freight in advance of sale.

NEW POST OFFICE, CLIFTON.

Mr. KATES asked the Secretary for Public Works—

When the Government intend to invite tenders for the new post and telegraph offices at Clifton, for which money has been voted?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*) replied—

Tenders will be invited in the *Government Gazette* of the 23rd December, 1899.

RAILWAYS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence.

ADDITIONAL TROOPS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That this House renews the assurance of its loyalty and devotion to the Throne and Person of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen; and, while recognising with pride the splendid gallantry and valour displayed by the officers and men of Her Majesty's army in the course of the present war in South Africa, is of opinion that, in view of the unexpected difficulties which have presented themselves since the opening of the campaign, united action should be promptly taken to augment the number of the Australasian troops which have already volunteered for service and have been despatched to the seat of war.

This House accordingly approves of the proposal of the Government to equip, despatch, and maintain an additional military force volunteering for service with Her Majesty's said army in South Africa, of trained mounted men, consisting of 160 officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, to serve in conjunction with like military forces to be raised in and despatched from other Australasian colonies—

said: Mr. Speaker—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: In moving this motion, I regret exceedingly that there is occasion to send more men from Australia, in order to help the British army in South Africa.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Every man in the House must recognise the importance of the war we are now engaged in.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JACKSON: It is very serious.

The PREMIER: It is a question of whether Great Britain will be the dominant power in South Africa or not.

Mr. DAWSON: It is more than that.

The PREMIER: I think we in Queensland should do all in our power to assist the great country to which we are proud to belong.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The other colonies have taken federal action in sending additional troops, and the telegrams from the other colonies which have been placed before the House during the last three or four days will show what action has been taken by the Queensland Government in the matter. We have given the House all the information in our possession, and now, having arranged to send these additional troops, we ask Parliament for authority to do so. The mother colony—New South Wales—has taken the matter up very warmly, and they intend sending 400 or 500 men from that colony. They are undertaking the transport, and our troops will form a portion of the federal contingent going to South Africa. I think that Australians will show that they are brave and persistent, and that they will not disgrace the great country from which they have sprung.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I think our men, and the men of Australia generally, will be of great assistance to the British army now in South Africa.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: If they want them.

The PREMIER: We have been invited to send good horsemen and trained shots.

Mr. McDONALD: Who issued the invitations? I want to know all about it.

Mr. KIDSTON: It appeared in the newspapers.

The PREMIER: The *Times* first invited Australia to send troops. The New South Wales Premier then cabled home to the Secretary of

State for the Colonies, asking if more troops from Australia would be acceptable, and he received a reply that a number of good horsemen and good shots would be acceptable. I think they would be of the greatest service, if they were now on the spot. I hope there will not be any opposition to this motion—that the House will be unanimous on the matter.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The cost of the contingent already sent, up to date, is about £28,000, and the cost of the contingent it is proposed to send will be £15,000 or £16,000. In addition, we shall have to pay the difference between the colonial pay and the Imperial pay. I do not think we will require any additional taxation to defray the cost of these troops going to the Transvaal, but if we must have additional taxation I do not believe the people of the colony will object to it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: We have already had most liberal offers from the people of the colony—from Townsville, Charters Towers, and Rockhampton—

Mr. LESINA: Put on a wealth tax to pay it.

The PREMIER: And no doubt further offers will be received. I am certain that the taxpayers of the colony will not object to pay a fair share towards the cost of sending these troops, because every man, woman, and child in the colony is just as much interested in the result of the war as the people in Great Britain.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: We are part of that great Empire, and their fight is our fight.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It is not for us to question the wisdom of the war, but we in this colony should do all we can to assist the mother country to make all her undertakings a success.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. STEWART: Do you think the war is justifiable?

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): In rising to second this motion—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I do so with the full sense of the responsibility it involves, and I recognise the gravity of the present position. It is only due to myself and other hon. members in this Chamber, that I should make some observations a little beyond what has been indulged in by the Premier. You will recollect, Mr. Speaker, that when a somewhat similar motion was moved by the then Premier I, in my position here, opposed it—bitterly, fiercely—and some humourist was pleased to say, fanatically, opposed it.

Mr. STEPHENSON: Hear, hear! (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: More overcoats.

Mr. DAWSON: I am glad that I have discovered the humourist in the hon. member for Ipswich, whom I have known for many years. I would like to draw hon. members' attention to my position in this matter. There is a very great difference between the motion moved by the then Premier, Mr. Dickson, and the one we are now called upon to determine this afternoon.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: At that time the centre of the discussion was—and the principle of my amendment was—that Parliament had not been consulted, and that an unconstitutional act had been committed by the then Premier. It was practically declaring war against the people of the Transvaal without the consent of the people of this colony. That was the chief ground of objection we took on that matter. Further, at that time, it was a question of volunteering services without the consent of the probable volunteers or anyone else, Parliament included. But this is in response to an invitation,

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which makes all the difference. The offer was made at a time of profound peace, when there was a probability or possibility that war would not be declared; and it is just possible that the offer made from the colony of Queensland, and which was responded to by the other colonies at the invitation of the Colonial Office, was a large element in precipitating the present war.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Oh, oh! (Laughter.)

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: They don't like it.

Mr. DAWSON: I took objection on those grounds to the last contingent going, and I may also say that it was out of profound admiration for the heroic struggle the Boer people were making to retain the last shreds of their liberty. And I say that if I thought now that the British Empire was simply engaged in a tussle with the Boers, I would still be against this contingent going. At the time it was proposed to send the last contingent I fell into an error common to many people. Many persons, wiser, older, and more experienced than I am, fell into exactly the same error; in fact, it was the same error that Generals Buller, Methuen, and Gatacre fell into—under-estimating the strength of the enemy. I thought myself when England went to war with the Boers that it was like Jefferies challenging the consumptive patient in the hospital to fight him twenty rounds; but now that hostilities have actually commenced, we find that the true position was not understood either in Queensland or in England, or else the British Empire would have been much better prepared than it was. It is perfectly clear that the struggle is a little wider than is imagined even by the Premier. I quite agree with the hon. gentleman as far as he has gone that the struggle in South Africa at the present time is a struggle for supremacy in that portion of the continent. But I would like to point out that it is something more, in my opinion; it is a question as to whether Great Britain shall hold dominion in South Africa at all. As far as we can judge now, from the information that is gradually filtering through the Press, there had been a huge continental conspiracy, and that for some considerable time past in South Africa there have been a large number of trained continental troops there which have been using the Boers in their endeavours to humiliate their traditional enemy.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: The struggle to-day is not a struggle between the Boers and Great Britain, urged on by a coterie of land-grabbers headed by Cecil Rhodes, but the struggle has reached such an acute stage that it is a matter of national existence—whether the prestige of the British Empire is to be sullied and to suffer a humiliation in South Africa at the hands of its traditional enemies on the continent who, when they find her in difficulties, may make a dash for her possessions. I say that we, as one of the richest possessions of the Empire, have a very keen interest indeed in this matter.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: I think it is about time that we woke up and protected ourselves in time.

Mr. STEWART: By sending our troops out of the country.

Mr. DAWSON: I may point to the view of the matter which has been taken by a Labour paper in this colony, and which is put in much finer language than I have at command. I think the writer puts the matter very finely. I quote now from *Gympie Truth*, and I think

hon. members will agree with the sentiments expressed in the article. At any rate, I do to the very full. He says—

British reverses like those of Ladysmith and Stormberg can only delay the end, and intensify a thousandfold the mischief already done. They may embolden the disaffected Dutch to open rebellion, and raise a hornet's-nest of civil war about our ears in Cape Colony and Natal; they may thus drench the soil of South Africa in the life's blood of those who should live upon it in amity. But the agony would simply be prolonged and aggravated. Britain must win. And it were therefore well for the Boers, and well for the sakes of humanity, that she should win quickly and decisively. Every defeat of the British arms spells danger to the world's peace. The cut-throat powers of Europe are watching this struggle with eager eyes, and with what hopes in their hearts hell only knows. Britain is hated on the Continent with an exceeding great hate, equalled only by the ardour with which her rich possessions are coveted. Once let the idea take hold that British weakness makes possible the disruption of the British Empire, and look out for Armageddon and the reign of universal terror.

I subscribe to that sentiment to the very full. I believe now, from what information I have received, that the position in South Africa to-day, so far as the hatred of France towards the British Empire is concerned, is similar to that which existed when America was fighting for her independence. The great Liberals of England were against the war from the first; but when they discovered that certain influential Frenchmen were using the Americans for the purpose of humiliating England, they turned round and took the opposite view. The greatest Liberal of the lot, Lord Chatham, fought as hard as he knew how against the war, but, as soon as he discovered what I have pointed to, he took the other view. The same thing occurred with regard to Charles Fox, the greatest champion of English liberty who was ever born on the soil.

Mr. STEWART: The best men in England always opposed the American war, just as the best men in England oppose this war.

Mr. DAWSON: They did up to a certain point, but when they discovered conspiracy and intrigue going on, they immediately recognised that there was danger to their own country, and advocated the prosecution of the war with as much vigour as possible. I would like to point out to hon. members that the situation in South Africa at the present time is very acute. We do not know half the trouble yet.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: What we do know of the truth is bad enough. We know that three distinguished generals of the British army have been repulsed one after the other, but a more significant fact than anything else, the most convincing testimony as to the seriousness of the situation, is to be found in the fact that Generals Buller, Methuen, and Gatacre have been superseded; the highest military genius which the Empire can produce has been sent to South Africa to take command, and the army there is being reinforced to the extent of 50,000 men.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: But there is another little item, only a line of print, which is very significant to me, and which leads me to believe that that there is more than a South African affair in this difficulty, and that is that Great Britain is getting her navy ready. I don't think they would get their

[4 p.m.] navy ready to run their ships overland to try and shell the Boers' strongholds; it is because somebody else is making a move that the War Office is aware of, and it must be some continental power.

Mr. JENKINSON: Reeves's cablegram indicates that.

Mr. DAWSON: I agree with the hon. gentleman that it is too late now to talk about the

justice of the war. I believe it was a most unjust war, and it has been very hard lines indeed on the Boer.

Mr. STEWART: Not at all. Exterminate them! Cut their throats!

Mr. DAWSON: If the hon. gentleman is actuated by that sentiment, he ought to resign his position in Parliament, and volunteer to go himself.

Mr. STEWART: Bolstering up rogues and mining sharks!

Mr. DAWSON: I hate war with every drop of blood in my veins, more particularly a war of this description. At the same time I must recognise the logic of facts; I must recognise that the fight has actually commenced, that the position is now very acute, and that the time has arrived when prompt and definite action must be taken. Delays in matters of this kind are dangerous. It is a matter now of supremacy or humiliation. There is another thing to which I would like to draw attention and that is this: We have abundance of evidence that the last contingent that left here left wives and families in a state of destitution.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No.

Mr. DAWSON: Yes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No.

Mr. DAWSON: I say distinctly that some of them left wives and families in a state of destitution.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That may be said of some who did not go with the contingent.

Mr. DAWSON: Very likely. I want to point out that a wise discretion should be exercised in the selection; and if married men are taken away to serve with the Queensland contingent, I hope it will be seen that their wives and families will not be a burden on the taxpayers, but that they will have something to eat and wear while the husbands are away fighting for the glory of the Empire.

The HOME SECRETARY: The greater portion of their pay is payable to their wives now.

Mr. DAWSON: That is what I want to know. As a matter of fact the hon. member for Gympie and myself have been in the Chief Secretary's Department about this, and we received information from the department. While I was there five minutes I made inquiries, and I found that there was no power to deduct any of the money payable to the men in order to give it to the wives and families. Here is an official letter in reply to an application made by the hon. member for Gympie in regard to this matter. I do not think I need bother the House by reading it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes. Read it.

Mr. DAWSON: This is what the letter says—

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 7th instant, asking whether any of the pay due to a member of the Queensland contingent now in South Africa can be stopped in Brisbane for the benefit of his wife and family, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that the Crown Law Officers, to whom the matter has been referred, advise that there is no legal right to deduct any amount due to such member, even though it be for the use of his wife and family.

I have, etc.,

HENRY S. DUTTON.

I draw attention to this because it is a serious matter, and what I would suggest to the hon. gentleman would be this: The men of the Queensland contingent will receive Imperial pay, and, as they are also receiving extra pay from the Queensland Government, I would suggest that the extra pay should be stopped here and given to the wives and families of those men, and that those married men should live on the Imperial pay the same as Imperial soldiers

receive. I very much regret that the first act of federated Australia is an aggressive one. There are many things we have to regret.

Mr. STEWART: Even Federation itself.

Mr. DAWSON: I don't know that we regret that. I believe there are some hon. members in this Chamber who will be amongst the first to occupy seats in the Federal Parliament, and I take the opportunity of dropping a hint to those hon. gentlemen who have an ambition in that direction. Now there is a contingent going as a contribution from federated Australia in response to an invitation from the home Government that fact alone I think should entitle federated Australia when the Boers are subjugated, as they are bound to be, to put in her voice and see that they be treated with humanity, and that all their rights, consistent with the safety and peace and welfare of the South African State, will be properly safeguarded. I will say no more about that matter, but I will just take this opportunity of thanking the hon. member for Musgrave, Mr. O'Connell, who, the last time I addressed myself to the question of the contingent, referred to certain remarks which were understood by the hon. gentleman, and also by many other hon. gentlemen who are political opponents. They did not put the true interpretation on the matter as that hon. gentleman did, and I take this opportunity of publicly thanking him for that. I am proud to have him as a friend—I am proud to know a man brave enough to be honest and manly enough to be just. I beg to second the motion.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

At the request of the Chief Secretary, most hon. members rose in their places and gave three cheers for the Queen.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of this session as will admit of the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day; also of the reporting and receiving of resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means on the same day on which they shall have passed in those committees—

said: This is the usual motion at this time of the year, and I suppose this is very nearly the last week if not the last week of the session. If this is passed it will enable two private Bills to get through. The only Government Bills now to get through are the Appropriation Bill and the Loan Bill.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I called "Not formal" to this motion, and, personally, I am prepared to go further and divide the House upon it. Under the circumstances, the hon. gentleman ought not to have come down and asked for the suspension of the Standing Orders at all. It will practically mean that the Government, with its majority, can ask for the suspension of the Standing Orders, and carry through any measures they think proper. What is the use of the forms of the House at all? What are they given to us for? They are given to us for our protection; and if the Government is going to ask for their suspension time after time, it is likely to lead to very grave results. I would remind hon. members opposite that they may not always be on the Treasury benches. There may be others sitting over there who will probably take advantage of the precedent which is being set on the present occasion by the Government. I could understand the motion if this was the last day of the session, when there was no other business to be done but the passage of an Appropriation Bill. But the hon. gentleman not only wants to get an Appropriation

Bill through, but he talks of getting two private Bills through as well. Then there is to be a Loan Bill, and at any time a Loan Bill is a very contentious matter.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. McDONALD: I maintain that anything that is going to saddle this country with an annual expenditure on account of interest on a loan is a very grave matter, and should not be allowed to be rushed through as the hon. member proposes by this suspension of the Standing Orders. In the past it has only been the custom to suspend the Standing Orders on the last day of the session, but the hon. gentleman now wants to adopt a different course, and wants to suspend them for three or four days. The motion reads that the Standing Orders are to be suspended for the remainder of the session. Now, if the session lasts for another month, this motion will hold good for the whole of that time, and that is not a good thing. I can quite understand the motion for one day, but when it comes to passing it for an indefinite period, it is a very different matter, and no leader of the House should ask us to agree to such a proposal. There is another matter which, above all, the hon. gentleman should take into consideration. At the present time a certain election petition case is proceeding in the court. I am informed that it is almost an impossibility for that case to be finished this week, and in that case they will not sit again till January. Now, if the hon. gentleman is going to finish the session this week, that case cannot be gone on with until the House meets again next session.

Mr. GIVENS: It cannot go on even then.

Mr. McDONALD: Oh, yes, it can, because that has already been established by the fact that we have already had a federal session, and it did not come on then, but came on in the next session. In that case there would be a new Elections Tribunal, and it would be very questionable whether the case would not have to be gone over from the very start. That is not fair to either the petitioner or the respondent, and under those circumstances the hon. gentleman ought not to ask for the suspension of the Standing Orders. It may be contended by some, though it is not established yet whether it can be done, that if the hon. gentleman adjourns the House for three or four weeks before proroguing it the case can go on during that adjournment. But, seeing that that has never been established, we do not know what position the judge would take up in the event of such a thing taking place, so that we might be in a very awkward position. I certainly enter my protest against the motion, and will go so far as to divide the House upon it. The Premier has given us no indication of what the Loan Bill is going to be—how much it will be for—and yet he asks us to place a weapon in his hands which will enable him to force that Bill through this House in a single sitting, without an adjournment at all; and under those circumstances it is not decent to propose this motion at the present time. The least the hon. gentleman should have done was to intimate to the House the nature of this Loan Bill before asking for this suspension of the Standing Orders. This is only Wednesday, and there is ample time for the hon. gentleman to withdraw this motion, give notice of it to-morrow, and move it on Friday, thereby enabling him to finish up his business. That would have been a more straightforward course for the hon. gentleman to pursue.

The PREMIER: With the permission of the House, I would like to reply to the remarks of the hon. member for Flinders.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I quite agree with what the hon. member has said about the injustice to the two parties in the elections case now being tried

in the Supreme Court, and I can assure the House that Parliament will not be prorogued until that case is finished.

Mr. McDONALD: You do not know what position the judge may take up with regard to the adjournment. We have not got that definitely settled yet by our court.

The PREMIER: The court can go on with the case until the prorogation, and I will give plenty of time. My motion is in accordance with the usual practice of the House during the last week of the session. I moved it to-day in order that two private Bills may go right through without stopping. Friday is quite sufficient for my own Bills. The Loan Bill will only deal with amounts that have been previously voted by this House.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): This is a most unusual course, although the hon. gentleman assured the House that it is the usual thing to move such a motion towards the end of the session. I am not going to say the hon. gentleman knows better, but I appeal to his colleague, the Chief Secretary, and ask him if it is not an unusual course to move such a motion at a time when there is so much business on the paper. The usual custom is to move the suspension of the Standing Orders when all the business that is going to be done is practically finished, with the exception of the final Appropriation Bill. Then the Government ask for the suspension of the Standing Orders with the object of passing that Bill through all its stages in one day. That has been the custom ever since I have been a member of this House. But in this instance things are altogether altered. The hon. gentleman comes down at a time when there is a very large proportion of the Estimates still to consider, and when there is still a considerable amount of business on the paper which the hon. gentleman may decide to go on with or may decide not to go on with. So far as I know, the hon. gentleman has given the House no information regarding what business he is going on with.

The PREMIER: I have told the House all the business we are going on with.

Mr. TURLEY: I may say I have been away.

The PREMIER: It was before you left, I think.

Mr. TURLEY: Then there is no business except the Loan Bill?

The PREMIER: The Loan and Appropriation Bills.

Mr. TURLEY: At any rate, it seems to me that it is rather early in the session to ask that the Standing Orders be suspended. I noticed by the papers the other day that a motion had been passed by the House giving the Government the time allowed to private members, and the hon. gentleman now says there are one or two private Bills that he wants to afford hon. members facilities to get through. I would point out that we have a considerable amount of private members' business on the paper.

The PREMIER: It has all been arranged for.

Mr. TURLEY: There has been no particular arrangement made in connection with some matters on the paper, and I make bold to say that the business which some private members have on the paper is just as important as that which the Government seem to favour passing through this session. When the House affirms that the time allowed to private members should be taken away, then any private member who has business on the paper is simply subject to the gracious treatment he may receive at the hands of the Government in respect of that business, as the Government may or may not grant time for the despatch of that business. If the Government think that by obliging any hon. member who has business down for consideration, it will be a good thing for themselves, or for the person who wants to be

obliged, they can afford him time to deal with his business, but if they do not view it in that light they may refuse to give the necessary time. That is extremely unfair. If the hon. gentleman were sitting on this side of the House, and he had business on the paper, would he not think it unfair that the Government should take private members' time and simply dole out their favours to one or two of their own followers who had business on the paper?

The PREMIER: We are treating them all alike.

Mr. TURLEY: I am very glad that I got up, because I believe that hon. members on this side were under the impression that they could not go on with private business after the motion which has been carried. Now they will know that the Government will give them Government time to deal with the motions they have on the paper.

The PREMIER: To take a vote on them.

Mr. TURLEY: I think that is all that is necessary, and if the Government are disposed to flatten out the business which private members have on the paper they can do it at any time. But if a member goes on with a Bill that should be taken as early as possible, as, if passed, it will have to go to another place for consideration.

Mr. GIVENS: We do not want to be mere voting machines.

Mr. TURLEY: It is not a question of being voting machines, because there is no question that comes before this House on which a member cannot speak, if he so desires. There is no gag to speech in this House, unless a two-thirds majority pass a motion to the effect that a discussion shall not proceed; and if a matter comes before this House on which I think it is necessary to express my opinion, I shall do so. I have taken exception before to this way of carrying on business. If the hon. gentleman would wait until we have passed the Estimates, and then ask for the suspension of the Standing Orders for the final Appropriation Bill, he would be following the usual custom and procedure of the House.

Mr. FISHER (*Gympie*): I am of the same opinion as previous speakers on this side regarding this matter. I think it is too early in the session to move a motion of this nature, and in my opinion no business will be hindered if we postpone the motion till Friday next. I am inclined to think that this session will not close before Christmas; if justice is to be done to the business, and the country's interests are to be protected, I do not think it is possible to finish before Christmas. I therefore move that the motion be amended by the insertion after the word "That" of the words "on Friday," so that the motion may read—"That on Friday so much of the Standing Orders," etc.

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): I am entirely in favour of the amendment, only I regret that the hon. member who moved it did not move a later day than Friday next, because I fail to see why such a large amount of important business should be rushed through the House in the closing days of the session simply because hon. members opposite had a majority. The country did not send us here to do business in any particular season, or to close before Christmas, or to rush business through in order that we may have a holiday; but they sent us here to do the business of the country. There are several matters coming on that I am in favour of just as much as hon. members on the other side of the House, but at the same time, because I am in favour of those particular matters, I do not desire to take away from other hon. members who may not be in favour of them the right of discussing them. I totally disagree with the opinion expressed by the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Turley,

that all that we want is a vote on private members' business. If the Workmen's Compensation Bill is to be considered in Committee, are we to take a vote on that without discussion? Are we to be mere voting machines, and not discuss the measure at all? I say we should have an opportunity of discussing the matter. Full and free discussion is the only means of arriving at what is best for the country, and of solving any difficulty the House or the country may be in. For that reason I think the right of discussion is as important as the right to take a vote. Therefore, we are not very much beholden to the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government when he offers to take a vote, and nothing more, on the matters on the business-paper. The hon. member for Bundaberg has on the paper one of the most important motions that have been brought forward this session, and it is very desirable that it should be discussed. The fact that the Premier called "Not formal" to that motion clearly shows that the Government have no intention of allowing a vote to be taken on that matter this session; otherwise they would have allowed a formal vote to be taken on it this evening.

The PREMIER: It will not be discussed five minutes on this side.

Mr. GIVENS: If hon. members on the other side of the House do not consider [4.30 p.m.] such a motion as this worth five minutes' discussion, they have very little care and very little concern for the welfare of a large portion of the colony.

The PREMIER: You don't want it discussed. You wanted it put formal just now.

Mr. GIVENS: Hon. members opposite want to pose now as being in favour of it, while, when it was called, they called "Not formal," so as to prohibit a vote being taken.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. GIVENS: That was the exact position, because if they had wished a vote to be taken they would not have called "Not formal." There are several other matters that have been insufficiently discussed, or have not been discussed at all. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley has moved a motion that has been only partially discussed; that is a matter on which some hon. members hold strong opinions, and they have not been able to express an opinion. It will be unfair to them to ask them to record their vote on that, and on other matters, without having had the opportunity of expressing their views. It is calculated to place them in a false light in the eyes of the country. If we pass this motion we deprive hon. members, who have not yet had the opportunity of expressing their opinions, of their right to do so, and I, for one, object to it. Apart altogether from private members' business, we have Government business involving an expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds, and the Government apparently wish to rush it through this House in a day or two. The hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Kidston, the late Treasurer, says it amounts to over £1,000,000, and I accept the correction. These forms have been placed in the Standing Orders for the especial purpose of safeguarding the interests of the people, and safeguarding the minority, so that they may be able to effect decent criticism of any measure which may come before the House, and I think it is unwise to suspend those safeguards. I think hon. members, who are paid for attending to the business of the country, should give full time to the free and full discussion of these important matters. Therefore I will vote for the amendment which has been moved by the hon. member for Gympie.

Mr. KIDSTON (Rockhampton): I think that before the Premier asked the House to pass such

a motion as this, he had a right to tell the House when the end of the session is to take place. The motion says—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of this session.

What does that mean?

The PREMIER: We can finish the session this week by sitting on Saturday.

Mr. KIDSTON: We can finish it to-day if we pass this motion and take all the business as formal. At any rate, the hon. member knows we can finish it by to-morrow if all the business is formal; but the hon. member also knows it is quite impossible for hon. members on this side to take all the business yet to come before the House as formal. Much of it is of a very important character, and must receive at least a fair amount of discussion. The hon. gentleman cannot give us any assurance as to when the session will end, and it is unfair of him to ask this House to consent to a motion of this kind, which would take away the rights of members and the protection which members have of legitimate opportunities for discussion, because the session may last for a month yet. We may be discussing matters this day month. There is no guarantee we will not be.

Mr. COWLEY: Suppose we do, it does not matter.

The PREMIER: I have told you all the Bills I want to get through.

Mr. FISHER: It may lead to complications.

Mr. KIDSTON: I am not throwing any doubts on the hon. gentleman's *bona fides*, or saying that he does not mean well in the matter. He knows quite well what he wants to do, and it is a reasonable thing he wants to do. I am only pointing out that he is asking the House to consent to a motion that the House has no right to consent to until it sees the end of the session within a few days. And the hon. gentleman has no right to ask it. I think the hon. gentleman might withdraw his motion until he can give the House some assurance that the end of the session is within very few days. Then I do not suppose there would be any objection to it being passed.

Mr. COWLEY (Herbert): The hon. gentleman says the House has no right to pass this motion. What right has the hon. gentleman to define the rights of the House? The House has the right to pass any motion.

Mr. KIDSTON: Of course, I know that quite well.

Mr. COWLEY: And the Prime Minister has a perfect right to move it. He has told us the motion is to enable private members' Bills to be taken through all their stages to-day—that he is prepared to give them time to discuss them until 6 o'clock. The motion is for the purpose of passing these Bills through three stages, and sending them to the Council to-morrow, so as to enable them to be dealt with there. If the word "Friday" is inserted that object will be defeated. We shall not be able to pass them through committee to-day.

Mr. FISHER: Why?

Mr. COWLEY: We cannot.

Mr. FISHER: Why cannot we do it?

Mr. COWLEY: The hon. member says we shall not. We can do it; but, generally speaking, there is a great objection to it. The Prime Minister asks you not only to pass them through committee, but through the third reading, so that they can go to the other House to-morrow.

Mr. FISHER: There is nothing to stop it in the ordinary way.

Mr. COWLEY: No. The hon. member says distinctly the Standing Orders should not be suspended. This proves he does not approve of Bills being passed through two stages at any time in one day. I think he is defeating his own object by this amendment.

Mr. TURLEY: The hon. member knows that although the Standing Orders are not suspended we can take two stages—that is, second reading and committee—in one day. That has often been done when the House was satisfied with the provisions of a Bill.

Mr. GLASSEY: It was done the other night.

Mr. TURLEY: The Bills can be carried through these two stages—the principal stages—and the third reading can be carried to-morrow, because it is a formal matter, and then the Bills could be sent up for the consideration of the other place. We know perfectly well that there has been a motion carried there that the Standing Orders be suspended. So the argument of hon. members opposite does not apply in any way, because there is no obstacle thrown in the way as far as the other place, because the Bills can be taken right through the three stages there. These private members' Bills can be dealt with there to-morrow and definitely settled. It seems to me that that is no argument why the motion of the Premier should be accepted.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 20.

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

NOES, 34.

Messrs. Philp, Foxtan, Dickson, Dalrymple, Murray, Chataway, Ruicidge, Macdonald-Paterson, Leahy, Boles, Cowley, G. Thorn, Bell, Stephens, Mackintosh, Story, Stephenson, Forsyth, Tooth, Plunkett, O'Connell, Lord, Campbell, Bartholomew, Petrie, Stodart, T. B. Cribb, Anear, Bridges, Smith, Callan, Kent, Jenkinson, and Grimes.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Curtis. No—Mr. Hanran.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question stated.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I suppose the House may distinctly understand that the Loan Bill and the Appropriation Bill will not be brought down until the Estimates are finished?

The PREMIER: We cannot.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has never been done.

Mr. LEAHY: It was only tried, and we blocked it.

Mr. DAWSON: It was attempted to be done by the Nelson Government.

Mr. STEWART (*Rockhampton North*): I intend to oppose the motion. The hon. member for Herbert said the House could do anything it liked. We know perfectly well the House can do anything it likes. The House can abolish, practically speaking, the Standing Orders, if it chooses; but such a course of action would be altogether subversive of the principles of constitutional government. I do not know that the Premier is anxious to go that length in addition to the many other vagaries which he has performed. I do not think the Standing Orders should be suspended except in cases of great emergency—except some very good reason or reasons could be advanced for the step. Have we any reason of that kind at present? What is the reason the hon. gentleman desires to suspend the Standing Orders? He has not given any. He has not told us; he has left us to guess; and the only reason that I can guess is that he is very desirous of closing the session and getting into recess. That is the only reason—the only apparent reason—as far as I can gather.

Mr. STEPHENSON: And a very good one, too.

Mr. STEWART: I do not think so. There is a great amount of work to be done this session.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why don't you do it?

Mr. STEWART: We are doing it as well as we possibly can. We have been sitting up night and day trying to do it. Of course I know what

the hon. gentleman calls doing work. What the hon. gentleman wants is that he should bring in his Estimates or Bills, and we should shut our eyes and open our mouths and swallow the dose, whatever it might be. But that is not government according to the ideas of British communities. What that means is simply handing over the reins of power to an oligarchy—manufacturing a despotism out of what ought to be a constitutional Government. We are not prepared for that. We desire that every Bill, motion, or proposal to expend money brought before this House shall receive full and legitimate discussion. That is what the Opposition is here for—to see that every proposal brought forward by the Government is thoroughly sifted and tested in the crucible of discussion.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. STEWART: We know that the policy of hon. gentlemen who sit on the Treasury benches is to cover everything up. They do not want any discussion here. In fact, if they had their way a great many of their measures would never come before this House at all.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. STEWART: I don't know whether the Speaker is calling me to order or not—

The SPEAKER: Yes. I call the hon. member to order for speaking in too general terms on the motion now before the House.

Mr. STEWART: I am giving my reasons for objecting to the motion. It is the evident desire of the Government to burke discussion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is the evident desire of the Government to get on with the business.

Mr. STEWART: There can be no other reason for proposing this motion, than that the Government are afraid to submit their proposals to lengthened discussion. What is this proposal? That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the session as will permit of the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day. Why, in the case of some Bills it has taken weeks to pass them one stage, not only in the House, but in every representative Chamber I know of.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And then they don't pass.

Mr. STEWART: "And then they don't pass," but that is a bull perhaps. Bills have been discussed for weeks here, and in other Chambers, and have not passed then. But if this motion is passed, whatever Bill the hon. gentleman chooses to bring forward must be passed during the twenty-four hours within which it is introduced. What is that? That is limiting the right of free speech. It is imposing a gag upon hon. members of this Chamber. It is stifling discussion. It is burking free and full discussion of matters that ought to be discussed in every representative Chamber. Some hon. members have hinted that the object of the Government in desiring to pass this motion is that hon. members may be able to get home to eat their Christmas dinner, their plum pudding, and all the rest of it. I submit to hon. gentlemen that surely they should think more of the business of the country than they do of their own ease, comfort, and even of their own stomachs! Surely, hon. gentlemen have a higher conception of the elevated position they occupy, than to make it subsidiary to the common every-day wants of their humanity? Cannot we carry on the business of the country and attend to our stomachs at the same time? If we cannot overtake the business that is to be done before Christmas, can we not adjourn and meet after Christmas? Where is the necessity for hon. members to rush away into recess immediately after Christmas? Why should we abandon our work here after Christmas any

more than the operatives in any of the manufactories in Brisbane abandon their work after Christmas? Have we not any number of measures on the stocks that might very well be passed? What would hon. gentlemen say of a station-owner who had 10,000 sheep to shear, and who would say that, because it was possible to shear only 5,000 before Christmas, the remainder could not be shorn at all? So long as there is business to be done, this House should sit to do it. Is there any business to be done? We know that the late Premier, now the Chief Secretary and twin-head of the Government—

The SPEAKER: I point out that the hon. member is again digressing into a general debate upon the motion now before the House, which is for the suspension of the Standing Orders during the rest of the session, in order that Bills may be passed through all their stages in one day. I expect the hon. member to address himself to the motion.

Mr. STEWART: I was giving—so far as my own judgment of the matter lies—very cogent reasons why this motion should not pass. It is very difficult, perhaps, for one to confine oneself strictly to any particular line of reasoning; but I think that upon a motion of this kind hon. members should be allowed to give as clearly and as fully as possible their reasons for opposing it. I was proceeding to do so. What is the reason this motion is brought forward at all? Unless in cases of supreme urgency, I maintain that no Bill should be permitted to pass through this Chamber in one day. What we do, if we permit this motion to pass, is to hand over our rights to the Government; and instead of the country being governed by a Parliament representative of the people, it will be governed by an irresponsible oligarchy. What are the Bills the hon. gentleman desires to bring in? I believe he has said there is a Loan Bill for one. I do not know how much he intends to borrow, but I have heard it is somewhere about £1,500,000. That involves, not only an addition to the indebtedness of the colony, to the tune of £1,500,000, but an addition to the annual burden of interest of between £45,000 and £50,000. That is a question, the discussion upon which ought not to be limited in any way. I think that measure is of great importance. Hon. members who represent the taxpayers of

[5 p.m.] the colony—who represent the people who have got to find the money—ought not to have any limit placed on their powers of discussion on such an important question as this. If any such limit is placed on them, and if their rights are curtailed in this way, it will mean that we will have taxation without due representation. I hope the hon. gentleman will see the position he is endeavouring to place hon. members in. He is making an insidious attack on the rights and privileges and liberties of the people of the colony; but of course he does not see that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Neither do you.

Mr. STEWART: I do, most decidedly. If the majority of hon. members in this Chamber can suspend the Standing Orders in one instance, they can suspend them in other cases. If that was done, where would representative government be? If the Premier or any Minister of the Crown, simply because he has a majority behind him who will follow him without question—if he chooses, he can take away from this Chamber almost entirely its representative character—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. STEWART: It should not be possible for any Minister or any number of hon. members to do anything of the kind. I certainly shall oppose the passing of this motion with all my might. I consider that it is making an attack on our constitutional system of government; and if

any hon. members had any clear conception of their duties to their constituents and of their positions as representatives of the people of the colony, they would never tolerate for a single instant any motion of this kind.

Mr. BOLES (*Port Curtis*): I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. member for Rockhampton North with regard to this motion. I think the desire of the Government and of the majority of hon. members is that the House should adjourn before Christmas. I would remind the hon. gentleman that the Government have been in office for some time, and he must know that really no contentious business has been brought before the House. On these grounds alone, I think the House should close its doors before Christmas.

Mr. STEWART: What about the one man one vote Bill?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOLES: I do not know what the hon. gentleman thinks about that Bill, but when I saw it on the Government programme I looked upon it as a perfect bogey. I never thought it would be passed, and I don't think it will. I see some hon. members on the other side smiling, and I think some of them would give that particular Bill a high time in committee. There is no contentious business to deal with, except the passing of the remainder of the Estimates. If the hon. member can show that there is, I am perfectly willing to come back after Christmas and assist the House. The Government have brought forward no progressive works. The whole cry outside is for railway works—some of which would pay at once.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BOLES: In my judgment there is not an item on the Government programme that would be beneficial to the country. Similar motions to that now proposed by the Premier have been passed several times. No doubt private members will have an opportunity to get their business through, and if not they have their remedy.

Mr. HARDACRE: What remedy?

Mr. BOLES: The hon. member knows it quite well without asking me that question. Question put and passed.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF LABOURERS.

Mr. GLASSEY (*Bundaberg*), in moving—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that an Address should be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor praying that Her Majesty will be pleased to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report upon the following matters, namely:—

1. The best means of encouraging close and permanent settlement upon the pastoral and agricultural lands of the colony by persons engaged in shearing and other intermittent employments of such a nature as to render it necessary for such persons to move from place to place in search of work.
2. The desirableness of establishing in certain centres in the interior of the colony, by means of Government assistance, homes for the convenience of persons engaged in such intermittent employments, to which they could go during the off season, when such employments are not open, and thus prevent such persons from being compelled to camp during bad weather on the banks of creeks and other open places, much to their discomfort, and frequently to the serious injury of their health, and whether it is practicable to make such homes self-supporting.
3. The sleeping, cooking, and dining accommodation provided for shearers, rouseabouts, and other persons employed on stations and sugar plantations.
4. The quality and quantity of the food, whether cooked or uncooked, supplied to persons employed on stations and sugar plantations who receive food in addition to wages; also the quality and quantity of the water supplied to all persons employed on stations and sugar plantations, as well as the sanitation thereof generally, more especially of those stations and sugar plantations where white men are employed.

5. The means (if any) now provided for mental improvement and recreation of persons employed on stations and sugar plantations, especially where a considerable number of white men are usually employed.

6. Any other matter which may conduce to the well-being of persons employed on stations and sugar plantations—

said: I regret that the Prime Minister called "Not formal" to this motion, because I have no intention to discuss the matters contained in it at length. I am very anxious to see the business of the House brought to a close before Christmas. But I am very pleased to know that the Minister is not going to make it a party question. The matter has been in the hands of hon. members for some days, and I think the resolution speaks for itself. Hon. members have, no doubt, made up their minds how they are going to vote on the motion, and I am anxious that a division should be taken as soon as possible. I think it is extremely necessary that a Royal Commission—armed with full authority—should be appointed to inquire into these matters, and I think one of the members of that commission should be a medical gentleman, and that the other members should be persons fully acquainted with bush life and plantation life. I am not desirous of becoming a member of the commission, if the House, in its wisdom, adopts the resolution, as I hope it will. I am not moving this resolution with a view to becoming a member of the commission, as some hon. members may say, in order to get a few extra fees. I wish to clear that ground more particularly. I have for some considerable length of time thought that persons engaged in shearing and other occupations should be provided with more settled homes. That I consider a matter of necessity; and I know of no better means by which those people can have settled homes than by utilising some of our best agricultural and grazing lands for that purpose. That is a matter that may be gone into by persons who have practical knowledge of the subject. I have discussed the matter with many bushmen and pastoralists, who agree with me that something should be done in this direction, after sufficient data has been provided by means of close inquiry. Sometimes we are told that men in the bush lead wandering, reckless lives, and spend a great part of their time at the bush shanties. I think that is a matter that might be fairly inquired into, and that such a commission as I propose might take evidence upon the desirability of establishing bushmen's homes in different portions of the colony, where men could go after the shearing season expired, and not be compelled to lie about in all kinds of places, much to their own discomfort and to the injury of their health. I have had several communications on that subject, both verbal and written, from one of my best friends living in the interior, who is of opinion that if such homes were established they could, to some extent, be made self-supporting, inasmuch as most of the men would be inclined to give a reasonable sum per week in exchange for comfortable lodging. In all probability, also, those men would be able to devote some of their spare time to cultivation of the lands set apart, and thus help to make the place self-supporting. With regard to the sleeping, cooking, and dining accommodation provided at some of the centres where large numbers of men are employed, I need scarcely say that it is a matter that requires some attention. I am pleased to say that the Government of New Zealand have dealt with this matter by Act of Parliament, compelling employers to provide reasonable accommodation, and that the places where men are employed in numbers are subject to inspection by the factories inspectors. Then, again, I have had

many complaints from persons, especially those engaged on sugar plantations, as to the want of decent sleeping accommodation, together with the poor quality of the food supplied and the primitive nature of the cooking appliances. The food is at times not only deficient in quantity but also in quality, with the result that, owing to its coarseness and the way in which it is supplied, men cannot be induced to stop during the busy season when labour is most required. I need only mention one plantation not a great distance from my electorate, where 1,400 or 1,500 men are employed and pass through the books in one season. In cases such as that, where men are employed in such large numbers, surely their sleeping accommodation, their food, and the sanitary arrangements of the place are of some importance to themselves? The sanitation of these places is a matter that requires special attention, and to which inquiry might reasonably be directed. I am very anxious, if this commission of inquiry is granted, to see a medical man on the commission, together with a representative of the pastoralists, and a man with some experience as a shearer and rouseabout—such gentlemen, for instance, as my hon. friend the member for Gregory and Mr. Kewley, the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union at Longreach, who would bring to bear on the subject experience extending over many years, and would do justice to the whole question. I will not attempt to discuss the matter at greater length, because there is other private business to come on, but I will leave the motion in the hands of hon. members, trusting to their good judgment and fairness. Whatever little expenditure is incurred over this matter I am quite certain it would be more than compensated for by the value of the information gathered.

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): I do not intend to make this a party question, though I intend to oppose the motion myself. There is too much in the motion altogether. If we are to commence inquiring into the sleeping accommodation and cooking and dining facilities provided for one class of persons, we should have to continue it and apply the inquiry to domestic servants and all the sailors in our ports. The first question dealt with—that of close settlement—has been engaging the attention of Parliament for many years past. We tried first of all to establish village communities, and we have since amended our land laws several times with the object of attaining the end aimed at by the hon. gentleman. Of course it is very desirable that men should not be continually wandering about the country looking for work, but if the Government undertake to find work for all the men who want it they would undertake a very big contract indeed. Then, with reference to the sleeping and cooking accommodation provided for shearers, rouseabouts, and station hands generally, as I have said, if we begin inquiry of that nature so far as these matters affect one class, we should have to make similar inquiries in regard to everyone who works for wages and who is supplied with board and lodging. With regard to the matter of providing for the mental improvement and recreation of persons employed on stations and sugar plantations, I may say that the State tries to provide mental food for all the people in the colony who are willing to help themselves. The Government subsidise schools of arts and technical colleges, and provide schools for the children. I leave it an open matter to hon. members on this side to vote as they please, but personally I intend to vote against it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): I think the hon. gentleman who has introduced this motion deserves credit for endeavouring to improve the condition of

labour in the Western portion of the interior, which, perhaps, is subject to certain hardships, and which might be improved by having fuller knowledge on the subject. But I think the hon. gentleman has descended to too much detail; and it would have been better, to my mind, if he had made the motion more general, requesting that the Royal Commission be appointed, and allowing the commission to decide upon the special form of investigation. The 1st clause of the motion, dealing with the best means of encouraging close and permanent settlement upon the pastoral and agricultural lands of the colony by persons engaged in shearing and other intermittent employments, commends itself to my approval; and I think a great deal of information might be elicited as to the desirableness of establishing, in certain centres in the interior of the colony, by means of Government assistance, homes for the convenience of persons engaged in such intermittent employments, but I object to the instruction given in the 3rd and 4th clauses particularly, and even in the 5th clause. If the hon. gentleman had confined his motion to a request for a Royal Commission to inquire into the best means of encouraging such settlement as is referred to in the 1st paragraph of the motion, as well as any other matter which might conduce to the well-being of persons employed on stations and sugar plantations—if the motion were reduced to those dimensions I would give it my support.

Mr. GLASSEY: But I attach so much importance to this sanitary question.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That could be inquired into by the commission when appointed. It might be left to their judgment to deal with those matters, but the motion in its present form makes a particularly invidious distinction, by indicating stations and sugar plantations as places where abuses have taken place.

Mr. GLASSEY: So they have.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think that in this shape the motion is objectionable, but I would support the motion if the hon. gentleman confined it to the 1st and 6th clauses.

Mr. FITZGERALD: What is your trouble?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My trouble is that there is an implication in the motion that there are grave abuses in regard to the sanitation, the food, and sleeping accommodation, and all that sort of thing, of which we have no direct evidence, and I think that a Royal Commission ought to go to an inquiry or this sort in a position to make an impartial investigation without receiving any instruction from this House as to any abuses of which we have no evidence. I sympathise with the motion to the extent I have indicated, and that is why I rose to speak.

Mr. GRIMES (*Ozley*): The only portion of this motion that needs inquiring into is the 1st clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: And the last.

Mr. GRIMES: Yes. With reference to the first, which is the most important, I would point out to the hon. member that it is not a great while ago since there was a select committee on land settlement. That committee sat six weeks, and entirely covered the ground of this 1st clause, as any hon. member can see by looking up the evidence in "Votes and Proceedings." I am strongly opposed to Royal Commissions being appointed to go over work that has been already done by a select committee. I was upon that select committee, and I know very well what came before us. I know the class of witnesses, and we had some of those very men referred to by the hon. member for Bundaberg in this motion. With reference to the class of men he is anxious to make inquiries about, why should

this motion be confined to station men and men engaged on sugar plantations? If it is necessary—

Mr. GLASSEY: Because they are employed in large groups there.

Mr. GRIMES: If it is necessary for them, it is necessary for other industries where a large number of men are employed. There are more men engaged in general farming at the present time than on station work or sugar plantations, and why are not labourers in connection with general farming included in the motion? I am strongly opposed to Royal Commissions, and I cannot see that the hon. member has made out a good case for this Royal Commission.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): I am going to oppose this motion. I am opposed to the system of Royal Commissions. I have always taken up that stand, and I am perfectly satisfied that since I have been in this House there has not been a solitary Royal Commission that has done one bit of good.

Mr. DAWSON: Except the Mines Commission.

Mr. TURLEY: I would not except even the Mines Commission. The hon. member for Croydon pointed out a long time before the commission sat exactly the alterations required in the mining law, and one or two of the members who were on the Mining Commission were the men who, in this House, had declared their opposition to anything of the sort being carried out. I am not referring to the leader of the party; I am referring to the late hon. member for Burke and the late hon. member for Gympie.

Mr. BELL: Do you ever study the reports and the evidence?

Mr. TURLEY: I generally do. The only report I have not read so far is the report of the Police Commission; but with every other one since I have been a member I have taken time to go through the evidence as well as the report. The hon. gentleman, I suppose, was referring inferentially to the report of the Lands Commission, which to my mind was about the greatest frost in the way of a commission of inquiry ever appointed by this House, as was admitted not only by members on the front Treasury benches, who embodied very few of the recommendations of the commission, but also by one member at least on the commission, who pointed out the absolute futility of appointing Royal Commissions for that kind of work.

Mr. BELL: A great many of the recommendations were embodied.

Mr. TURLEY: I refer the hon. gentleman to the speech delivered by the hon. member for Lockyer, who made it his chief complaint at the time that the Government had not thought fit to embody any of the important consequential recommendations at any rate submitted by the commission. The hon. gentleman must fight it out with one of his own colleagues, who was a member of that commission. That is the reason why I am going to oppose this motion. There is a great deal of it that to my mind is unnecessary. There is a great deal that may be said for various parts of this motion. At the same time the crux of the question is this: We have been asking for some considerable time for the Government to extend the provisions of the Factories Act to all these stations, and shearing-sheds, and sugar plantations, and every place to which this inquiry would extend itself. I contend that is the line of argument that this party should take up. As far as I understand it, personally at any rate, the object should be to see first that the principles that are embodied in the motion at the present time should be embodied in the Factories Act, and then that the operation of the Act should be extended to all the places that would be dealt with in a motion of this sort.

It should be extended to shearing-sheds because of the accommodation that [5.30 p.m.] in many instances is not fit to put human beings into. It should be extended because the sanitation is bad for health and everything else. It should be extended to sugar plantations for the very same reason, and that is the reason why I intend to vote against this motion—because I do not believe in Royal Commissions with the object of making these inquiries, and because I believe that the solution of the difficulty will be far more easily accomplished by the extension of the provisions of the Factories Act, and the inclusion of these places under that Act.

* Mr. BELL (*Dalby*): I suspect that the reason which has, consciously or unconsciously, influenced the hon. member for South Brisbane in coming to the conclusion he has about Royal Commissions which have been appointed during the last few years by this Parliament, is that amidst the list of members of those commissions the name of the junior member for South Brisbane has not found a place.

Mr. TURLEY: That is a very lofty statement. It is worthy of the source it comes from.

Mr. BELL: I venture to say that if the hon. member had been on one of those commissions, whatever the result of their deliberations had been, we should not have had the hon. member getting up in his place this afternoon and making the disparaging remarks that he has against them. The hon. member has stated that he has studied, not merely the report, but the evidence of the various Royal Commissions which have been appointed in recent years. I take the hon. member's word for the statement, though, I confess, industrious as I believe him to be, I was certainly not under the impression that his industry was of so all-embracing a character as that. But, as the hon. member tells us that he has studied, not merely the reports, but the whole of the evidence of those Royal Commissions, I venture to say that the hon. member in so doing occupies a unique position in this Chamber. But having done that, I am astounded to hear the hon. member say that no Royal Commission we have had in recent years has been of any practical service to the statute-book of the colony. The hon. member went out of his way to gird at the Royal Commission on Land Settlement, merely because I happened to make an interjection, and because I happened to be a member of that commission. I tell the hon. member that I do not think he is capable of studying the report and the evidence of the Lands Commission—(Opposition laughter)—and giving a practical opinion on the value of the statements it contains.

Mr. BROWNE: "Lord, gie us a guid conceit o' oursels!"

Mr. BELL: In ability I suppose the hon. member is the equal of any man in this Chamber, but natural ability is not everything. The hon. member's experience of life has been gained in cities rather than in the country; and in saying that I do not forget those frequent incursions, or excursions, into the country which the hon. member makes on the top of a bicycle. I remember that I once followed in the tracks of the hon. member's bicycle in the Western country for a considerable number of miles, and I venture to say that the hon. member's progress—however much it may have enlightened the original darkness of his mind—was not, at all events, of a character sufficiently illuminating to enable him to pose as a condemnatory critic of the report of the Royal Commission on Land Settlement. I tell the hon. member this—he may believe it or not—he may take it or reject it—but I tell him that the majority of the recommendations of that commission are to be found in the 1897 Land Act.

Mr. TURLEY: I refer you to the speech of your colleague.

Mr. BELL: With regard to the Mines Commission all I can say is that we have the testimony of the hon. member's leader, and the testimony of other hon. members, as to the value of the Royal Commission. Unlike the hon. member I do not possess a universal mind which enables me to deal with the various ramifications of this colony, and I am not able to say a word about the Mines Commission. All I can say is that the hon. member's leader claims that it has done a great deal of good. I repeat that, consciously or unconsciously, in the mind of the hon. member, what is wrong with the Royal Commissions of this colony is that he has not been on them. Now, sir, with regard to this motion of the hon. member for Bundaberg. I should imagine from the way that it has been drawn up, and the particular directions that it contains, the hon. member had very little hope when he drew it up of any Royal Commission being appointed. I venture to think that when the hon. member drew it up he was rather preparing a document which was less intended in his mind to form the basis of the investigations of a Royal Commission than to be a kind of mild manifesto addressed to the people living in the rural districts of the colony, and a kind of reminder that there was in this Chamber a species of guardian angel who was watching over their interests. In other words, I hold the opinion that the hon. member was guilty of conduct of which hon. members in this and other political chambers are frequently guilty—that is, that he was playing to the gallery, and to the electors of the colony. No hon. member with the parliamentary experience and knowledge of affairs of the hon. member for Bundaberg would ever ask a Royal Commission to sit upon and investigate the all-embracing subjects that are mentioned in the motion. It would take any competent body who desired to carry out those duties in a sincere way years rather than months, and they certainly would be outside the scope of the functions of any single Royal Commission, as we know them. Before the subjects that are mentioned in the motion become fit subjects for the scrutiny of a Royal Commission, we should have the way paved by motions in this House, and some indication given that there are real grievances existing in regard to the various matters that are mentioned in the several paragraphs of the motion. Nothing that has yet come before this House warrants any man in stating conscientiously that any widespread, serious grievance exists as to the general state of shearing-sheds throughout Queensland.

Mr. TURLEY: It does exist all the same.

Mr. BELL: Undoubtedly there are shearing-sheds in Queensland that are not creditable to the men who are responsible for them, and are dangerous to the men who inhabit them.

Mr. TURLEY: They are a perfect disgrace.

Mr. BELL: I say with confidence that I will have a favourable reply from the hon. member for Gregory when I ask him if it is a true charge to make against the pastoralists in the Western district that the shearing-sheds and the shearing accommodation that they provide are dangerous to the health of the shearers during the period they have to occupy them?

Mr. FITZGERALD: Yes.

Mr. BELL: Speaking broadly, it cannot be charged against the pastoralists of this colony as a whole that the shearing accommodation they provide is insanitary or dangerous to the shearers, although I fully admit that there are men who do not attain to that standard, and whose conduct is consequently highly reprehensible. In regard to the accommodation that is provided for the employees on sugar plantations, I admit that I

do not know very much; but all I can say is that, if there is grave cause for complaint as to the accommodation, the hon. members who represent sugar districts in this Chamber are very much to blame that they have not in a more pointed way brought those grievances under the notice of the House and of the country. I, at all events, have never heard anything which leads me to think that it is necessary to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the subject.

Mr. COWLEY: Hear, hear! There have never been any complaints.

Mr. McDONALD: Kanakas have died in thousands.

Mr. BELL: Although it is not always an agreeable thing to do other than attribute the highest motives to an hon. member, I am quite sure the hon. member for Bundaberg will forgive me if I decline to regard him as a disinterested patriot in this motion of his.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): Animated by the lofty feeling that generally animates the hon. member for Dalby, the result of a university education through being a gentleman of means, the hon. member got up—as he usually does in nine cases out of ten—to throw out all sorts of innuendoes and impute motives to hon. members on this side of the House. The hon. member first attacked the hon. member for South Brisbane by stating that the reason that hon. member was against the appointment of Royal Commissions was that he had been omitted from Royal Commissions ever since he had been a member of the House. Is it not fair then to suppose that the very strong advocacy of Royal Commissions by the hon. member for Dalby is due to the fact that the hon. member is one of those who drew the lot from the lucky bag and was appointed on a Royal Commission? So far as the Royal Commission on Lands goes, it has been of some advantage to the House, for we have had many evenings' amusement listening to the tales of the members of that commission, colleagues of the hon. member, about their adventures, and regarding the delicacies provided for one member's exclusive use, and how someone inside the coach took those delicacies when that member was not looking. Then the hon. member attributed all sorts of motives to the hon. member for Bundaberg, and said that he was playing to the gallery, and was doing it for electioneering purposes. I have listened to many members in this House making speeches and playing to the gallery, but I think the hon. member for Dalby is the best actor in playing to the gallery, more especially when it is crowded with ladies. (Opposition laughter.) As to the charge that this is electioneering, I remember a case in which the hon. member took a course that very few members would care to take, and differed from the ruling of the Chairman of Committees, and, animated by the lofty principle that had reference to the Dalby dam, was going to divide the Committee on that ruling, and no doubt would have done so had he not got an assurance from the Premier.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What has that got to do with this motion?

Mr. BROWNE: It has nothing to do with the motion, but it has something to do with the hon. member for Dalby, who has been imputing motives to hon. members on this side of the House. I wish to point out that an hon. member who lives in a glass house—especially in a house of very thin glass—should be careful how he throws stones, and remember the number of stones that may be thrown at his house. With regard to this motion, I have always opposed the appointment of Royal Commissions. I opposed even the Mining Commission, and opposed it justly, and I say that the chief result of that commission was that there was a division of opinion—there was a very strong minority

report opposing the majority report—and whatever value there was in the commission came from that fact.

Mr. JACKSON: We got both sides, at any rate.

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, we got both sides of the case stated.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The bulk of the recommendations were unanimous.

Mr. BROWNE: I remember many years ago reading the saying of a British statesman to the effect that when you are in a difficulty as to how to shunt a question, and have no other card to play, you should appoint a Royal Commission; and that seems to be a very good idea. Personally, as far as the object of the hon. member for Bundaberg is concerned, I believe he has brought forward the motion with the very best motives, his desire being to better the condition of the people whom it will affect. I do not think he has introduced it for electioneering purposes. Considering that the biggest portion of the men referred to are in the West, that the Western electorates are represented by members on this side of the House, and that the hon. member does not aspire to represent one of those constituencies, I do not see how it can be said that he has an electioneering object in view. At the same time I agree with the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Turley, that one of the best ways to remove the evils complained of would be to amend the Factories Act, and then extend its operation to shearing-sheds and sugar plantations. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg as to the way in which the sleeping accommodation in shearing-sheds is looked after in New Zealand, I would point out that that is owing to the fact that shearing-sheds are included in the Act there.

Mr. GLASSY: They have a special Act.

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, they have a special Act, but it is on the same lines as the Factories Act. I am very sorry at any time to oppose a motion of this sort, but at the same time, for the reasons I have given, I shall vote against this motion, even though it has been introduced by my old friend and colleague, the hon. member for Bundaberg.

* Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I am going to oppose this motion brought forward by the hon. member for Bundaberg, not because it is not desirable to get the fullest particulars with respect to the conditions surrounding the daily life of the persons working in woolsheds, shearing-sheds, boiling-down establishments, meat-works, on sugar plantations, and in other industries of the colony where a large number of our population are employed; but because I do not believe that the best possible way of obtaining the information required is by the appointment of a Royal Commission. I do not believe in Royal Commissions at all. There are commissions and commissions; some commissions have done good, and have been instrumental in placing in the possession of the people of the colony accurate information which has been of use to them and to legislators in promoting legislation, but there have been other commissions which have not justified their appointment. They are very often the result of political dodgery, and have been appointed for the purpose of consoling disappointed political followers who have not succeeded in obtaining a portfolio, and have therefore to be placated in some way. The work done by such commissions has not been well done. The members of the commissions have had no heart in the work, and they have not justified their appointment. Such commissions are a waste of public time and public money, and merely defer legislation which, perhaps, is urgently required, and, instead of assisting it forward, assist in keeping it back. I believe it is possible to alter the conditions

surrounding the daily life of the shearers, rouseabouts, workers on plantations, workers in meat-works and boiling-down establishments, and the workers in all those grooves in those industries which now form so great a part of the work of Queensland, by applying the provisions of the Factories Act, or an amended Factories Act, to it. I was in Bundaberg some time ago, and visited a sugar-works there in company with the hon. member for Bundaberg and several other gentlemen who were in the district at the time. We noticed the conditions under which many of the men were working in that mill. In the upper gallery there was a large number of men working; at the door, looking in at them, they appeared like phantoms moving about in the thick smoke or steam that filled the atmosphere. They were barely visible at times. Some were stripped absolutely bare, except for a small loin-cloth. The heat was intense, probably not as intense as it is in some of the mines on Charters Towers in the height of summer, but still intense enough to make it desirable that the best possible means should be adopted to ventilate the building. I believe that the extension of the provisions of the Factories Act to that mill would have a good result to the men employed in it, which would result again in increased energy being put forth by the men and in increased results to the employers of the men. Then, again, there are meatworks, where men work on the premises and sleep on the premises, where the accommodation is not altogether too good—not as good, at all events, as it might be; not as good as it can be made by humane legislation, or as good as it is in the sister colony of New Zealand. That, I believe, can be remedied by the extension of the provisions of an amended and extended Factories Act. There are, as hon. members representing Western constituencies in this Chamber are aware, shearing-sheds in the colony which are models—sheds that possess excellent accommodation for the shearers engaged during the wool season; where the sanitary arrangements are as good as it is possible to make them; where nearly all the conditions have been made as humane as possible by a humane manager; where they have already added—in some instances—libraries so that the men may improve their minds. These libraries are stocked with valuable works of all classes and descriptions. A shearing-shed like that should be a model for shearing-sheds right throughout the colony. On the other hand, there are sheds where the men have to use the water brought from a dam that comes through a wool scour; sheds where men live under conditions that savages would not live under for any length of time—where they could not live and maintain their health. It is the same in New South Wales and Victoria. I will not detain the House more than two minutes. I may say that some time ago a deputation waited on Mr. Hogue, the late Minister for Labour in New South Wales, and placed under his notice such a collection of facts dealing with the conditions surrounding the daily avocations of shearers and shed hands generally—rouseabouts and station hands generally—both permanent and casual, in the New South Wales western districts, that induced Mr. Hogue to remark that he did not think such an extraordinary state of affairs could have existed for so long a time and not have attention drawn to it. He promised that legislation dealing with the matter should be introduced next session. I saw Mr. Hogue, and he promised to send me a copy of the Bill which it was the intention of his Government to introduce; but the Government were defeated, and, of course, the thing went no further. There is an urgent necessity in this colony, as there is in the other colonies, for the conditions which surround the daily life of

permanent station hands to be improved. We might do it without a Royal Commission consisting of political appointees, who will scour the colony from one end to the other at great public expense, and great expense of time, for the purpose of gathering information now in the possession of members of this Assembly. Therefore I say that is not the right way to bring about the reforms of which the hon. member for Bundaberg is so earnestly desirous, but of which he is no more earnestly desirous than other hon. members on this side of the House, and, I believe, hon. members on the other side. What I suggest is that next session an Amending Act should be introduced by the Government to apply the provisions of the Factories Act to stations, meat-works, sugar-mills, and such other places throughout the colony that employ large numbers of men, either permanently or casually, the whole year round, and who have to work under conditions that are injurious to their general health and injurious to them both morally and physically.

Mr. FITZGERALD (*Mitchell*): I did not intend to speak on this question until the hon. member for Clermont got up and suggested a way out of the difficulty would be to bring in an amended Factories Act. I just want to point out as a fact that, according to the present Factories Act, shearing-sheds are excluded. Suppose they are included, it would come to exactly the same thing. At present at Longreach, Clermont, and other Western districts the Act does not apply, and the hon. member knows that perfectly well.

Mr. LESINA: I know it does not.

Mr. FITZGERALD: It all depends on the Governor in Council whether he will apply that Act to Longreach, Clermont, Rockhampton, or Brisbane.

Mr. LESINA: If the Government are sympathetic they will.

Mr. FITZGERALD: The most sympathetic Government in the world will not apply the Factories Act to these places, where stations are fifty miles apart. That is the difficulty I want to point out to the hon. gentleman; but he cannot see that even if the Act did apply to shearing-sheds the Home Secretary for the time being, whoever he might be—whether he was from this side of the House or the other—could not possibly apply the workings of the Act to the whole of the districts there.

Mr. LESINA: They do it in New Zealand.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Just so; but there they have special legislation. That special legislation does not come under the Factories Act at all.

Mr. LESINA: Let us have that Act.

Mr. FITZGERALD: The hon. gentleman is opposing the hon. member for Bundaberg's motion.

Mr. GLASSEY: On personal grounds.

Mr. FITZGERALD: I do not know whether it is personal or not.

Mr. GLASSEY: Purely personal.

Mr. FITZGERALD: I do not know. He ought to support it.

Mr. GLASSEY: He is opposing it on purely personal grounds, as I can show.

Mr. FITZGERALD: I think every member on this side ought to vote for the motion.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*): I cannot see my way—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: It is 6 o'clock.

Mr. COWLEY: We want a division.

Mr. HARDACRE: You will not get a vote if you go on.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Very well.

Mr. McDONALD (*Finders*): As I understand, we have suspended the Standing Orders, and the debate will come on after tea.

Mr. DAWSON: There is no private members' day.

Mr. COWLEY: The Sessional Orders do not affect this.

Mr. McDONALD: It affects this motion as well as any other motion on the paper. This is not Thursday, and this matter is coming on just the same as if it was Government business. The Government have actually given up Government time.

The HOME SECRETARY: All the afternoon.

Mr. McDONALD: What right has the Government to limit it? I maintain that this motion is one which ought to be discussed thoroughly, because it affects a very large portion of the colony. It was not my intention to speak on this matter

at all, but for the position taken up

[7 p.m.]

by the hon. member for Albert, who was under the impression that it could not be dealt with after 6 o'clock. However, I may say there is not the slightest doubt that in this motion there are many matters mentioned that want inquiring into, especially with regard to the sanitary conditions of shearing-sheds and men's huts in the West. While admitting that in a great number of cases, particularly since the unions were established in the Western part of Queensland, the conditions under which men have to live generally are much better than they were prior to the existence of those unions, still there is great room for improvement in many cases. There are many shearing-sheds which are fairly up to date, but it is not solely in the sheds where the men work that the conditions want to be altered. The sanitary and other arrangements of the places where they are compelled to live also want looking after. It is no use ignoring the fact that, year by year, quite a number of serious typhoid cases come from those places, and in the interests of the community generally those men ought to be protected. Then, again, there is the question of rations. Only a short time ago there was a very important case concerning rations supplied to the men. It was complained that the food was not fit for human consumption, and the employers immediately started to discharge the men, and it resulted in a lawsuit, which put the men to a considerable amount of trouble, though ultimately the employers were compelled to give way owing to the case having gone against them. If it was necessary, I could quote quite a number of cases where food not fit for human consumption has been supplied to men, and of the insanitary conditions under which they have to live and work. Still, I do not want anybody to understand that I think that is the general condition of the men in the Western part of Queensland. While I recognise that there are a number of places where the conditions are fairly good, I am compelled to admit that there are a large number of other places where men are housed and have to live under conditions which ought not to be tolerated. On those matters, by the appointment of a Royal Commission, a good deal of valuable information could be obtained.

* Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): I believe the appointment of such a commission as this would do a lot of good. Some persons are of opinion that many of the complaints that have been made, particularly with reference to the Western shearing-sheds, could be dealt with by the extension of the Factories Act to those places. I believe the same thing, although I know there is a difference of opinion on the subject. A Royal Commission could see for themselves the condition of those places, and their inquiries and recommendations might have the effect of impressing upon the Government the absolute necessity of extending the Act in that direction. The same thing may be said about

sugar factories. The Government, and particularly the Home Secretary, are very much to blame for not having, up to the present time, extended the provisions of the Act to sugar refineries a little outside districts where the Act is at present in operation. It has been stated by some hon. members that Royal Commissions are practically useless. I do not hold that view. Some of the Royal Commissions we have had in the colony have resulted in a great deal of good. For instance, here is the Royal Commission sitting within the last few months in Brisbane inquiring into the state of the Police Force. That Royal Commission, in my opinion, did its duty well, and has placed before the people of Queensland a lot of most valuable information; and when its recommendations are carried out, as I hope they will be, they will result in a vast improvement in our present Police Force. We have also had a Royal Commission inquiring into the working of the Government Printing Office, and a number of hon. members on this side are undoubtedly of opinion that that commission has also done a great amount of good, and that it was absolutely necessary that that commission should have been appointed in order to reorganise the establishment on better lines than those on which it has been worked hitherto. Other Royal Commissions have dealt with other important matters from time to time, and I think this proposed Royal Commission will also justify itself. In the other colonies, particularly in Victoria, some of the best legislation in existence in those colonies has been brought about by the appointment of Royal Commissions which have gathered important information upon which Acts of Parliament have been based which have had a most beneficial effect. I refer more especially to the present Victorian Factories Act. That was mainly brought about by the startling information gathered by the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the conditions under which persons engaged in factories and shops had to work in that colony. I hope hon. members will support this motion. Though I believe it might have been condensed to a certain extent, I think every matter mentioned in this motion deserves full inquiry. If we have a Royal Commission, I hope it will be a commission of practical men, who understand the question. They will, during the recess, be able to travel and see things for themselves, and when we come down here next session the Government will have a mass of information at their hands upon which to bring forward legislation, which I hope will have the effect of realising what the hon. member for Bundaberg wishes to bring about by this motion. I wish to say that I shall vote for the motion, and heartily support it.

Mr. DUNSFORD (*Charters Towers*): We always find that when hon. members object to the principle contained in a motion such as this, or to the object sought to be attained by it, they object particularly to the wording of the motion. That is generally the excuse of hon. members for not voting in favour of it. They complain that the motion contains too much, or that it does not contain sufficient; that it enters too much into particulars, or is too vague altogether in its idea. Thus, we had the Premier stating that he agreed to a part of the motion, yet, because it did not generalise, but entered too much into particulars and was too much like an instruction to the commission, he objected to it and is prepared to vote against it. It is very clear to me that the object sought to be attained by this motion is a good object. We have had frequent complaints in Queensland about the class called "nomads," and termed by one member of this House, I

think, "the dingoes of the West." We have been told that it is not good that these people should remain in their present condition, wandering about here and there, and searching, vainly sometimes, for the means of a livelihood. We know that it does not tend generally to the improvement of the human family to have a class of people of this kind in our midst. The hon. member who has brought this motion before the House seeks to improve the condition of these people, and he goes about it in the most practical way. He says there should be a Royal Commission to inquire as to what land laws we should have or in what way those we have should be amended in order to permanently settle these people on the land. Certainly, hon. members of this House can agree to that. No harm can come of it, but it means more revenue for the State as well as an improvement in the social condition of this class of men.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And probably the ruin of employers.

Mr. DUNSFORD: "The ruin of employers"! Does the Secretary for Railways advocate the continuance of a class of men wandering about, working only a portion of their time, and the rest of their time "humping bluey" and camping in the beds of creeks? Does he advocate a continuance of such a state of things? I think not. I think that upon calmer and closer consideration of the question he will see the very great evil of the existence of such a state of things. The very fact of closer settlement being brought about in the districts where the employers of these men now are would be a great good to the employers, because they would have a continuous supply of reliable—of course, we have always heard that nomads are not reliable—it would be a great advantage to the employers to have settled in their districts a class of reliable labourers willing to work. This would assist in establishing the close settlement upon the soil of a class of people who would not only be able to till their own few acres of land or enter into the pastoral industry in a comparatively small way, but would be in a position, when labour was called for, to give their labour for a fair wage, and the employer would no longer have to seek vainly for the labour he wishes to employ. The hon. member for Bundaberg goes further than that—into the necessity for improving the social conditions of the people. He points to the hard fact that at present for a large portion of their time these people are camped in the beds of rivers and creeks, on the plains, and under the canopy of Heaven. Talk about going on the land! They sleep upon the land. They have no feather beds. The hon. member wants to better their condition, and he says that, instead of inducing them to knock down their cheques at the nearest "pub" on the plain which we know is swallowed largely by these people out West, we should provide means to give these people comfortable homes. This, surely, is within the range of practical politics, and could be done! Look at what is being done in Great Britain at the present time! They are taking hold of this question; and if you go into the slums of any of the great cities you will find that the municipal authorities, who are invested now not only with administrative but almost with legislative functions, are building homes for the unemployed. They are going down to the bedrock of the lives of the people, trying to better their condition, and to make their lives less hopeless. They are putting these people into a position to assist themselves, and that is what the hon. member for Bundaberg wants to do. Is he not deserving of all

praise? Is not his motion worthy of consideration and full discussion? I think it is. When we have soldiers to shoot other people for us we look after their welfare, and we put our hands into our pockets to provide means to secure the welfare of their families. But the soldiers of industry—we have it now from the Secretary for Railways—are not even worthy of the calm consideration of the members of this House. "What will the employers do," says the hon. member, "if we provide homes and reasonable comfort for these soldiers of industry?" It is about time this legislature followed the good example set us by Great Britain, and tried to better the condition of our soldiers of industry. We can do it in this way. Here is a practical means offered, and we should accept it right away. I do not wish to make a long speech, but this House should, if possible, enter into the condition of these people. Let us for a moment consider ourselves in their place. Is it not a crying shame that hoary-headed old men who have given all their lives to labour should be walking around seeking a billet that always seems ahead of them, and which they appear never to be able to overtake? Is it not a shame that when one of these men has got his billet and has received his cheque, he should be almost compelled—we know the weakness of mankind—by his environment and circumstances, to knock down that cheque upon poison, because no means are provided by which he could go into some home? We have sailors' homes and homes of different kinds, and why should not homes be provided for these people? With the hon. member for Bundaberg, I will do anything I can to better the condition of this class of people, and I will certainly vote for the motion.

Mr. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I may say that I think the hon. member for Bundaberg has introduced this motion with a good motive—with a motive which will command the respect of hon. members on this side of the House; but I do not think there is any necessity for a Royal Commission to inquire into the questions embodied in the resolution. As far as the station employees, shearers, and others out West are concerned, I think if the Government want to do anything, they have quite sufficient information without the appointment of a Royal Commission. I have had as large experience of shearing-sheds as any member going, or any witness who could be before a Royal Commission; and as far as sanitation and accommodation in the sheds and huts are concerned, an amendment of the Factories Act will meet all requirements in this direction. I wish to give credit where credit is due; and while no doubt the men themselves have done a great deal to improve their position by forming unions, the Government have also done something in this way. There has been a great improvement in the accommodation in shearing-sheds on many stations; but there are other stations where the accommodation will always remain the same until the arm of the law forces the owners to make some improvement.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The arm of the law cannot compel them unless there is the wherewithal to do it.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: My remarks do not apply to all station-owners. Many station-owners have made genuine efforts in the direction I refer to. With regard to the settling of shearers, rouseabouts, and others on the land, I do not think any Royal Commission would know how to do that. I know the condition of most of these men, as I was one of them for many years, and I know it takes them all their time to tide over from one season to the next, and keep themselves. They have neither the time nor the means to take up

land. How could you inaugurate a method to provide the means for this? Of course, it would be a great benefit if some means could be devised of settling these men on the land. Hundreds of them would be only too glad to do so if some means were provided, but such means have not been provided. Clause 3 says—

The sleeping, cooking, and dining accommodation provided for shearers, rouseabouts, and other persons employed on stations and sugar plantations.

In this way I believe the extension of the Factories Act would apply. The hon. member for Dalby raised his ire when the matter of stations was being discussed, but, as a rule, stations owned by individuals have much better accommodation than stations owned by large syndicates and rich companies. On one station owned by the Darling Downs Pastoral Company, in which I believe the hon. member or his family are interested—Westlands—the accommodation is simply scandalous; the hon. member for Barcoo can bear me out in that.

Mr. KERR: Yes.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: The accommodation there is not fit for pigs, and only the strong arm of the law can compel the owners to make better accommodation. Clause 5 reads—

The means (if any) now provided for mental improvement and recreation of persons employed on stations and sugar plantations, especially where a considerable number of white men are usually employed.

I will give the Government credit for this: That they have done and are doing a good deal by establishing libraries on stations. The men themselves subscribe for this and the Government give 10s. for every £1 subscribed. Many station-owners have fallen in with the men in this matter, and they have erected reading-rooms, which are much appreciated. One such library has been established in my own electorate, which is near the border of South Australia. I went to the Education Department, and I had no trouble in getting the 10s. in the £1, and I give the Government credit for what they have done in this direction. It is not right to expect the Government to do everything. If the men like to put their hands in their pockets and assist themselves, and the Government assist them with 10s. in the £1, I think the Government are doing a very fair thing. I am going to oppose the motion, because I think a Royal Commission is unnecessary. All the ends aimed at can be gained by the extension of a certain Act of Parliament.

Question—[Mr. Glassey's motion]—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 26.

Messrs. Dawson, Glassey, Kidston, Givens, Rutledge, J. Hamilton, Leahy, McDonnell, McDonald, Stewart, Dibley, Campbell, Petrie, Mackintosh, Jenkinson, Boles, Forsyth, T. B. Cribb, Smith, Finney, Callan, Jackson, G. Thorn, Kerr, Ryland, and Dunsford.

NOES, 17.

Messrs. Philp, Dalrymple, Murray, Chataway, Cowley, Lesina, Grimes, Stodart, Lord, Stephenson, Turley, Bridges, Maxwell, Story, Bell, Toth, and W. Hamilton.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

GRATUITY TO MRS. GILL.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*): I would ask permission, owing to the regrettable [7 30 p.m.] circumstance of the illness of Mr. Groom, to move the motion standing in his name.

The SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. member that the course he proposes to follow is opposed to the practice of the House. The rule is that a Minister may move a motion which appears on the business-paper in the name of one of his colleagues; but, with that exception, and one or two others of a strictly limited application, it is the rule that a motion standing on the business-paper can only be moved by the

member in whose name it appears. There are, as hon. members are aware, peculiar circumstances in the present case, since the absence of the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba is due to illness. The hon. member for Wide Bay asks permission to move the motion standing in the name of the hon. member, Mr. Groom. The matter is one for the determination of the House. If the House takes the responsibility of departing from the rule, I can only express the hope that this case will not be made a precedent.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: It will be, though.

The SPEAKER: Am I to understand that it is the will of the House that the hon. member should proceed?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JENKINSON, in moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the following resolution:—

That an Address be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates of 1899-1900 the sum of £1,000, as a gratuity to the widow of the late Crown Solicitor, James Howard Gill—said: In the first place, on behalf of the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, in whose name this motion stands, I must express my thanks for the courtesy accorded to me by members of this House in affording an opportunity for moving the motion. I think that the circumstances in connection with the work performed by Mr. Gill are pretty well known to every member of this House. Some years ago Mr. Gill was appointed to the position of Crown Solicitor at a salary of £1,000 a year. He was then practising in Ipswich as a solicitor, his income then being about £1,300 a year. He accepted the position on account of the honour attached to it, but during the retrenchment of 1893 he suffered more than any other Civil servant, inasmuch as his salary was reduced from £1,000 to £600 at one fell swoop, and from that £600 was deducted the 10 per cent. which was deducted from the salaries of all other Civil servants, leaving him £540 a year. That meant a loss of £460 on the salary that was promised to him by the Government when the position was offered to him. I do not intend to detain the House very long over this matter, because I am anxious to proceed to a vote upon it. Altogether Mr. Gill, at the time of his regrettable death, was out of pocket, through the Government not paying him the salary they stipulated, of no less a sum than £2,000; and even supposing his salary had been the amount paid to the present Crown Solicitor—£800 a year—he still would have been at a loss of over £1,000. I therefore think the amount asked to be given as a gratuity to assist his widow and children, who have been left in destitute circumstances, is under the circumstances a modest one. During the discussion of the Estimates of the Department of Justice we heard that Mr. Gill had been a faithful servant of the Crown, that he had done excellent work in connection with his department, and that he had reduced the expenses attachable to the Crown Solicitor's department to a very large extent. We know also that the salary that is paid for similar work in the other colonies is considerably larger than that paid to Mr. Gill, although his work in this colony is equally important as the work carried on in the Crown Solicitor's departments in the other colonies. Had it not been for the application and ability shown by Mr. Gill, Queensland might, in many instances, have been cast in heavy damages in connection with law cases. I think this motion will appeal to all hon. members. It is acknowledging that Mrs. Gill has no legal claim on the colony, yet, at the same time, she has a moral claim, inasmuch as Mr. Gill, thinking that his

salary was to be a permanent one, entered into obligations which it was incumbent upon him as an honourable man to fulfil, and that is the reason why the appeal is being made for the granting of this gratuity. The obligations thus cast upon him, and which remain to the present as a burden on the family, have reduced them to such an extent that they are not able to meet them. I think, under the circumstances, that the House can, as a moral obligation, grant a very modest sum for the widow and the children of the late Crown Solicitor, and I have much pleasure in moving the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom.

Mr. COWLEY (*Herbert*): I would remind the hon. member that he has read only the first part of the motion, and it is utterly impossible for the House to deal with the motion unless it is moved. I therefore rise to a point of order as to whether it is not absolutely necessary for the hon. member to move the motion in its entirety.

The SPEAKER: I understood the hon. member to do so. I assume that if he did not do so he will do so now.

Mr. JENKINSON: I was under the impression that I had done so, and I beg to apologise. I beg to move therefore—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolution:—

That an Address be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates of 1898-1900 the sum of £1,000, as a gratuity to the widow of the late Crown Solicitor, James Howard Gill.

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): I must admit that there are exceptional circumstances connected with the late Mr. Gill. I understand that he was engaged by a past Government at a salary of £1,000 a year, and that he gave up his practice in Ipswich, where he was making a much larger sum. Through the retrenchment, unfortunately, we had to cut down salaries, and Mr. Gill had £400 a year taken off and 10 per cent. taken off what was left to him. The Government, when times got better, raised the salary again to £800 a year, but unfortunately Mr. Gill's death took place, and he never enjoyed the larger salary. It was only this year that we put £800 on the Estimates for the Crown Solicitor, and Mr. Gill died shortly afterwards. If this sum is reduced from £1,000 to £800—which is one year's salary at the present rate—I shall not oppose the motion.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I am rather surprised to hear that the Government are going to accept this motion. I remember occasions within the last few years when sums of only £100 were asked for unfortunate widows whose husbands lost their lives in the service of the State. The Government strenuously opposed those motions, and would not allow them to be granted. Now, it comes upon me as a strange thing that whenever it is a case of a highly paid Civil servant people have only to come to this House and it is the easiest thing in the world to get assistance; but the unfortunate widow whose husband was merely a hardworking man in the service of the State, with very low salary, has to make her way in the world the best way she can. I think it is time we should have the line drawn as to where this matter is going to end. I think it is about time, if this sort of thing is to be allowed to go on, that we should go in for old age pensions, and that everybody should be treated on an equality. Under the present haphazard system it is only those who are in favour with a number of members of the House that can get anything. If people are not able to pull the wires and have no influence, they get nothing. Probably before the session is finished there will

be other matters of a similar nature, and what are we going to do then? Is there to be a batch of similar applications made on behalf of the relatives of other highly paid servants of the State or other persons who have been ill-treated for gratuities of this kind? It was only the other day that I was approached in connection with a case of this kind, and I refused to have anything to do with the matter. I think that if these motions are going to be brought down, and the Government are going to lend an ear to them, there is going to be no end to the applications that will be made, and I am sorry that the Government should have taken this matter up. There is another case existing where £1,000 was paid to a certain individual, and one time when there was a motion likely to be carried in the House stopping the amount received by that gentleman it was then given out that he was dying, that he could only live another two or three days, and that it might be allowed to pass. The feeling of sympathy caught on with hon. members, and the motion was withdrawn. That was about four or five years ago, and the amount has been drawn continuously ever since. I think this is not fair. If we are going to treat Civil servants like this, as has been stated over and over again in this House, I think the best thing the Government can do is to come down with an old age pension scheme; and in the case of Civil servants, at any rate, there should be a system of State life assurance which they should have an opportunity of joining on the best possible terms, and, if they do not like to make provision for themselves when the opportunity is afforded, let them take the consequences.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): I do not think it is worth while wasting time over this motion at the present time. This is merely a motion to go into committee, and when we are in committee those hon. members who do not approve of the motion can state their reasons, and vote against it if they like.

Mr. McDONALD: Why not deal with it now and have done with it?

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 37.

Messrs. Philp, Rutledge, Dalrymple, O'Connell, Bell, Murray, Glassey, Finney, Cowley, Macdonald-Paterson, G. Thorn, Dickson, T. B. Cribb, Plunkett, Leahy, Callan, Smith, Kidston, Fitzgerald, Forsyth, Jenkinson, Tooth, Forrest, Mackintosh, Stephens, Ryland, Petrie, Turley, Campbell, Stephenson, Stodart, Anncar, Lord, Story, Grimes, J. Hamilton, and Givens.

NOES, 10.

Messrs. Stewart, Lesina, W. Hamilton, Maxwell, Kerr, Bridges, Boles, Dunsford, McDonald, and McDonnell.

Resolved in the affirmative.

INQUIRY INTO CONDUCT OF MR. CHESTER.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*), in moving—

That there be laid on the table of the House copies of all the papers and correspondence between the Home Secretary's Department and the Clermont Progress Association, and all other persons and institutions, with reference to the necessity for holding an official inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Chester, warden and police magistrate at Clermont—

said: I merely content myself with moving this motion as it stands. There is no necessity to make a speech. I simply submit it to the House.

Question put and passed.

MOUNT MORGAN GAS, ETC., BILL.

RECOMMITTAL.

[8 p.m.] Clauses 1 to 12, inclusive, put and passed.

Clause 13 passed with a verbal amendment.

Clauses 14 to 43, inclusive, and preamble put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment, and the third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ENTERTAINMENT OF VISITORS.

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

That there be laid upon the table of the House a full and detailed account of the various disbursements connected with the entertainment of visitors during the twelve months commencing 1st July, 1898, and ending 30th June, 1899.

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 18.

Messrs. Lesina, Stewart, McDonnell, McDonald, Boles, Turley, Fitzgerald, W. Hamilton, Jenkinson, Maxwell, Dibley, Kidston, Jackson, Givens, Kerr, Hardeare, Dunsford, and Ryland.

NOES, 29.

Messrs. Philp, Chataway, Rutledge, Dickson, Murray, O'Connell, J. Hamilton, Callan, Cowley, Dalrymple, Leahy, T. B. Cribb, Glassey, Campbell, Lord, Smith, Stephenson, Forsyth, Mackintosh, Forrest, Tooth, Petrie, Finney, Aunear, Bridges, Story, Stodart, and Grimes.

Question resolved in the negative.

LEGITIMATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*): I rise with a certain amount of diffidence to move the second reading of this Bill. It is a measure which has passed through the mill in the other Chamber, and is now submitted to this Chamber for its approval. I feel sure the provisions of the Bill will commend themselves to every member of this House. That they are reasonable, just, and humane, I firmly believe; and besides it is a law that has been badly wanted in this colony. There is nothing new about it. It is in force in many of the other colonies. I would like to point out that the Hon. Mr. Macpherson, who introduced the Bill in another place, submitted it to the Chief Justice, who was distinctly in favour of it and approved it. It is drafted on the lines of the Bill that passed the Assembly in New Zealand, although it appears before this Chamber in a slightly altered form, and, to my mind, in better language. It is common law at the present time. Similar measures to this have been placed on the statute-books in France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Holland, Jersey, Guernsey, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Demarara, Berbice, the Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, Mauritius, Lower Canada, and also in the States of Vermont, Maryland, Virginia, Idaho, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Illinois, and Massachusetts. It has been the law in Scotland for many years; it is so, also, in many parts of the continent of Europe. Since 1894 it has been the law of New Zealand, and last year it was successfully piloted through the Houses of Parliament in South Australia. The principal item in the Bill is contained in clause 3, which provides that—

Any child born before the marriage of his or her parents (and whether before or after the passing of this Act), whose parents have intermarried, or shall hereafter intermarry, shall be deemed on the registration of such child as hereinafter provided to have been legitimated by such marriage from birth, and shall be entitled to all the rights of a child born in wedlock.

We know that unfortunately many women become mothers through ignorance, and sometimes they are led astray; and to my mind it appears almost inhuman that, if the father and the mother subsequently agree to marry, their child should be deprived of the rights he or she would otherwise have, had it been born in wedlock. This Bill provides for the legitimation of such children as that. I understand there is a lot of other business on the paper which hon. members are anxious to get at; therefore, although I am particularly anxious to speak

further on this matter, I shall curtail my remarks, so that we may have an opportunity of getting into committee to discuss it. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. FITZGERALD (*Mitchell*): I do not wish to prolong the debate on this Bill. I thoroughly agree with its main principle, and I think the House will also. But I wish to draw attention to clause 6, in which a very important question of principle crops up. That clause provides that—

Nothing in this Act shall have the effect of legitimating any child if at the time of the birth of such child there existed any legal impediment to the intermarriage of the parents of such child.

Personally I would rather see that clause wiped out altogether. Why, because at the time a child is born, there happens to be some legal impediment to the marriage of the parents, although they marry in after years—why should not that child be legitimised when other children can? I should like to hear some argument on that point. It is our experience almost every day, especially in the Western districts, to find that a woman has been deserted by her husband—he has cleared out from her to New Zealand or elsewhere, and nothing more is heard about him. The wife cannot prove more than desertion, and consequently she cannot get a divorce. Some other man comes along, enters into an alliance with her, acts as a real parent to her children, and is a good husband to her, although they cannot go through the legal formality of marriage. Perhaps years afterwards the man in New Zealand may die. There are children born of the combination, if I may call it so, of two persons who could not before legally marry. The parents get married, but those children can never be legitimised on account of this clause 6.

Mr. JENKINSON: It is one of the safeguards of the Bill.

Mr. FITZGERALD: I wish the hon. member had explained the matter. I know that the

hon. member who has moved the [8:30 p.m.] second reading of the Bill has done so in substitution for another hon. member, but I should like to have heard some argument upon this question. I intend to raise the question in committee, whether clause 6 should not be wiped out altogether, but whether it is or not I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

* The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Marawaia*): This Bill comes to us from the other Chamber. It was introduced there by a gentleman who has been instrumental in bringing about several very useful amendments in our law.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I regard the fact of his having introduced the Bill in another place as being a guarantee or a certificate upon which hon. members may feel justified in acting in this case. It is unfortunate, I think, that the Bill should have come on at so late a period of the session, and it is also unfortunate that the Bill has not been subjected to the scrutiny of the Parliamentary Draftsman.

Mr. JENKINSON: The Chief Justice is equal to the Parliamentary Draftsman.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have myself been so extremely busy during the last three months that I have not been able to scrutinise it. I have glanced hastily through it; and from the very hasty consideration I have been able to give it, it seems to me to be all right. At the same time, I think it is a principle which ought to be regarded as one which ought to be observed in the case of every Bill brought in—that it should pass through the hands of the Parliamentary Draftsman, and should receive his imprimatur. If

he is not the officer who actually drafts a Bill, he ought, I think, to be consulted before it is introduced. I am not able, at the present time, to put my finger upon anything which I can say is a flaw in this Bill, but that is not equal to saying that no such flaw exists. The Bill introduces a very radical change in our existing law, but it is a change with which I am in entire sympathy. I believe it is a very cruel thing indeed upon persons who have been born under conditions which no longer exist, that they should not only have a social ban placed upon them, but that they should be proscribed, so far as our law can proscribe them, so as to prevent them participating in the benefits of property that may have been left by the father or mother, as the case may be. The Bill is retrospective, and necessarily so, because it would be obviously unfair that one class of persons in that unfortunate condition should be recognised by the community, and another class, simply because the accident of their birth occurred before the passing of this Bill, should be in an entirely different position. So far as that goes, I think the Bill must necessarily be retrospective. The only want of clearness I had in regard to the Bill was as to section 5, which provides—

Nothing in this Act shall affect any estate, right, or interest in any real or personal property to which any person has become or may become entitled, either mediately or immediately in possession, or expectancy by virtue of any disposition made before the passing of this Act, or by virtue of any devolution by law on the death of any person dying before the passing of this Act.

I was not clear as to whether that section covered every conceivable case.

Mr. LEAHY: No. You must have some finality. You must commence somewhere.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There must be some finality. As I have said, I have not been able to so scrutinise the Bill as to enable me to say with certainty whether that does cover every case, so as to prevent any trouble arising through interference with the condition of things, say in connection with the distribution of property in intestate estates, that has occurred before the passing of the Bill—whether, though the section does provide that the passing of this Bill shall not “affect any estate, right, or interest in any real or personal property,” it is sufficient to cover the whole case. If those words are sufficient, not merely to cover the status of persons who are or have been entitled under the existing law, but to cover the extent of the interest, it is all right. I am at present disposed to think the words do meet the whole case. I do not feel justified in raising a doubt as to the construction of words which appear to me, as they stand, to meet the whole case. If they do, I do not personally see any reason why the Bill should not pass. Although, in the case of any alteration of the law of this radical character, it is always desirable that we should have plenty of time to think what we are doing, and make sure that what we are doing we are doing properly. I do not see anything to object to in section 6, of which the hon. member for Mitchell has complained. I think it would be very mischievous indeed to permit, in the case of the offspring of persons who intermarried in the past, when there was a legal obstacle existing to such intermarriage, that they should be able to come in and claim to be legitimate children. I therefore think clause 6 a very proper clause to have inserted in the Bill, as it removes all possibility of falling into any error on that subject. Speaking for myself, the Bill seems to me to be a Bill that it is really desirable that the House should adopt, and the change in the law proposed to be effected by it is one which, I think, ought to be established in every British community.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS; Hear, hear!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I understood the hon. member for Wide Bay to say that the Bill had been scrutinised by the Chief Justice.

Mr. JENKINSON: And altered and improved by him.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If that is so—and I accept the hon. member's statement—if the Bill has passed through the hands of the Chief Justice and satisfies him, it ought to be quite sufficient to satisfy me and other hon. members of this House.

Mr. JENKINSON, in reply: I do not intend to detain the House long. I wish to explain to the Attorney-General and to the House that when the Bill was drafted there had been no Parliamentary Draftsman appointed, and therefore it was submitted to the Chief Justice, and it comes here with his approval. With regard to the objection raised by the hon. member for Mitchell in connection with clause 6, I point out that it simply brings the law into line with Scotch law, canon law, civil law, and also with the Code Napoleon. It does not recognise any children of adultery, and to my mind rightly so. Those objections made against the Bill have not, I think, very much weight. When we get into committee on the Bill, no doubt we will discuss the matter mentioned by the hon. member for Mitchell in further detail.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 4, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 5—“Certain estates, rights, or interests not affected”—

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): This was a very far-reaching Bill, and they should have the distinct assurance that it would not interfere with the succession to property. While it was very desirable to improve the condition of illegitimate children, they should be very careful not to interfere with the position of children born in lawful wedlock.

Mr. JENKINSON agreed with the Chief Secretary, but he did not think any words could be plainer than those at the commencement of the clause—“Nothing in this Act shall affect any estate, right, or interest,” etc. The utmost care had been taken in drafting the Bill, and the clause would not have the effect the hon. gentleman feared. He had the assurance of the Chief Justice and Mr. Macpherson that it would have no such effect.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I want a legal assurance.

Mr. JENKINSON: Well, the opinion of the Chief Justice and Mr. Macpherson ought to be enough.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are not here.

Mr. JENKINSON: He had the authority of Mr. Macpherson for saying that what he said was correct. He would not wilfully mislead the Committee.

Mr. LEAHY (*Bullo*) suggested that the clause be postponed till the next day, and in the meantime the effect of it could be ascertained.

Mr. FINNEY (*Toowong*): Seeing that this was the universal law, there should be no difficulty about the passage of the clause, which was a very good one. The old law was most cruel in this respect, and it was wrong that illegitimate children should be made to suffer.

Mr. LEAHY: It is no fault of these children.

Mr. FINNEY: No; and he thought this was a very humane law. Under it, these children would not suffer as they had done under the present law.

Mr. JENKINSON: The clause was exactly the same as the wording of the New Zealand clause, which had had the scrutiny of legal gentlemen in that colony; and he had indicated that

this Bill had passed through the hands of high legal gentlemen in this colony. Furthermore, the Bill had been in the hands of hon. members since the 10th November, so there had been plenty of time to consider it.

Mr. COWLEY (*Herbert*): Supposing there were five children, and the first was illegitimate, the father was dead and had left a considerable amount of property not divided—by the passing of the Bill would the illegitimate child share with the other four?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He understood the object of the Bill was to prevent the illegitimate child interfering with the rights of the other four children mentioned by the hon. member.

Mr. FINNEY asked the Attorney-General if an illegitimate child, afterwards legitimised, would have any right to share with the four other children born in wedlock?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No. By will a man might do so. If the will had been made prior to the passing of this Act only legitimate children would receive under the Bill; but if the will was made after the passing of the Act, then the legitimate children would share equally with the others.

Mr. COWLEY: That was not the point. If the father died intestate, and no division was made, would the illegitimate children share equally with those born in wedlock? They should deal justly and fairly with all.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Under clause 5, if the death took place before the passing of the Act, the distribution to the next-of-kin would take place under the existing law; but if it took place after the passing of the Act, the distribution would include the illegitimate children as well as those born in wedlock.

Mr. LEAHY: How will it be if the estate is in process of distribution?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In a case where the distribution of an intestate estate had occurred before the passing of the Act the existing law would prevail.

Mr. COWLEY thought it a very unfortunate thing that provision could not be made for the case he mentioned.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There were a good many reasons why that could not be done. It would have the effect of upsetting a good many things. It might have the effect of upsetting distributions of shares that had taken place. If the hon. member's suggestion were adopted, half-a-dozen new next-of-kin might possibly be admitted, and although an estate might have been completely distributed, yet the whole process would have to be gone over *de novo*. The provision seemed absolutely indispensable in order to preserve existing rights.

Mr. FITZGERALD knew of an unfortunate case in which, before the marriage of the parents, there had been one child, and afterwards four or five more. If there was no limit fixed by the Bill, the eldest child could have the whole matter of the distribution of the estate reopened. They must have some starting point, and he really thought that clause 5 was very clear.

Mr. COWLEY thoroughly understood the position, but it seemed to him that, where the estate had not been divided, it would be a very unfortunate thing if all the children did not share alike.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 6—"Limit to legitimisation"—

Mr. FITZGERALD: If they had more time at their disposal he would endeavour to have that clause expunged from the Bill. There were frequent cases in which women were deserted by their husbands, and after the lapse of years they lived with other men without going through the form of marriage. In the course of time the

scamp who had deserted the woman died, yet the children born to that woman could not be legitimised under the Bill. He saw no reason why children born out of wedlock in such cases should not be legitimised. It was a very important question, and he was sorry that there was not more time to discuss it.

Mr. JENKINSON: It would be admitted by everyone that a start must be made somewhere. Although some grievances would continue to exist, yet if that clause were struck out innumerable difficulties would crop up. The Committee would do well by passing the clause as it stood.

Clause put and passed.

Schedule put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on Mr. [9 p.m.] McDonnell's motion—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the regulations dealing with grammar school scholarships should be so framed as to provide—

1. That such scholarships should be open to the competition of the youth of both sexes irrespective of where educated in the colony.

2. That, if so desired by successful competitors, such scholarships should be enjoyed at such schools or colleges, other than grammar schools, as may be approved of by the Department of Public Instruction—

Mr. GRIMES (*Oxley*): I regret very much that any arrangement has been come to by the Premier that this important question should go to a division to-night. I look upon this as one of the most important questions we have had before us for consideration this session, and its influence and effect—if carried, and if carried out—will be very far-reaching. Our educational system has provided for these grammar school scholarships, and they are termed grammar school scholarships in the Education Act.

Mr. LEAHY: Can you tell us what portion of the Act?

Mr. GRIMES: The hon. member for Bulloo is very fond of interjecting. I shall not reply to his interjections, and if he interrupts I shall claim the support of the Speaker.

Mr. LEAHY: State facts.

Mr. GRIMES: I am going to state facts, and the hon. gentleman's interjections and interruptions will only make me longer in my address.

Mr. LEAHY: That would be an advantage, I should say.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GRIMES: The Education Act provides for these scholarships to our grammar schools.

Mr. FITZGERALD: What section?

Mr. GRIMES: If this resolution is carried and put into force, we shall have to have a different term altogether for them. They will be no longer grammar school scholarships exclusively. There will be provision made, or there may be provision made, for those boys who have shown by their merit—by examinations—that they are worthy of assistance in their higher education being sent to any school there is in the colony or out of the colony.

Mr. BOLES: Why not?

Mr. GRIMES: We have schools that are supported by almost every denomination. There is the Wesleyan, there is the Congregationalist, and there are other denominations; and, of course, they will seek to have these boys sent to those schools if they so desire. Perhaps it is not known to many hon. members present that there

was left us, as a legacy from the New South Wales Parliament, what was called "State aid to religion." £1,000 was voted every year, to be divided amongst the ministers of the gospel who chose to remain in Queensland and preach the gospel, and they received £100 a year each as long as they so remained and preached. One of the first Bills, I believe, that was introduced into the Queensland Legislature was one to abolish this State aid to religion, and that Bill passed through the legislature almost unanimously. It was provided that those who were the recipients of this salary, as long as they remained in Queensland, should have it; and I think there is only one now left that is in receipt of the salary. That has been looked upon with approval by the residents of Queensland. Now this resolution, if carried and put into force, will have the effect of in some measure nullifying the principle that was in that abolition Bill, and will be the thin end of the wedge to give State aid to religion.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Not at all! Oh! (Laughter.)

Mr. GRIMES: Which I believe is not desired by the people of Queensland. There were at one time what were called "non-vested" schools in Queensland, which received Government aid; but the legislature took the matter up at the request of the people, and, after the question had been thrashed out at elections, did away with State aid to these non-vested schools. If this resolution is passed it will mean the re-establishment of this principle in a small way. As I said in reference to State-aided religion, it will be the thin end of the wedge of the reintroduction of denominational schools.

Mr. LESINA: That is a bogey.

Mr. GRIMES: I strongly protest against this resolution being carried at the end of the session, when we are probably not in a fit state to properly discuss it, and when there is no time for proper discussion. A simple resolution passed in this Chamber will put it in the power of the Ministry to carry it out by simple regulation—a procedure which is entirely opposed to the procedure adopted in regard to ordinary legislation. The Bill for the abolition of State aid to religion passed its first and second readings, passed through its committee stage, and its third reading here, and was then sent to the other House, where the same procedure was followed. The other Bill I alluded to was dealt with in exactly the same way, giving ample time and ample opportunity for a thorough discussion of the question before it became law. Now, if this resolution is carried, it does not give the same opportunity for a thorough discussion, and for it to be looked at in all its bearings. This resolution, as hon. members know, will not be sent to the other Chamber for their concurrence. It will simply be passed by this branch of the legislature, and then I suppose the Government of the day will feel justified in making regulations to give effect to it. I do not think that is a fair thing, and, depend upon it, if the resolution does pass in this Chamber in its present form, and is given effect to, there will be a hue-and-cry amongst the general public about it. The first part of the resolution I have not so much objection to—that is with reference to scholarships being "open to the competition of the youth of both sexes irrespective of where educated in the colony." There cannot be a great deal of objection to that. But I have certainly a very strong objection to the 2nd paragraph. It is a parcel carefully wrapped up so that the contents may be concealed.

Mr. BOLES: You can see through it.

Mr. GRIMES: I dare say I can see through it. Those who have been in the colony as long as I have, and who have watched the struggle that has been going on for the last twenty-six or

thirty years with reference to this question, will also see through it; and they certainly will not look upon it in a very favourable light. To make this resolution palatable, it has been attempted to be shown that the boys who win these scholarships will be able to go to schools other than grammar schools. If they are inclined for agriculture, they can go to the Agricultural College at Gatton. If they have an inclination for mining, they can attend a school of mines, or they can go to a technical college. I should have no objection to that. My objection to this 2nd paragraph is that it proposes to reintroduce State aid to religion, and assistance to a denominational system of education. I have no desire to see our secular system of education interfered with in any way whatever.

Mr. BOLES: You take a very bigoted view of it.

Mr. GRIMES: I am not taking a very narrow view of it. This resolution may be amended in such a way as to allow boys to follow the natural bent of their inclination, and go to an agricultural college, to a school of mines, or to a technical college, or to other places, and it is my purpose to move an amendment that will enable them so to do, and yet prevent the reintroduction of a system which the people have declared against.

Mr. MAXWELL: Let us take a vote, and see if we declare against it.

Mr. GRIMES: I have no desire to stonewall the resolution, but I felt it was imperative that I should raise my voice in protest against the resolution being carried in this way, and I have no hesitation in saying that if the Premier takes this matter up, and carries it through, he will find serious difficulty hereafter with reference to it.

Mr. MAXWELL: It means the downfall of the Government.

Mr. LEAHY: You will find the serious difficulty—not the Premier.

Mr. GRIMES: I am not afraid of the consequences of my action this evening.

Mr. TURLEY: You must not threaten.

Mr. GRIMES: In the 2nd paragraph I move the insertion after the word "such" of the words "State-aided." It will then read—

That, if so desired by successful competitors, such scholarships should be enjoyed at such "State-aided" schools or colleges, other than grammar schools, as may be approved of by the Department of Public Instruction.

* Mr. T. B. CRIBB (*Ipswich*): I know that I am taking rather an unusual course in speaking when seconding the amendment. I would have preferred if some other hon. member had seconded the amendment so as to give me a freer hand. It is a subject of great importance, and there is a great deal in what the hon. member for Oxley has said. I do not think that it is necessary at present to introduce the question of religion. I look at it in this light: We have a State system of primary education, and we have a system of secondary education which is endowed by the State. I admit that that secondary system is not as perfect as it might be. It especially requires to be brought more under the control of the Government, when the State would receive a larger return in proportion to the amount which it contributes towards the support of these secondary schools. When the scholarships were initiated it was considered that those pupils who had shown their efficiency and who had received their primary education in a State school should be awarded scholarships equal to the fees charged for secondary education, so that secondary as well as primary education might be provided by the State. It has also lately been proposed that we should endow a university, so that more facilities should be given to the youths of the colony to get a

higher as well as secondary education free. I do not think we should give scholarships to pupils to go to schools which are in competition with the schools provided by the State. That is a very great objection to the motion as proposed. I do not see why the Government should be called upon to contribute extra money to educate pupils in other schools, when the Government themselves have provided or endowed the necessary schools to give the required education. It would be better that we should enlarge our grammar school scholarships, so that free secondary education might be given to a larger number of pupils. Some members have argued that scholars who win university exhibitions are entitled to go to various universities—to Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, or other universities. I admit that, but it must be borne in mind that we have no university in Queensland. I think hon. members will agree with me that if we had a State-endowed university in Queensland we would first of all seek to build up that university by sending the pupils who won exhibitions to our own university. If, after we had succeeded in establishing a university in Queensland, it was thought desirable to give the youths of the colony an opportunity of getting in any other place an education beyond that which the colony could afford, I should not object to exhibitions which would have the effect of allowing youths to go to Great Britain, or America, or the Continent of Europe, or wherever they could obtain the particular education they desired. I think hon. members should look at the matter in this light, that it is far better that we should seek to build up an efficient system of our own, than to minimise the value of that system by encouraging competition with our own schools. On that account I second the amendment moved by the hon. member for Oxley. I should have preferred to see the words "other than grammar schools" omitted, so that the motion might read "at such State-aided schools or colleges as may be approved of by the Department of Public Instruction," but I have no objection to those words remaining in the motion.

* Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): I may say at once that I do not intend to accept this amendment. It is meant to carry on exactly the system to which I object at the present time. I brought forward this motion because it is considered that in Queensland at the present time there are a very large number of persons who are deprived of taking advantage of secondary education scholarships, owing to the fact that the only State-aided schools in the colony where secondary education can be received are our grammar schools. No man, however, can claim that our grammar schools are really State schools, or that our secondary education is a State system. Undoubtedly our primary education system is a State system, and I for one would not attempt to interfere with it, and this motion does not affect that system in the slightest degree. At the present time we have practically no control over our grammar schools.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB: We have passed a resolution to amend that.

Mr. McDONNELL: We have passed a resolution simply for the purpose of having those schools inspected, but that resolution may never be carried out. The fact of the matter is our grammar schools are not State schools, for we have no control over them, although we pay them £1,000 a year in the shape of endowment. I deny altogether that I ask for State aid to denominational schools, and I am surprised that any member of this House should get up and make such a statement. I am surprised that any hon. member should speak in the terms the hon. member for Oxley has employed

to-night. This motion does not provide for any school; it simply asks the House to provide that certain prizes now offered to pupils by the State shall be made wider and broader, and that the competition for them shall be open to every boy and girl in Queensland, and that when a boy or girl has succeeded in winning one of those prizes he or she shall have the right to take out that prize at any scholastic institution they may choose, so long as that institution is approved of by the Department of Public Instruction.

Mr. LEAHY: The department controls the whole thing.

Mr. McDONNELL: Of course; there is a check in the hands of the department, as it is left to them to approve of the schools in which scholarship pupils shall obtain their secondary education. The hon. member for Ipswich referred to the fact that our university exhibitions can be taken out in any university, and that is quite correct. Not only can they be taken out at any university, but they can be taken out at

[9:30 p.m.] any college which is affiliated with any of the universities. A scholar who wins a scholarship can go to a Presbyterian, or the Wesleyan, or a Roman Catholic college if it is affiliated with any of the universities.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB: But we have no university.

Mr. McDONNELL: Possibly if we had a university the scholarships would be confined to our own university; but I should like to point out that in the southern colonies every high school which is giving an efficient secondary education is affiliated with the southern universities. St. John's College, in Melbourne, which is the Roman Catholic College, the Presbyterian College, the Wesleyan College, and other colleges are affiliated with the Melbourne University. The same thing obtains in Sydney; and if we had a university in Queensland at present, secondary schools other than grammar schools that are providing secondary education would undoubtedly become affiliated with it; and the scholarships, the same as obtains in the southern colonies, could be taken out at those universities. We give thirty-four scholarships in Queensland at present. That is the number provided for in this year's Estimates, and as there will always be a few running for past years, as there are now, they will bring the number up to between fifty and sixty. I ask that our boys and girls in this colony who are of a certain age should have a right to compete for these scholarships, and that no barrier should be thrown in their way whether they are educated at school or in their father's house, and that if they choose to take out their scholarships at one college because it is famed for being particularly efficient in one subject or another, they should not be debarred from taking them out at that school. The principle of the scholarships—the original principle of them—was that they were intended for the benefit of the scholar and the scholar only, not, as it is now, for the benefit of any institution.

Mr. LEAHY: The prize belongs to him.

Mr. McDONNELL: The prize belongs to him, and he should have the right of taking it out wherever he chooses. The hon. gentleman who moved this amendment followed out a line of argument that, as I said before, is not worthy of any hon. member of this House; because I say this, and say it at once, that it is not my intention to in any way interfere with our primary State system of education, or for one moment to introduce the vexed question of religion.

Mr. LEAHY: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONNELL: I maintain—and I challenge contradiction on this point—that neither in Queensland nor in any part of Australia, there is not what may be termed a State system of secondary education. I challenge any hon.

member to point out how this motion can in the smallest way affect our present State primary system of education. The day it comes round in Queensland, when the State will make its secondary system of education a State system, then I say it is about time to object to such a motion as this. As we have at present a system of education which is not a State system, it is our duty—and I believe the House will rise to the occasion—to do this small particle of justice, and give the boys and girls of the colony who win these scholarships, the opportunity to take them out at whatever school or college in Queensland they may choose, so long they receive the approval of the department.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): It is my intention to vote against the amendment and support the original motion, because I consider the amendment does not meet the case at all. In the electorate which I represent—Gympie—during the last four years, there have been eight grammar school scholarships won; but on account of there not being a grammar school in the town, and the parents of the children not being able to send them away, the scholars were not in the position to take advantage of them. Under the amendment they would not be in a better position; but if the original motion is carried they will be able to take advantage of the higher education which is procurable in Gympie. There, in common with many other towns, is a very good private school, which is very well conducted and well attended; but it is not endowed by the Government, and consequently it is not taken advantage of by anyone who wins a grammar school scholarship. There is also a high school for girls; and as three out of the eight winners of scholarships were girls, they would be able, under the original motion, to take advantage of it. These scholarships were not established for the benefit of the grammar schools, but the winners of them. As regards that, if this is carried, it will not be necessary to go to any particular school, and it will only be done by regulation, I am informed that matters at present in connection with our grammar schools are nearly all done by regulation. I am entirely in favour of the motion because it will widen our educational system. Children will be able to take advantage under it of our agricultural college, or our high schools, or our schools of mines. I do not see that there will be any harm done to the community even if our children can take advantage of these scholarships in a Wesleyan, Presbyterian, or Baptist college. If they want to do so, let them. I do not think the country will suffer. I am sorry the hon. member has brought in this sectarian matter. The motion does not interfere with the undenominational character of our State schools.

Mr. ANNEAR (*Maryborough*): I do not believe in giving a silent vote on this or any other question. I have never done so since I have been a member of the House. While I have been within the walls of this Chamber I have recorded my vote one way or the other; but it seems to me that there are a great many hon. members this evening who would like to say a great deal, but have not the same courage as the hon. member for Oxley had a few minutes ago.

Mr. MAXWELL: Not the same as you have yourself.

Mr. ANNEAR: I do not think the hon. member for Fortitude Valley should take any umbrage at the remarks of the hon. member for Oxley. I admire an hon. member who has the courage of his convictions, and states them in the clear and open manner that the hon. member did. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley is always very pronounced in his opinions. Why does he object to other hon. members following the same line as himself?

Mr. McDONNELL: I object if they are not correct.

Mr. ANNEAR: I oppose this motion. I believe this matter is of such an important character that it should not be brought forward in this House by a motion of this kind. It is a question in which the people of Queensland are deeply interested—

Mr. LEAHY: That is what we say.

Mr. ANNEAR: And they should have an opportunity of expressing their opinion. I am in this position—as I know other hon. members are—that when I met the electors in Maryborough in March last, they returned my colleague and myself to this Chamber, pledged to do nothing by vote to in any way disturb the present Education Act which has been in existence for so many years. This motion no doubt reads very well, and it seems to me to be very reasonable, but I take the opinion of a gentleman now no longer with us—the late T. J. Byrnes—who, on the public platform in the city of Brisbane, and also in other electorates in the colony, when the question was submitted to him, said he would do nothing to interfere with the present Education Act, being convinced that that Act is the will of the majority of the people of Queensland. I would ask: What should a member do who is pledged to his constituents that he will do nothing to disturb that Act until it is submitted at the poll to the people of the colony? Before I give my vote to disturb the present Act, I consider it is my duty to meet my constituents and place the question before them. I regret, for many reasons, that I cannot see my way to vote for the motion of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. I may say that last week I visited my constituents, and that several of them waited upon me and brought under my notice this question. They reminded me of the promises I had made to do nothing to disturb the present educational system until the electors of Maryborough had a further opportunity of expressing their opinion upon it, as they had in March last. Some hon. members say that if this motion is carried it will not in any way disturb or interfere with the present Education Act. If that is so, why leave it till the end of the session?

Mr. McDONNELL: It was brought on six weeks ago.

Mr. ANNEAR: The electors have not had an opportunity of discussing it. The hon. member must agree with me that the people look with a very jealous eye on anything that may be introduced into this Chamber which will in any way interfere with the present educational system, which has been ratified, and would be to-morrow, by a very large majority of the electors of Queensland. As I said before, I consider I should be unworthy of my place in this House, unworthy to be the representative of an electorate like Maryborough, to whom I pledged myself only ten months ago to do nothing to disturb that Act, if I voted for the motion of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley.

* Mr. LEAHY (*Bullo*): It may be safely laid down that when hon. members of the House, or persons outside it, arrive at wrong conclusions, or take up wrong positions, it frequently arises from ignorance. When the hon. member for Maryborough was making those charges in the sweeping way customary with him—

Mr. ANNEAR: What charges did I make?

Mr. LEAHY: That the adoption of this resolution would interfere with the State system of education.

Mr. ANNEAR: I said I would do nothing to interfere with the State system of education.

Mr. LEAHY: The hon. member said that if this resolution was carried, and the objects of it were put into force, it would interfere with our State system of education.

Mr. ANNEAR: I said that was the opinion of a great many outside. It is not my opinion.

Mr. LEAHY: I thought that would be the opinion of a gentleman so intelligent as the hon. member for Maryborough, and so free from prejudice. Yet, what is his position? He says he holds certain opinions, and certain of his constituents hold different opinions, and he is going to stultify his own opinions in favour of those of half-a-dozen of his electors, who do not understand the object of this resolution. That is an extraordinary position for the hon. member to take up, and no doubt when he considers the position he will withdraw from it. With regard to the hon. member for Oxley, I think he is incapable, by construction, of taking a fair view of a question of this kind. I am not prepared to say that he has not an open mind, or that he is not absolutely conscientious, but his mind is so constituted that he can no more escape the conclusions to which his opinions lead than a man can escape his destiny. I want to say at once that if I thought this motion was introduced for the purpose of disturbing our State system of education, which has stood the test of twenty-five years, and which time after time has been endorsed by a large majority of the people of this country, under the present conditions and circumstances, at all events, I should not be in favour of it. I say that at once, and unhesitatingly. There is no attempt in this instance to interfere with our primary system of education in any shape or form. It deals entirely with grammar schools and scholarships, and grammar schools are under a separate Act, and have no connection whatever with our State system education. And besides, the resolution has not the binding force of law. It is only binding for the session, and may expire next week. It is strange that a gentleman holding the position of Chairman of Committees should not know the limited effect of a resolution. And what it asks could be done just as well by a regulation without having any expression of opinion from this Chamber whatever. As a matter of fact there is very little in this resolution after all. It is more than probable that before very long grammar schools will be brought within our educational system—perhaps before the century is out; and if that takes place this resolution lapses at once. That is the opinion of the Chief Justice, and the hon. member, Mr. Groom, had a motion on the paper recently to that effect, which was received very favourably by the House. When that is the case there will be no grammar school scholarships of this kind required; the education given then will be free.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: A certificate.

Mr. LEAHY: As the hon. gentleman says—"a certificate." He can take that to any school he likes, and I do not think a bald certificate of that kind can be of any assistance to what the hon. member for Oxley is pleased to call "religion." I am very sorry to have heard the question of religion introduced into this House at all. We are not here to discuss questions of religion. I never want to know what anybody's religion is. Any person who believes conscientiously in his religion is as good as I am in my religion, and I do not want to quarrel with him upon it at all. I think it is a matter for extreme regret that the hon. member for Oxley should, in an assembly of this kind, have gone so far out of his way to introduce such a question—one which is known as the "yellow pup."

* Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): One of the most baleful influences at work in the civic life of any community is that which at times takes the form

of religious sectarianism. It is an unfortunate circumstance that a resolution of the character of that moved by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley should have induced the hon. member for Oxley to introduce a matter of this kind. Members on this side of the House have been elected upon a platform, one of the foremost planks of which is "free, secular, and compulsory education." No member of this party can go out of his way to interfere in the slightest respect with our present excellent system of primary education without violating the platform he is pledged to uphold. I would like to point out for the benefit of the hon. member for Oxley that the Labour platform contains, as one of its chief planks—free, compulsory, and secular education; and it would be violating that platform to in any way countenance anything which would have for its object the overturning of the excellent system of primary education at present existing in this colony—a system which has existed so successfully for the past twenty-five years, and which, I hope, will continue to exist as long as the colony survives. I would never be a party to any attempt to lift even a little finger against this excellent system. I want rather to see it broadened and extended, and, if possible, made more representative throughout the community. This resolution does not propose to touch that system. As I understand it, what it proposes to do is to give to children educated in the colony, and who have by their energy, and, perhaps, genius, achieved and won a prize offered by the State, the opportunity of taking out their higher education in any high school they care to take it out in. This resolution applies just as well to the Church of England colleges as to the Christian Brothers' schools.

Mr. DAWSON: Or a father might teach his own child.

Mr. LESINA: If John Jones's son has taken one of these prizes, whether he has been educated by John Jones himself out in the bush or anywhere else—if he manifests a certain genius for education, acquires knowledge rapidly, and, after examination, passes successfully and wins the prize, it becomes his property, and the question is, Where shall he take out his higher education? Under the present system he must go to a certain State-subsidised grammar school, not one whit better than certain other schools in this colony that are not subsidised and not assisted, and yet turn out—as the examination sheets show—scholars as well educated, and just as successful, if not more successful, than many turned out from the grammar schools subsidised by the State to-day. I maintain that Jones has a perfect right, if his son wins that prize, to send him to the Church of England college, the Christian Brothers' college, or anywhere else he pleases to send him, because the prize is his property. I do not see that it touches the primary system of education in the colony to do that. Where does the danger come in? Will any hon. gentleman who has spoken indicate one particular portion of our primary educational system which is interfered with in the slightest degree by allowing a person educated by himself or by a private tutor to attend any high school he likes to complete his education, if he can win one of these prizes? I am a person who holds secular views upon most things, even including religious matters, and I say I would not lift my little finger the eighth of an inch to interfere with the present excellent system of State primary education we have got. But, I submit that this resolution is simply meting out a measure of justice which has been denied for some time past to necessitous scholars, whom it was intended originally to assist by the granting of these prizes, and who ought to be allowed to complete their education in whatever

high school they like. I think that is all the resolution asks; and, understanding it in that light and no other, I cheerfully give my assent to it.

Question—That the words "State aided," proposed to be inserted, be so inserted—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 10.

Messrs. Dickson, Dalrymple, Cowley, Finney, Annear, Higgs, Stephenson, Lord, Grimes, and T. B. Cribb.

NOES, 31.

Messrs. Philp, Dawson, O'Connell, Turley, Hardacre, Mackintosh, Kidston, Leahy, Dunsford, Fitzgerald, Kent, W. Hamilton, McDonald, Ryland, McDonnell, Forsyth, Glassey, Boles, Jenkinson, Kerr, Campbell, Dibley, Forrest, Bridges, Story, Petrie, Tooth, Callan, Maxwell, Lesina, and Givens.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question stated.

Mr. COWLEY (*Herbert*): I intend to vote against this motion, and even if the [10 p.m.] amendment of the hon. member for Oxley had been carried, I would have voted against the motion as amended. My reason for so doing is, that I think it is inadvisable at the present moment to make any alteration in our existing system. I think it is high time that our grammar schools were taken over by the State.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COWLEY: And I sincerely trust the Minister for Public Instruction will see his way to introduce a Bill next year to make provision for that. I do not think it is wise to carry a resolution of this description, believing, as I do, that the time has arrived when the grammar schools should be taken over and run by the State. Another reason why I intend to vote against the resolution is because we have already passed the Estimates making provision for grammar school scholarships only. If the resolution is passed, no money voted can be devoted to denominational schools. If we do not deal with the question by a Bill to take over these grammar schools, provision can be made in the next Estimates for the purpose desired. As provision has been made for these scholarships, no portion of the money voted can be devoted for the purpose aimed at. I intend to vote against the motion.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about the regulations?

Mr. COWLEY: The regulations do not affect the question before the House. The money on the Estimates has been voted for a specific purpose, and no resolution can override the Estimates as passed. We can't anticipate future votes, and I do not think it is opportune to deal with this matter now. I am anxious to come to a division on the question, but I do not want to give a silent vote.

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*): I agree with the hon. member who has just sat down that what we want is a national system of secondary education. I do not see how any honest member could object to the first part of the resolution, although he may object to the second part. It seems to me inequitable that any boy or girl in the colony should be debarred from these scholarships because their parents happen to be of a particular religion. I think the first part of the resolution must appeal to the sense of fairness and equity of hon. members. Every boy and girl in the colony should have equal chances for these scholarships, wherever they are educated. With regard to the second part of the resolution, it is extremely doubtful—

Mr. COWLEY: I don't object to the first part of the resolution.

Mr. KIDSTON: I am very glad to hear that. I desire to say that I see there will be some diffi-

culty in dealing with the second part of the resolution in a proper way. I hope the carrying of this resolution will remove the disabilities which now rest on some of the children of the colony—that it will be a step in the direction of removing the anomaly which exists under our present system.

Mr. FINNEY (*Toowong*): I do not wish to give a silent vote on this very important question. I have been elected by my constituents on two occasions, and I gave them my solemn promise that I would support the Educational Act as it stood, so I am bound to vote against this motion. If I did not do so, I would violate the promise I made, and on which I was returned to this House.

Mr. HIGGS (*Fortitude Valley*): I wish briefly to say that I am in favour of the first portion of this resolution, but not of the second, and I am afraid, in view of the vote just taken, there is no possibility of carrying an amendment that the second portion be struck out. Therefore I am compelled to vote against the motion as it stands.

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): In common with many other hon. members who have spoken, if I considered this motion was one which would interfere with our present system of national education I should most decidedly vote against it; but as no hon. gentleman who has spoken against the motion has shown where it will interfere with our present system, I fail to see why anybody should vote against it. I am more than surprised to see that a member who usually sits on this side of the House should get up to air his opinions from the other side against this motion. I hope his constituents will take notice of it.

Mr. ANNEAR: He is only sitting here because there has just been a division.

Mr. GIVENS: It seems a curious thing that the hon. member for Maryborough should defend the junior member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Higgs.

Mr. HIGGS: Don't you mind him. He can look after himself.

Mr. GIVENS: I have not the slightest intention of minding the hon. member in any way, but I am exercising my undoubted right of criticising his action, as any hon. member can criticise mine. I will not shirk criticism.

Mr. HIGGS: You are very plucky in some places.

Mr. GIVENS: Members who are so ardent in defence of the hon. member are generally those who used to be recognised as his avowed and bitter political opponents. Let me remark that this motion has nothing whatever to do with the general question of education, because, as a matter of fact, the grammar school scholarships are taken out in the grammar schools, and they are just as much religious institutions as any other institutions in the colony.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. GIVENS: I know that some of the head teachers of the grammar schools open their school services every morning with a form of prayer which would be highly objectionable to many of the citizens of this colony.

Mr. LEAHY: We do the same thing in the House.

Mr. GIVENS: At any rate, if this motion is passed—as I hope it will be—it will rest with the Executive to say what schools shall be approved, and it will rest with them to say that any child going to any school which may be selected shall be free from any religious interference which is objectionable to the child or its parents. For those reasons amongst others I think there is no danger to be apprehended from the motion. I believe it will relieve a great many people from a grievous burden—namely,

that a child who wins a grammar school scholarship under the present system is entirely debarred, if his parents are poor people, from making use of it, because there is no provision made for maintaining the child when it has to go away from home to school.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Bursaries are given.

Mr. GIVENS: How many instances have we seen in Queensland in which children are debarred from going to grammar schools because their parents are unable to maintain them away from home? I know of a full half-dozen instances. I say that the scholarship should belong to the child, and so long as the parents are satisfied, and the State is satisfied with the institution at which the scholarship is taken out, there is no room for anyone else to cavil. I think that members are perfectly right in safeguarding by every means in their power the undenominational system of education. It is a grand and noble system of education, but there is not the slightest fear that this motion is going to interfere with it. I challenge any hon. member to show me how it will be interfered with, and if he can I will vote against the motion.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE (*Mackay*): Like the junior member for Fortitude Valley, I have not the slightest objection to the first part of this resolution. Nobody apparently has. It is rather awkward to bracket together two resolutions which have no particular connection with one another, and which may force a member to vote against the resolution of which he is in favour, or *vice versa*. Hon. members should have some latitude in a matter of that kind. Now, I do not quite understand what is meant by the 2nd resolution. The hon. member who spoke last seems to think that this is a present made by the State to successful competitors, at an examination, of a specific sum of money; but if it is a specific sum of money, it is a sum of money which represents the cost of a grammar school scholarship—namely, £16 16s. per annum. Does the 2nd resolution mean that if a scholarship is won, the cost of the child's education must necessarily be paid by the State, whatever the education may be, in any private school of the colony? The State knows what the cost of grammar school scholarships comes to, but if, as the hon. member contends, scholarships must be given regardless of the school, then I must remind him that different schools have different charges. That, I say, is not altogether clear. While hon. members have said themselves that it has no reference to denominational education, I can only say that those opinions are not those of a large section of the Press, in which it has been pointed out repeatedly—I am not giving the opinion as to whether the opinions expressed in the Press—the metropolitan Press—are right or wrong—

Mr. McDONNELL: Only one newspaper in Queensland.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: The hon. member may have read all the newspapers in Queensland.

Mr. McDONNELL: I have not.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Then I deny that the hon. member can make the statement he has made with any degree of certainty. Here we are giving to private institutions scholarships, or sums of money, and those private institutions may, or may not, accompany their secular instruction by denominational instruction. I am not saying whether that would be right or not, but we would be voting money to subsidise these private institutions. I agree with the hon. member for Herbert that at the close of the session, when, as a matter of fact we are really not debating these questions as fully as we generally do—more especially when it cannot possibly

have any effect this session, even if it is passed—I am at a loss to know why we should commit ourselves to an expression of opinion on this question. The hon. gentleman will admit that this is an academic debate from which no practical results will follow—

Mr. McDONNELL: I admit no such thing.

Mr. LEAHY: Why not come to a vote?

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: I have no disposition to talk it out, but for reasons I have given I do not feel disposed to vote for the motion which might just as well be left till next year, unless it will have some particular result, which I do not at present foresee, in connection with electioneering or voting.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): The hon. gentleman insinuates that this motion has been brought forward for electioneering purposes. I think such an imputation is unworthy of the hon. gentleman. An election took place only a little while ago—

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: There is another coming on. Catching votes is the practical business of hon. members opposite, and it is useless to disguise the fact.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TURLEY: This is not a question of getting votes at all. There is one admission which the hon. gentleman made which applies to all business that is now being considered—namely, that the House is not giving, and cannot give, that attention now to public business which ought to be given. If that applies in this case, it applies to every case that is coming before the House at the present time, and there are some measures of importance that have been dealt with in exactly the same way. Does the hon. gentleman mean to say that this motion is being rushed through the House without due consideration being given. The hon. gentleman knows that it is not so; he knows that this motion has been on the paper a number of weeks and has been discussed before this session; he knows that a similar motion was before the House last year, but lapsed at the close of the session, and he knows that public attention has been drawn to the question. But he says that the opinion of the Press does not altogether accord with the opinions expressed by hon. members who are in favour of the motion. What is the opinion of the Press to the hon. gentleman? When he picks up a paper and the opinion expressed accords with the opinion held by the hon. gentleman the Press is all right, but when he picks up a paper and the opinion expressed is at variance with the hon. gentleman's opinion then the Press is only the opinion of one man who is earning his living by writing to the order of somebody else. There are papers in Queensland that express opinions favourable to the motion, just as well as there are papers expressing opinions opposed to the motion; but I take it that hon. members are supposed by those who elect them to have sufficient intelligence to make up their minds without having them made up for them by any article they may see in a newspaper.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: That goes without saying.

Mr. TURLEY: Then why is the hon. gentleman continually trotting out the opinion of the Press, which is not unanimous one way or the other? It is most surprising, when one considers that some three years ago there was not one dissentient voice raised in this House when the late Hon. T. J. Byrnes delivered a speech from the front Treasury bench that was characterised by a considerable number of members of this House as one of the best deliverances given in this Chamber on the matter of education. I remember the question perfectly well, and, whatever may be said now, the opinion of the House at that time was just exactly as expressed by

the hon. gentleman—that the system of scholarships was not a system whereby the grammar schools should be subsidised in addition to the subsidy they were getting from the State. He pointed out that the State scholarship should be for the benefit of the pupil able to win the scholarship, and not altogether for the benefit of the grammar school in the district where it is won. Taking the fact into consideration that this motion covers every smart boy in the colony who by application and by superior ability is able to win a scholarship, it does not seem to me that he should be debarred from taking it up wherever he or his people may think advisable. The hon. gentleman generally brings forward a series of arguments when speaking on a question, but on this occasion he has simply brought forward a number of quibbles. He says that the value of a grammar school scholarship is £16 16s.; he says he does not understand the motion; he asks whether it means that a boy shall be allowed to go to a school where the fees are £26 5s. The hon. member knows that that is merely a quibble.

Mr. LEAHY: Let us divide.

Mr. TURLEY: I am satisfied to divide, but when these statements are made they get into *Hansard*, and they ought to be put right. In a case like this it is necessary to controvert those arguments.

Mr. JENKINSON: It is only an assertion.

Mr. TURLEY: Not one solitary argument has been so far adduced to show [10.30 p.m.] where this is going to subsidise denominational education, and when hon. members opposite know that members on this side who are supporting the motion have pledged themselves to support the present system of education, and to extend that system to the secondary education, I am surprised that they should go on fighting windmills in this way. They know as well as I do that hon. members on this side, if they thought for a moment that the motion would interfere with the undenominational character of our present system of education, would not touch it at any price. We realise that the question of denominationalism is altogether outside the question, and it is on that account that they are prepared to broaden the system, instead of keeping it narrowed down as it has been for some considerable time. They are prepared to allow the greatest opportunities to be given to the boys and girls of the citizens of Queensland who have the ability to win for themselves scholarships. The State gives these scholarships as an incentive to children and parents to see that the best is done in the way of developing the natural abilities of the children. What is the use of the State offering a scholarship to a boy or girl of exceptional ability, and then, after he or she has won that scholarship, saying, "Now you must go to this particular school, because we are already subsidising it to the extent of £1,000 a year, and it is necessary in the interests of the school—not in the interests of the scholar—that you should pay the £16 16s. that you receive from the State to help to maintain that school?" I believe the sentiment expressed by the late Mr. Byrnes was correct—that the scholarships should be granted for the benefit of the scholar, and not used as an extra means of subsidising the grammar schools already in existence.

Mr. ANNEAR: I entirely agree with what several other hon. members have said. I approve of the 1st clause of the motion, and I move that the question be divided by putting the paragraphs separately to the House.

Mr. LEAHY: That is not your own amendment.

Mr. ANNEAR: It is my own amendment, and written by me.

Mr. LEAHY: I know. I saw someone come up and tell you to do it.

Mr. McDONNELL: The Chief Secretary did it.

Mr. ANNEAR: The Chief Secretary had nothing to do with it.

Mr. LESINA: A wily old politician.

* Mr. HIGGS: I am glad of this opportunity, if the House will permit me, to say just a few words, as my position was challenged by an hon. member sitting on this side.

The SPEAKER: Is the hon. member going to second the amendment?

Mr. HIGGS: Yes, I will second the amendment. It was pure accident that I was sitting on the Ministerial cross-benches. I had voted in favour of the amendment, and, thinking that a division would almost immediately be taken on the main question, I did not take the trouble to shift over to this side of the House.

Mr. ANNEAR: You acted as a free man.

Mr. LEAHY: Surely it is not worth replying to!

Mr. HIGGS: I am the best judge as to what is worth replying to concerning my own personality.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

Mr. HIGGS: The implication was that I had done something which no true man should do. In voting as I did, I think I showed a great deal more courage than some men who vote with the biggest crowd. It is not always a sign of courage when a man votes with the majority, and if I have an objection to voting for the second portion of the resolution, it is because I know the benefits of the State school system. I have seen both systems in operation. In my young days at school I have known a body of us to sally out from one school to combat the boys of another school, and hon. members know very well that a common song at that time was—

Protestant, Protestant, ring the bell!
Catholic, Catholic, go to —

somewhere. This kind of thing caused a spirit of dissension and disunion which I do not think should exist between Australian natives.

The SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. member that the question now before the House is the division of the question by putting it paragraph by paragraph. The general question is not open to debate or comment of that nature.

Mr. HIGGS: I asked the permission of the House because I thought I was entitled to do so, seeing an hon. member attacked me on account of my vote—an hon. member who has a very high opinion of himself. The opinion he gives us is that he believes himself to be possessed of all the wisdom of the ancients, and that he can teach hon. members in this House from the oldest to the youngest. The hon. member is very courageous in certain places, and he has come into this House to-night and attacked me because I have resented his insults in another quarter.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. HIGGS: The hon. member is very courageous in certain secret places.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HIGGS: I understand he at one time horsewhipped an individual, but I have no doubt that, if we discovered who the individual was, it would be found that he was very much smaller than the hon. member.

Mr. BRIDGES: You had better be careful, or he might "do" you.

The SPEAKER: Order! I must again call the attention of the hon. member to the question before the House.

Mr. HIGGS: I will just briefly second the motion.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Let us divide.

Mr. HIGGS: As we do not know what will be the operation of the second portion of the resolution, I hope hon. members will vote in favour of dividing the resolution, and then carry the 1st paragraph.

Question put.

Mr. COWLEY: I am going to give my reasons why I shall support the motion for the division of the resolution. The hon. member for Rockhampton; Mr. Kidston, said that he could not conceive how any honest man could vote against the 1st paragraph. Now, I was under the impression that that paragraph practically sets out the system at present adopted in connection with the granting of scholarships, and it therefore seems somewhat superfluous here. I know several schools that are not State schools, the scholars of which compete for, and win scholarships. I have no objection whatever to the first part of the resolution, but, for the reasons I have already given—and which I shall not repeat—I have an objection to the second part, and therefore I want the question divided. I certainly think the objection raised by the junior member for Mackay, the Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, is one that requires a little consideration, and that is: What amount is to be given for a scholarship? In some schools, other than grammar schools, the fees may be less than £16 per annum, and in others more. If the maximum value of a scholarship were fixed, probably I might not have the same objection to the resolution. The 1st paragraph may be given effect to, and I am in favour of that, because unless it is passed, children who have been educated by tutors would not be eligible for scholarships, even if they passed the examination, as are the pupils of private schools at the present time. I think it would be unwise, and very ungenerous, if children whose education has been wholly paid for by their parents were not allowed to compete for grammar school scholarships, and I am therefore prepared to enlarge the scope of the scholarships so as to make them open to children who have been educated by tutors.

Mr. GIVENS: With regard to what has been said about myself personally I have nothing to say. I merely wish to make a few remarks with reference to the amendment now before the House. I fail to see the utility of separating the two questions, as they are so inextricably bound up the one with the other that they are practically the same. The first part of the resolution says that a child shall be eligible for a scholarship no matter where he may have been educated, and if any child is eligible for a scholarship why should he not be allowed to take out that scholarship where he pleases so long as the school chosen is approved by the Executive Council? The grammar schools, although subsidised by the State, are not State institutions, and are not under State supervision. Therefore, I contend that it is absolutely useless to divide the question. It is trying by a side wind, by a mere quibble, to emasculate the motion altogether, and for that reason I intend to vote against the amendment.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB: I should like to point out to the hon. member for Cairns that the first part of the resolution deals with grammar school scholarships as they exist at present, but the second paragraph proposes to change the character of the scholarships entirely. In fact the two paragraphs are somewhat contradictory, and on that account I hold that it is right that they should be put separately. I am in favour of the first, but I am not in favour of the second, and I think it is only fair that in a division of this

kind I should have an opportunity to record my vote in favour of the first part of the resolution, and against the second paragraph.

Question—That the question be divided, and the paragraphs put separately—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 11.

Messrs. Murray, Dalrymple, Cowley, Dickson, Finney, Annear, Higgs, Stephenson, Lord, T. B. Cribb, and Grimes.

NOES, 22.

Messrs. Philp, McDonnell, Leahy, Kent, Petrie, Lesina, Mackintosh, Jenkinson, Fitzgerald, Givens, Glassey, Tooth, Dibley, Kerr, Forrest, Campbell, Bridges, Dunford, Forsyth, Maxwell, Ryland, and Turley.

Resolved in the negative.

Original motion put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 28.

Messrs. Philp, Glassey, Fitzgerald, Petrie, Lesina, Givens, Mackintosh, Leahy, Callan, Jenkinson, Forsyth, Kerr, Fisher, Forrest, Boles, Campbell, Maxwell, Browne, Ryland, Bridges, Dunford, Dibley, McDonnell, Turley, McDonald, Tooth, Story, and Kent.

NOES, 10.

Messrs. Dickson, Murray, Finney, Cowley, Stephenson, Higgs, Lord, T. B. Cribb, Annear, and Grimes.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Dawson. No—Smith.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

EDUCATION IN THE INTERIOR.

On the Order of the Day being called—

Resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Story's motion, That, in the opinion of this House, [11 p.m.] it is desirable that the State Education Act of 1875 should be amended so as to enable children outside the influence of the present Act to receive some education

Question put and passed.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

MOTION TO GO INTO COMMITTEE.

Mr. FISHER (*Gympie*): Mr. Speaker,—I move that you do now leave the chair.

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): This Bill is of a very contentious nature, and there is not the slightest chance of its passing this session. When I gave up this afternoon to private members I understood that all the private business would be over by 6 o'clock, and it is now 11 o'clock. This Bill would take two or three days to consider, and I think it would be much better if the hon. member for *Gympie* would withdraw it.

Mr. McDONALD: The Standing Orders are suspended, so it is all right.

The PREMIER: But there is no time to discuss it. There is a motion on the paper to refer the Bill to a select committee, and if that is passed we cannot possibly expect their report this session. I would advise the hon. member to withdraw the Bill.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I would like to point out to the Premier that as the Standing Orders are suspended, there is nothing to prevent the Bill going right through within the next half-hour. There has been quite sufficient discussion over the matter already, and it is only right that we should go straight through with the business on the paper. I object to the Bill being withdrawn.

Mr. FISHER: I hardly know how to meet the suggestion of the Premier. I made an earnest attempt at the beginning of the session to get the Bill on, and I have pressed it at every available opportunity; and now, at the end of the session, I am asked to withdraw it as there is no time.

Mr. ANNEAR: Did you ever know a private member to carry such a Bill?

Mr. FISHER: Yes, the Attorney-General, when a private member, carried a Bill of a similar character to this, although not quite as drastic. I would remind the Premier that a Bill of a similar character to this passed both

Houses of the Imperial Parliament, and has been the law for the last eighteen months. I do not see why this should be a stumbling-block to us. But I should like to ascertain from the Premier whether, if this Bill is withdrawn now, he will adopt it as a part of his programme for next session.

The PREMIER: I will make no promise as to that.

Mr. COWLEY (*Herbert*): I have an amendment to propose to the motion, "That you do now leave the chair." The amendment is—

That the question be amended by the omission of all the words after "That," with the view of inserting, "this order be discharged from the paper, and the Bill be referred to a select committee.

2. That such committee consist of the Honourable Mr. Dalrymple, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Dunstond, Mr. Dibley, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Campbell, and the mover.

3. That such committee have power to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit during any adjournment of the House.

My object in moving that amendment is this: I have carefully perused the Bill the hon. member has introduced, and I am confident that no committee of this House can amend it within a reasonable time. It would give rise to interminable discussion, and would occupy many nights, perhaps months. But if it is referred to a select committee, with power to collect evidence both from workmen and employers, I believe much good would result. A similar course was adopted in New Zealand with very beneficial results, and the New Zealand statute is a great improvement on the English statute. The English Act has been proved to be utterly unworkable, and has been condemned both by employers and employees. It has led to endless and costly litigation, and there is a demand from all sections of the community that it should be amended, and amended very materially.

Mr. GIVENS: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in discussing the provisions of the Bill and its effect on a motion for the appointment of a select committee?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member for Herbert is quite in order.

Mr. COWLEY: I do not wish to occupy much time, but I could read extracts innumerable bearing out my statement.

Mr. McDONALD: Let us have them.

Mr. COWLEY: I prefer to conduct my case in my own manner, and not at the dictation of the hon. member for Flinders or any other hon. member. I am perfectly prepared to deal with the question, and I have no intention to stone-wall. But I wish that, if this measure is to get on our statute-book, it shall be a credit to the House which passes it, and a benefit to those whom it is intended to benefit, and not the source of endless litigation which it is in Great Britain, where magistrates, judges of the Supreme Court and of the appeal court, say it is impossible to know what the provisions of the measure are, and how they act. Therefore if we are to pass a measure which will be beneficial to the workers of this country, I say let us take time, collect evidence from both parties, and deal with the matter in a statesmanlike manner, and not place a measure on the statute-book which will give rise to endless litigation and dissatisfaction. I will say no more now, as I do not wish to interfere with the progress of business. The Bill as presented by the hon. member is one which no House could possibly pass. It will not effect its purpose, it will be no benefit to the employee, and it would be a disgrace to our statute-book in its present shape and form. Therefore I beg to move the amendment standing in my name.

Mr. FISHER: I see the hon. member for Herbert has disappeared. I wish he had had the grace to stay in the Chamber, after he has

made assertions that have no foundation in fact at all. He was graciously pleased to say that if this Bill, as drafted, were placed upon the statute-book of this colony, it would be a disgrace to it. The hon. member apparently does not know that the Bill was drafted by the Parliamentary Draftsman, and followed as closely as possible the English statute, except that it was necessary to suit our own special conditions. If the Bill is a disgrace, it is so only to the towering intellect of the hon. member. He has discovered that the Bill is not only badly drafted, but is bad in principle. On the second reading he declared himself totally against it, and now he comes down, as a friendly critic, to do an obliging thing for myself by getting the Bill sent to a select committee to put it into shape. What kind of shape? The shape in which the hon. member desires to see it, will make it an effete Bill, that will not accomplish what I desire to accomplish, and that will not have the same effect as the Imperial statute. Is that the spirit in which we are to be met? I admit that some hon. members who have honestly stated that they would like a Bill of this kind to be passed, do not agree with every principle which it embraces. But I would like to say that the Bill as drafted is not more drastic than the Imperial statute, but in two instances it allows of a little larger sum being paid to the dependents of those who have been killed or injured. I tell the hon. gentleman again that the Imperial statute was passed by the Tory Government. Yet it is assumed that it is too far advanced for Queensland, and that may give the people here an idea of the kind of Government we have in this colony.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB: This is not like the Imperial Act.

Mr. FISHER: The hon. gentleman evidently has not read the Bill.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB: I think that was pointed out to you.

Mr. FISHER: I can assure the hon. gentleman that the instructions given to the draftsman were to follow the Imperial statute as closely as he could. For this reason: I think it would be better to suffer the ills of the Imperial statute and get the benefit of the decisions upon it, rather than to march on the high-sounding lines of the hon. member for Herbert to get our own local decisions. He told us he had carefully considered the Bill and found it a totally bad measure, but if hon. members will compare it with the Imperial statute they will find it is as close a copy as possible—with the exception that the contracting-out clauses have been omitted, for very good reasons. That does not make the Bill not a close draft of the Imperial Act. He told us there were innumerable decisions under the Imperial Act, and that employers and employees were against it in Great Britain. I can tell the hon. gentleman that the employers are against it, because they say it affords too much relief to the employees; and the employees are against it because it does not apply to every trade. There is a strong agitation in Great Britain now to extend it to sailors on the high seas, and some of the shipping employers have agreed that that should be done. It is very desirable that a Bill of this kind should be voted upon straightforwardly. When the Premier requested me to withdraw it, I asked him if he would take it up next session. He was not able to promise that, and what then can I hope to gain if I withdraw it now? It was started at the beginning of the session, and we have not yet got to the committee stage. If it is withdrawn now we can only begin next session in the same way, and fail in the same way.

Would it enlighten the hon. member for Herbert—I wish some friend of his would invite him to come in.

Mr. McDONALD: He has gone home.

Mr. FISHER: Would it enlighten him in any way to know that a Bill of a similar character was brought in in the Victorian Legislative Council by Hon. H. J. Wrixon, the Hon. Lieutenant-Colonel F. T. Sargood, and by the Hon. A. Wynne. I understand these are names eminent in the legal profession.

Mr. TURLEY: Sargood is a softgoods man.

Mr. FISHER: According to the gigantic intellect of the hon. member for Herbert, they also produced a Bill that would be a disgrace to the statute-book of the colony; and the Imperial draftsman has done the same. If I accepted his advice, I do not know what kind of a Bill I would get. If it is sent to a select committee, I do not know what chance there will be of doing anything with it. If we do send it to a committee nothing will come of it; and if we do not, hon. gentlemen will see that it does not pass this Chamber. What I desire is to see legislation of this kind pass, and I am prepared to take any reasonable assistance from any hon. member that will enable me to make progress in this direction. It is an absolute necessity. I may state a case which happened in Gympie only the other day, where a person who has been maimed for life has sold his furniture and his watch, and pledged all his goods, to test a case in the Supreme Court, with the result that he has been left a penniless person, and has got nothing. The lawyers have battered upon him, and he has been reduced to poverty in an endeavour to get compensation. Here is an attempt to give such a man a certain specified sum, less than what he has paid the lawyers, and we are told that such legislation cannot be approved of by the Government. I protest as strongly as I can, and I appeal to hon. gentlemen who are most in sympathy with it, to read carefully the trend of the times, and I feel assured their natural tendency to do justice will commend to them the necessity of passing legislation of this kind at the earliest possible moment. If I have failed in consulting the hon. member for Herbert before going to the draftsman, and in not submitting the Bill to that hon. gentleman for revision before submitting it to this House, I have failed unintentionally. I had no idea he was such an authority on the matter, and that he would have been of such great assistance in guiding me to a right conclusion.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): The present position reminds me of an old couplet—"You'll be damned if you do, and you'll be damned if you don't."

Mr. FISHER: This is a serious matter.

Mr. TURLEY: It is a serious subject, but the hon. member for Gympie has taken the amendment of the hon. member for Herbert too seriously. The hon. member for Herbert has deliberately attempted to burke the whole question.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TURLEY: I wish to point out the effect of the amendment, and hon. members can see whether I am correct or not. A select committee can only sit during an adjournment of the House, so that if this Bill is referred to a select committee now, that select committee can only deal with the matter while the House is in session. As soon as the House is prorogued, the select committee falls through. It is absolutely useless submitting this matter to a select committee.

Mr. LEAHY: The motion overrides that,

Mr. TURLEY; It does not.

Mr. LEAHY: They can sit during any adjournment of the House.

Mr. TURLEY: That is the same with all other select committees. The Standing Order says that—

Select committees may meet for the despatch of business on any day, except Sunday, on which the House is appointed to sit, and also during any adjournment of the House, which does not exceed seven days, and if so authorised by the House, during any longer adjournment of the House.

Therefore, under the Standing Orders, the select committee will drop out as soon as the House is prorogued. The hon. member for Herbert himself pointed out that it would take weeks, and perhaps months, for a select committee to fully go into the matter and put it into proper shape. The question is whether this House is now prepared to divide on the matter, and consider the Bill in committee, or that it be referred to a select committee? If this Bill is referred to a select committee, it will only be a convenient mode of getting away from the trouble of having to further debate the matter this session. That is the position. It is no use hon. members voting on the belief that by referring the Bill to a select committee, they would get more information. Hon. members must understand when they vote for the amendment, which absolutely amounts to this—that the Bill will be thrown out, so far as this session is concerned, and it cannot receive any consideration from a select committee, because the select committee will cease as soon as Parliament is prorogued.

Mr. McDONALD: I object to the hon. member for Herbert coming here and moving this amendment, which really means the shelving of the whole question—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: And then getting his hat and umbrella, and running home. Hon. members should not do that sort of thing. It merely means wasting time, and it is not the straight thing to do. The hon. member should have remained and fought the matter out. It is quite true, as the hon. member for South Brisbane said, that when the House prorogues the select committee will cease to exist, and the amendment is only introduced to kill the Bill. As to the Bill being a disgrace, the hon. member who said that was not piling discredit on the hon. member for Gympie but on the Parliamentary Draftsman, Mr. Woolcock, the gentleman who drafted the Bill. That was an unfair position for the hon. gentleman to take up. And then he made several bold statements, but he was in such a hurry to catch his train that he was not present to prove them. He thought more of getting home to his comfortable little bed than of sitting here and attending to business. He pretended to be so sympathetic with the working classes and employees generally, but he said that the Bill would mean endless litigation. His desire is to kill the Bill.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: That is clearly shown by his amendment.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: If this amendment had been introduced into the Bill when it was first before the House, I could have understood it, and I would have given the hon. gentleman credit, but, under the circumstances, I cannot give the hon. gentleman any credit at all.

Mr. T. B. CRIBB (*Ipswich*): I think the hon. member for Herbert proposed this amendment with the best motives, and not for the purpose of stopping discussion. The legislation introduced by the hon. member for Gympie is new legislation.

At 11:29,

Mr. KERR called attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 16.

Messrs. Dawson, W. Hamilton, Givens, Maxwell, Hardacre, Kerr, Browne, Boles, McDonald, Dunsford, Ryland, Turley, Fisher, Kidston, McDonnell, and Lesina.

NOES, 20.

Messrs. Philp, Dickson, Foxton, Rutledge, O'Connell, Macdonald-Paterson, Dalrymple, Leahy, Bridges, Story, Murray, Kent, Mackintosh, Annear, Tooth, Grimes, Stodart, T. B. Critch, J. Hamilton, and Chataway.

Resolved in the negative.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put and passed.

Amended question put and passed.

OFFENCES BY KANAKAS.

On the Order of the Day being called for the resumption of the debate on the following motion:—

That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing—

1. The number of kanakas and of male adults other than kanakas in the colony of Queensland, on 1st July, 1899.

2. The number of convictions for murder, rape, indecent assault, and common assault upon white people recorded against kanakas and against all persons other than kanakas from the 1st July, 1892, to 1st July, 1899— which stood adjourned at 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, 7th December—

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I just want to get a vote on this motion, and will not detain the House more than a few minutes whilst I add one more fact. A week ago a number of newchum kanakas, under engagement by the Mosman Central Mill Company, refused to work, alleging that, as they had been engaged by the late field manager, they were not bound to work for any other person. Mr. Connolly, the Polynesian Inspector, was communicated with, and that gentleman, with a constable named Thiesfield, proceeded to the scene of the dispute. Arrived at the Mosman, First Class Constable O'Connor, officer in charge at that place, accompanied the party to the mill. Mr. Connolly tried every means to induce the boys to resume work, but his efforts were futile, until, losing patience, he laid his cane across the backs of the dusky ones within reach. This had the desired effect, and the *Port Douglas Gazette* says the boys showed great agility in jumping into the trucks at hand ready to convey them to the cane-fields. Here we have a case of flogging administered by the Government inspector. Here we have in Queensland not only an exhibition of slavery in the cane-field, but also an exhibition of the use of physical force against kanakas by the Polynesian inspector, Mr. Connolly. I have private information from an old resident of the district, who writes testifying to the truth of the matter.

Mr. ANNEAR: Are you sure they are facts?

Mr. LESINA: I take as my authority a Ministerial organ; and Ministerial organs never tell untruths—they are remarkable for their veracity. I think I am justified in bringing forward this matter in connection with the administration of this kind of labour in the colony. Reverting to the resolution, I may say that after the amendment carried on the last occasion when we discussed this matter—an amendment moved by the hon. member for Herbert—

Mr. BROWNE: He is a genius for amendments.

Mr. LESINA: With that amendment I am satisfied that my resolution will not have the effect of giving the information in the form in

which I desire to obtain it, and that being so I ask permission to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

FREEHOLDERS OWNING AREAS OF 640 ACRES AND UPWARDS.

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

That there be laid on the table of the House a return of the names of all landed proprietors, whether individuals, syndicates, banks, or other corporate bodies, owning 640 acres or upwards of freehold country lands, with the area in each case, and approximate value—

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*): I think if this return is furnished it will serve a very useful purpose in giving to the people of the colony information which they should have at their command. I understand that a similar return to this was furnished some eleven years ago, but that is now out of date.

Mr. LEAHY: Was it a return giving similar information?

Mr. KIDSTON: It was substantially the same kind of information.

Mr. LEAHY: It would cost a lot of money.

Mr. KIDSTON: The census costs a lot of money too. It is desirable that accurate information on such matters should be available; and even if the getting of this information does cost some small sum, the information is so desirable that I think the Government may well agree to the motion.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I cannot understand why there should be any opposition to the presentation of this return. I think it is the object of good government to place the members of the legislature representing the people of the country in possession of all the information which it is possible to obtain in a legitimate way; and I think this return ought to be furnished, so that the people of the colony may know what is being done with the national estate. It educates the people, and if the national estate is gradually becoming locked up in the hands of private individuals, banking companies, or syndicates, the people may become alarmed, and demand a change. I cannot understand how any hon. member can oppose placing hon. members and the public in the possession of this information. It has been said that it will cost money, but does this Government ever do anything that does not cost money? I would undertake to say that they spend money much less wisely than it would be spent on the preparation of this return.

Mr. LEAHY: The land under 640 acres is many times more valuable than the land in areas above 640 acres.

Mr. LESINA: I have no doubt that a quarter of an acre in Queen-street would buy a whole country side. It certainly would be a valuable return, and I do not see that objection should be raised to furnishing it on the mere score of expense, unless those hon. members who object to the preparation of the return can prove that it will not conduce to good government to supply the return, or that it will be an injury to society. Such statistics should be very useful to the political student, as they would assist him in arriving at a right conclusion with regard to many of the evils which afflict society. It would be money well spent. We voted £1,000 to the widow of a deceased Civil servant, and we are spending money in a thousand other ways, and hon. members vote large sums cheerfully; but when it comes to voting a few paltry shillings for a return which will be of value to hon. members, hon. members immediately object on the score of expense. If hon. members oppose the motion, I

shall be compelled to come to a conclusion with respect to the motives which influence them that will not be creditable to them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*): Although the motion may be inquisitorial, at the same time the information might legitimately be asked for, with the exception of the value. The motion as it stands asks for information which there will be great difficulty in obtaining. In order to arrive at the approximate value of property valuers would have to be appointed. It would really be a sort of Doomsday Book. A similar return was prepared some years ago, but I do not know that any use has ever been made of it. The preparation of the return will certainly involve a large amount of labour, and I am quite certain it will not be completed for the next four or five months. The information would not be objectionable with the exception of the value, and I therefore move the omission of the words "and approximate value."

Mr. KIDSTON: The omission of those words will take away a large part of the value of the return. If the hon. gentleman will agree to substitute the words "and ratable value" for the words he proposes to omit, it will give us all we want, as the ratable value is an approximate value. It is the value of the land for taxation purposes, which is one of the purposes for which the return is asked.

The PREMIER: There is far more value in land under 640 acres.

Mr. KIDSTON: It would be far better if we could obtain the information for land in areas of less than 640 acres, but the difficulty of getting that information would be very great.

Mr. LEAHY: This would not give you a return for taxation purposes.

Mr. KIDSTON: The return would be very valuable, nevertheless.

The PREMIER: No use was ever made of the last return that was prepared.

Mr. KIDSTON: In any case I ask the hon. gentleman to put in "ratable value."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Each local authority has its own mode of rating. It does not at all represent the value of property.

Mr. LEAHY: One local authority has a low valuation and a high rate, while another has a high valuation and a low rate.

Mr. KIDSTON: If we are to judge by some recent purchases made by the Government, it is true that the ratable value affords very little indication of the market value of the land. But it would still give the relative value

[12 p.m.] of the land in each of the different districts, because while some local bodies may undervalue and others may overvalue, yet the value they place on the land is an approximate value, and the ratable value may be got without the slightest trouble. Without that information the return would lose much of its value, and I think what the mover of the motion meant by approximate value is just the ratable value. If the hon. gentleman will agree to amend the motion in that way, I think the mover of the motion will be quite willing to accept the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: With the permission of the House, I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.
Original question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE. RAILWAYS—TRAFFIC BRANCH.

Question—That £213,985 be granted for the traffic branch—stated.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*): A great deal was said last night on the question of the wages paid to

the employees in the Railway Department, and he then promised to confer with the Commissioner with a view to try to restore completely the remuneration previously received by the employees. He had done that, and after some considerable discussion, the Commissioner had agreed to restore to the workmen on the railway lines the full wages they were receiving prior to 1893, and to reduce the period of probation from five years to six months. That was a great concession, and one which he thought the employees themselves hardly expected to receive. It ought to be satisfactory to hon. members, and he hoped that on future occasions when they were putting through the Estimates of the Railway Department there would not be so much dissatisfaction expressed on that matter. The concession now made would, he trusted, permanently remove the grievance which had been complained of, and put an end to the continual disturbance and trouble which took place on the Estimates. He had another announcement to make, which was of some importance to the country generally. Hon. members were aware of the severity of the drought which at present prevailed in the Western districts, and which threatened almost completely the Western plains. The trains along the trunk lines of the colony had for a long time been busily engaged carrying sheep away from those districts to the coastal districts in order to keep them alive, but the sheep were now almost too weak to be trucked, and the next concession the Commissioner had agreed to make—which was a very laudable and necessary one—was to carry fodder along the trunk lines of railway at a cheap rate, with a view to keep the flocks in the Western districts alive. There were many valuable stud sheep and other stock in those districts that threatened to perish, unless some means were devised by which cheap fodder could be carried to keep them alive.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Carried at a reduced freight?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: At a reduction of 33½ per cent. At the present time fodder was carried from the Darling Downs to Brisbane at that reduced rate, and when it arrived at Rockhampton or Townsville, or any other port, it would then be carried at another 33½ per cent. reduction. That would be a great boon to the Western settlers, and they really deserved it. Very few people were aware of the difficulties and trials which beset people in the Western district at the present time, and the loss of those people would be the country's loss, so that the Commissioner was to be commended for the efforts he had put forth in order to help them over the difficulties that surrounded them.

* Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*) was very pleased that the wages of the whole of the railway employees were to be restored, and that the period of probation was to be reduced to six months, a concession which the hon. member for Leichhardt, who had taken a considerable amount of interest in the question, would appreciate on behalf of the men. There was one case he wished to bring up, and he regretted the hour was so late, because last night he referred to a matter of importance and there was very little report of it in *Hansard*. It was a pity that discussion of the Estimates should begin at this hour, when there was practically no reporting. The case he wished to bring under the notice of the Minister and the Commissioner was that of a young man named Frank Devine, who met with an accident at Roma street on the 3rd of January, 1898, and lost his life. He was a very promising young man, and a very good servant of the department. Through the carelessness of some official, a barrow had been left on the platform,

and he tripped over it, fell between the platform and the engine, and broke his back. He had been seven years in the service, and it was recognised that he was a man who had been faithful in the performance of his duties, and no one had a word of complaint or reproach to make against him. From time to time Parliament had passed votes for gratuities to the widows of Civil servants who had been in receipts of high salaries. There was the case of the late Crown Solicitor, who had been allowed practically a gratuity of £1,000.

Mr. LEAHY: £800.

Mr. McDONNELL: Parliament had always been indulgent and generous in this respect; and if it was generous with the relatives of highly-paid officials, it should not overlook the cases of minor officials. He noticed that in a few cases that had been done, and he hoped that in this case the Minister and the Commissioner would be prepared to give some reasonable compensation. Devine's father, he believed, was in the employ of the department; but the deceased, who was unmarried, had been, with his father, the mainstay of the family.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was fully aware of the circumstances of the case. Quite recently a deputation of members of the House waited on the Commissioner—and he was present—and urged the claim of the father to some compensation. The deceased was confined to the hospital for about twelve months before his death, and during the whole of that time he drew full pay. As the hon. member had said, the father was in the service of the department.

Mr. McDONNELL: Receiving 6s. a day.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He had another son in the employ of the department, who, like the father, was earning good pay. The difficulty in making compensation in cases of this sort was that it would establish a precedent. There was a regulation that if a man met with an accident while in the service of the department, his widow should be compensated to the extent of £50 or £100; but he did not know that there was an instance where compensation had been given in the case like this. The deputation put the case for the relatives in the strongest possible form; but the Commissioner could not see his way to accede to the request, except at the great risk of establishing a precedent which might lead to complications and expense in the future; and he had, in his (the Minister's) opinion, dealt with it fully and completely. It was doubtful whether the circumstances warranted the granting of what was asked. The deceased was not a married man.

Mr. ANNEAR (*Maryborough*) had known somewhat similar cases where the widows of men killed in the service of the department had been compensated to the amount of £100. Why should not that young man's case be treated in the same way?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He did not leave a widow.

Mr. ANNEAR: No, but he had left parents behind him who had been put to twelve months' trouble and expense in nursing and looking after him as the result of the accident to which his death was attributable. The compensation would not come out of the pocket of the Commissioner, and the people of the colony wanted to do justice to every case that came before them. This case would, he hoped, be treated in the same way as others he could mention.

* Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*) had heard the statement of the Minister with regard to the complete restoration of wages with a great deal of satisfaction, and he was sure it would give great satisfaction to the railway employees throughout the colony. He would say, in their behalf, that they deserved the amount of pay

they were to get. Their work was hard, and they had worked loyally and well during a period of depression, and deserved now to share in the increased prosperity of the present time.

Mr. ANNEAR: Let us deal with this other question first.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes, he knew; but he wanted just to get this into *Hansard*. It was a wise policy for the department to treat the men with consideration, as it would come back in willing, loyal, and good service. He hoped the Minister would not overlook the case of the bridge painters. Now that the standard wages had been restored to the men, no more would be heard of their grievances—at least so far as this question was concerned.

Mr. McDONNELL thought that the Minister could hardly claim that the employment of the father, who was an old and a good servant of the department, at 6s. 6d. a day, and the employment of another son at 1s. 8d. a day was compensation to those people for the loss they had sustained. Some time ago a guard lost his life on the Bundaberg line and his widow got a gratuity and an appointment in charge of a station on the Pinkenba line. That was right, but the relatives of this young man should be treated in the same way. Highly-paid servants of the State were often sick for months and years and their pay was not stopped. He saw a vote of £1,000 on the supplementary Estimates for the widow of the late Mr. Drew, who had drawn a handsome salary for years, and they had an instance of another gratuity of the kind this evening. Gratuities had also been given to the widows of men who had been members of that House, but when they came to the lower paid men, who did hard manual work, there seemed to be a cast iron rule that no compensation should be paid to their relatives. He was glad the hon. member for Maryborough had supported the claim he had made, and but for the lateness of the hour many other hon. members on both sides would have been there to support it. He hoped the Minister and the Commissioner would reconsider the position they had taken up in the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The case had been thoroughly threshed out, and he did not think there was anything more to be said about it. He had striven to deal justly with all such cases. No doubt the parents suffered a great loss in the death of this young man, but what would have happened if he had married? He did not see that his father had any claim on the department, and no compensation had been given in such a case before.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): It was inexpressibly shocking that the Minister placed so little value on the sentimental feeling between father and son, that he used the argument that, if this young man had got married, his afflicted parents would get no compensation. Yet they had sent 250 able-bodied, strapping men, the flower of the manhood of Queensland, to South Africa to fight the Boers, and they had insured their lives in a certain insurance office, at the expense of the State. Those men were not engaged in any work for the State; they were doing nothing to develop the industries or resources of the colony—they were simply sent away to pot Boers in South Africa; and while the Government guaranteed those whom they left behind against pecuniary loss, what did they do in the case of a public servant who died in the service of the Railway Department? Nothing; no compensation was given. The father of this young man, if he had married, would have seen him occasionally in the flesh, but now all he had was the remembrance of the son he had reared, educated, and supported, and who lost his life in the service of the State. More

should be done in the way of compensation to the soldiers of industry. They had just seen that the widow of a solicitor, who had been in receipt of a high salary, was granted £1,000; but the average man received no consideration. This young man received only 6s. a day, and his father received the same, after nineteen years' service; and yet any adventurer who came to the colony and who volunteered for the Transvaal was insured for £250! If that was the treatment meted out to Civil servants, not many would seek positions in the Government service. Queensland should treat her industrial warriors better.

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): The Minister was inclined to be sympathetic in the case of the young man referred to, but his sympathy did not take a practical form.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are dealing with the money of the public.

Mr. GIVENS: He knew that. The hon. gentleman who introduced the matter, said that the young man had lost his life owing to the negligence of someone in the Railway Department. If a man was working for a private employer, and became injured through his negligence, he could enforce a claim for compensation in a court of law, and the relatives of this young man, who had been killed through the negligence of another servant of the department, were certainly entitled to compensation. It appeared to him that whenever highly paid Civil servants died the House was ever ready to vote large sums of money to their relatives. He did not altogether cavil at that, because it was very hard for a family to lose its breadwinner, but he claimed that the relatives of a man who was only getting 6s. a day were equally entitled to sympathetic consideration. What hon. members on his side demanded was that there should be no favours shown. Although, as pointed out by the Minister, the young man in question left no widow, yet his parents and younger brothers were to some extent dependent upon his earnings. The case was a very hard one, and should receive favourable consideration at the hands of the department. He protested emphatically against class distinctions being drawn when dealing with the relief of those who were left behind by servants of the State. The facts had been admitted by the Minister, and he trusted they would be dealt with in a broad spirit of fair play.

Mr. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): He had been much struck by the ejaculation of the Secretary for Railways, in reply to the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, "This is the people's money." No doubt it was; but when it was proposed to grant £1,000 to the widow of a man who had drawn a large salary from the State, nobody protested that it was "the people's money." When it was a question of raising the salaries of highly paid Civil servants, or granting gratuities to their widows, there was great unanimity on the part of hon. members opposite, but it seemed to him that there was infinitely greater reason for giving compensation to the aged parents of a poorly paid servant of the State who was killed while in the execution of his duty. It would be a graceful and proper act on the part of the Commissioner and the Minister to grant some compensation in the case that had been mentioned. He was pleased to hear the Minister say that he was going to restore the lengthsmen's wages and reduce the probationary term to six months. The hon. gentleman said the men themselves would be surprised, because they never expected it, but he could assure him that they did expect it. However, as the restoration was to be made, he did not think they would have much cause for complaint in the future. The decision of the Commissioner to make a

reduction in the charge for carrying starving stock was very wise, and he deserved credit for it. He knew that through the railway being extended thousands of sheep had been saved, through being trucked to places where there was plenty of grass and water, and people were able also to save their stud stock by being able to get fodder by rail.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*): There were exceptional circumstances in connection with the case he brought forward at an earlier stage, just as there were exceptional circumstances in connection with this case. He said that in all cases where people in the employ of the State, and in receipt of low wages, happened to be killed in the execution of their duty, through no fault of their own, it was the duty of the State to provide some compensation.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*) asked whether the Minister was prepared to take this case into consideration and give compensation to the parents?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So far, the mind of the Railway Department was made up, and the application had been refused over and over again. The Commissioner had a duty to perform to the public, and it was impossible for him to yield to every claim. There were certain cases where it was desirable that the Commissioner should yield, and in those cases he gave compensation. This young man was shunting when he met with the accident which led to his death. He was ill eight or ten months before he died, and he got full pay during the whole of the time. If the House liked to vote £100 to £500 to the father of this young man it was the privilege of the House to do so, and he hoped a motion for compensation would be brought forward so that the question might be tested on its merits.

Mr. BRIDGES (*Nundah*) thought the Commissioner only did his duty in resisting those claims for compensation. The father had already been reinstated in the service, partly on account of the accident to the son. He did not want to go too far, but there were two sides to this matter. All Civil servants should be compelled to insure their lives, and if they did not take that precaution the Government were not to blame if they lost their lives and their relatives received nothing by way of compensation.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): He was not acquainted with the circumstances of the case, and if they followed the example of the hon. member for Nundah they never would know anything about it. As far as he could gather, the accident was not attributable to the negligence of the lad, but was, to some extent, contributed to by the negligence of other men in the railway service. The Government apparently sheltered themselves behind the plea of "common employment." The doctrine of "common employment" was that if a person was in the employ of another person, and was injured through the negligence of another servant, he could get no compensation; but that doctrine was exploded long ago in England. It was now recognised there that if a person received an injury through his own negligence his employer was not liable for compensation; but if the accident was contributed to by the negligence of other servants of the employer, the employer was liable all the same. That was now admitted to be the principle upon which compensation should be based. Although a man was not married, he might have others dependent upon him, and surely aged parents were as much entitled to compensation as a wife. He did not say that compensation should be given in the case of every accident, but the system they now worked under was an atrocious one. He believed there should be a State system of insurance.

The nucleus of that might be the insurance of all servants of the State, and then the system might be extended to include people outside the State employ who preferred State insurance. Whilst matters remained in their present chaotic condition, there would be frequent claims for compensation, and those claims should be considered in the most favourable light, because the State should not only set the example to private employers in regard to wages, but in regard to such things as claims for compensation for accidents.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. V. Chataway, *Mackay*): What the hon. member for South Brisbane had said with reference to the definition of "common employment" was very interesting, and would be very instructive if it bore on the case before the Committee. With the views of the hon. member on State insurance he was very much inclined to agree. As the hon. member had said that he did not know the details of the case, he (Mr. Chataway) might state that the young man was about twenty years of age, and that the case—if he remembered rightly—was not one in which the person injured was engaged in shunting, or in which there was negligence on the part of a fellow employee. He understood that the young man was running along the platform, and that he fell over a barrow and was struck by an engine, and that he received such injury to his back as caused a painful illness, which resulted in his death. Those, he understood, were the circumstances of this most deplorable accident. An inquiry was subsequently held at the hospital, or partly at the hospital, and the sufferer himself stated there that no one was to blame for the accident but himself. He was sure that if hon. members who took a particular interest in the case would call on the Minister or the Commissioner, either of those gentlemen would be ready and anxious to show them the papers in connection with the case, and the reasons which induced them to arrive at the conclusion they did arrive at.

* Mr. McDONNELL: The hon. gentleman was not correct in his facts. In the first place, the young man was twenty-five years of age; and in the next place, he met with the accident while shunting. He was getting on his engine while coming from the Central Station, tripped over a barrow which had been placed on the platform by one of the officials, and fell between the engine and the platform. It was true that an inquiry was held at the hospital, but the young man, who had his back broken and was mangled by the accident, was in a delirious state when his evidence was taken; and he was informed that when he wished to make some statement about the stationmaster he was stopped by Mr. Horniblow, the locomotive engineer, who conducted the inquiry. His relatives might have no legal claim for compensation, but the higher law of humanity should guide the Government in such a matter; and the case, which was an exceptional one, was certainly deserving of far more consideration than the Minister had given to it to-night. If the Minister would give a promise that he would favourably consider the matter, he would not press it any further. He was surprised at the hon. member for Nundah talking about them bringing pressure to bear on the Commissioner, seeing that that hon. member was frequently at the railway office looking after a reduction of the fares to Nundah, and trying to get more train accommodation. All the pressure hon. members on his side had brought to bear in the matter was brought in the light of day, and they only asked that the case should receive fair consideration. The late Mr. Gill, to whose widow it was proposed to grant a gratuity of £1,000, had for months and months previous to his death received leave of

absence on full pay for two and three months, and in one instance for six months, to recruit his health. He did not object to that, but he thought that in the present case—where a young man who had been receiving only 6s. a day, and before that a much less wage, had met his death in the performance of his duty—his relatives had a very good claim for compensation. The hon. gentleman tried to make the Committee understand that, owing to his son's death, the father had been reinstated, but that was not the fact. He was in the employ of the department for six years before his son died, and had been in the service—with, he thought, two intervals—for a period of nineteen years. He hoped the Minister would give some assurance that the matter should have consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was very anxious to go on with the business, and he did not think hon. members could throw any more light on the case. If the hon. member for Fortitude Valley would call on the Commissioner some morning when he (Mr. Murray) was in the office, the matter could be gone into, and he would see whether anything could be done.

Mr. McDONNELL: He would accept the suggestion of the hon. gentleman in the hope that he would be able to do something. He believed the hon. gentleman was desirous of doing what was fair.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is what I always strive to do.

Mr. DAWSON: He had been waiting for a long time to state a grievance the Northern people suffered from—those of them, at least, who were obliged to travel by the s.s. "Barcoo," land at Gladstone, and take the train there to Brisbane. The way the service was arranged was this: When the "Barcoo" got into Gladstone it met the mail train, and the train ran right through. Then there was plenty of accommodation on the train for passengers. Those, however, who came down in the "Barcoo" and took what was called "a goods train" had to put up with great inconvenience. He had had experience of it on one trip. He had been very bad from *mal-de-mer* on the voyage, and was very weak and exhausted by the time he got to Gladstone. He reached Gladstone about half past 7 o'clock in the morning, and was shot off the steamer on board the train. The train left at 8 o'clock in the morning, and the nearest place he could get a cup of tea was Bundaberg, which was reached at half past 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Then there was only one little carriage—which was fit to accommodate about four people—and ten were jammed into it like sardines in a tin. They had to sit bolt upright. They were not even able to move their elbows.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was some time ago.

Mr. DAWSON: No, it was not. The same thing was going on now. It was not that there was not sufficient accommodation along the line where passengers could obtain refreshments, or that the trains did not waste time at the different stations.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is the same on every train that comes down.

Mr. DAWSON: He did not know whether there was any conspiracy between the caterer at Bundaberg and the department; but the train pulled up a long way from the stations along the line, and neither the guard nor anyone else informed passengers how long it was going to stop there. At one place it stopped twenty minutes, at another half-an-hour. At a third place it pulled up about 200 yards away from the station and remained there three-quarters of an hour. The passengers did not know it was going to stop so long, and, therefore, did not get necessary refreshments. On the occasion he referred to there was an unfortunate woman, with two

children, among the passengers, and they were so much exhausted that he took the liberty of telling her to go and get food, and said that if the stationmaster or porter allowed the train to go without her he would report him. In that way he delayed the train until she could get something. He was told that this was the continual experience of travellers, and it was evidence of bad management. There were about a dozen houses of accommodation along the line, and, notwithstanding all these stoppages, passengers were unable to get anything from 8 o'clock in the morning until half-past 3 in the afternoon.

Mr. KERR: The Minister always travels in a special train.

Mr. DAWSON: Of course, and so did the Commissioner. If one of the officials of the department would travel *incog.*, things would soon be altered.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was rather a difficult matter to alter the train service on that line to suit the "Barcoo." He was surprised to hear the hon. member say he could get nothing to eat from the time he got into the train in Gladstone at 7 o'clock in the morning until he got into Bundaberg at half-past 3 in the afternoon, because another hon. member, who came down by the "Barcoo," and travelled by the same train, had told him that he had not suffered any of that inconvenience. He would see if it was possible to provide better accommodation for persons travelling by that train.

Mr. STORY (*Balonne*): He had come down in the "Barcoo" to Gladstone, and from there had travelled in the same train, and at one place which he did not know, but which they reached between 11 and 12 o'clock, the train stopped for three-quarters of an hour, and he went with others to an accommodation house a little to the right of the line, and got bottled beer and a good dinner, well cooked, and evidently prepared for passengers by that train.

Mr. DAWSON: Perhaps the people of that place knew the hon. gentleman was coming and made special provision for him.

Mr. STORY: Your small wit is very absurd, for they did not know I was coming or who I was.

Mr. DAWSON: They had only to look at the hon. gentleman to know that he was a distinguished person, and they would make provision for him, naturally. He believed that a station called "Rosedale" was reached between 12 and 1 o'clock, and though there used to be a place there where persons travelling could get refreshment, since the completion of the line to Bundaberg and the contract let to the caterer there, the people at Rosedale had even been refused permission to have a little stall on the railway siding at which passengers could get a cup of tea and a scone. Another thing that struck him as peculiar was that the guard of the train did not appear to know how long the train would stop at any station. Guards of trains on other lines went along their train when it reached a station and told the passengers how long it would stop. The want of carriage accommodation on the train to which he referred was the fault of the department in not providing more rolling-stock.

Mr. STORY: The hon. member had related his experience on a certain journey, and the Committee accepted his statement as absolute truth. When he (Mr. Story) also related an experience which was just as absolutely true, the hon. member had exercised his small satire, as he always did, and said that he was a remarkable person, and had been prepared for. The hon. member knew that to be utterly untrue. They did not know who he was, and he had not taken it upon himself, as the hon. member had done, to stop the train and tell the stationmaster that if he let it go he would report

him. He had not made himself so well known as the hon. member, but he had had sufficient energy to look out for himself.

* Mr. HARDACRE: He had not travelled by the ordinary train, but it was not correct to say that on the mail train things were all right, because they were not. That train left Gladstone at 3:45, and did not reach Bundaberg until 8:20, and passengers could not get a cup of tea on the journey. There was no reason why that should be so, and he had heard many complaints on that line, especially by second-class passengers. He hoped there would be some improvement in the matters he had referred to. He also complained that there was no letter-box on the trains running on the Gladstone line, and he thought there was also a necessity for a small sleeping car on that line. Women and children were bundled out at Emerald at 5 o'clock in the morning—Emerald was a cold place—and they had to wait there till 6:30, and even later sometimes. A small sleeping car would avoid that. With reference to the Central mail service, he did not complain about there being three mail trains per week on the Central line, but he complained about the service from Brisbane to the Western districts in the Central division of the colony. There should be some improvement in that service, because at present it was dislocated. He thought the trains for the West should leave on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights, instead of on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights, as that would accelerate the service to the West by a day on each occasion, and the same thing applied to the return journey. Instead of leaving on Tuesday morning, the return train should leave on Monday morning; that would make a break of a day and a-half.

Mr. DAWSON: Rockhampton is fairly favoured.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes, but the Western districts were not fairly favoured. He asserted that a passenger leaving Brisbane for Winton would get there sooner than another leaving Brisbane for Emerald at the same time. Some six months ago a guard on the Clermont line had been accidentally killed while doing his duty, and he would like to know if any compensation had been given to his widow and children.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: With regard to all the complaints made by the hon. member, he had travelled on the line referred to, but he had heard none of them, and had never suffered any inconvenience. The little wants the hon. member had referred to the department would try to remedy, but they could not attain a high state of efficiency all through the colony in a short time. With regard to the guard who was accidentally killed, £150 had been paid to his widow.

Mr. DAWSON asked if anything was being done in reference to the burning question of supplying special carriages for aliens in the North. At the present time passengers complained that they had to put up with about 500 different smells when travelling by train. He hoped the matter would receive consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You have my sympathy there. I quite agree with you.

Question put and passed.

MAINTENANCE BRANCH.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS moved that £404,206 be granted for the maintenance branch. There was a very large increase due chiefly to the relaying of lines with 60-lb. rails. In the Southern division there was the relaying of Northgate Junction to Sandgate, £3,055; Toowoomba to Gowrie, £3,535; Curra to Croydon Junction, £20,000 on account; and Croydon Junction to Maryborough, £4,570. In the Central division there was the relaying of

the line from Westwood to 59 miles, £14,000 on account. In addition to that, there were increases granted to certain officers. In the traffic branch the stationmasters and clerks received special increases to the amount of £300. Then there were guards, porters, and other labourers who received increases. There were special classification increases of £1,600, and for the special restoration of wages £2,068. There were also increases in the Central and Northern division.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*) asked how the contract on the Main Range was getting on?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is nearly complete.

Mr. KERR asked if any fines had been inflicted for delay? He considered that the contractor had very little knowledge of railway contracting, and that it would be much better if the department undertook the work by day labour and under their own inspectors. He should be glad to know whether the Nogoia and Comet bridges were to be rebuilt as low-level bridges. During flood time the trains were greatly delayed, and boats had to be used. He thought the bridges ought to be high-level bridges. If they were so constructed the grades could be greatly reduced.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In reply to the hon. member he might say that the contractor on the Main Range had been a long way over his time, but the work was well done. It was just completed, although there certainly had been some difficulty in keeping the contractor up to his contract. It was rather a difficult matter to institute a comparison between the cost of having the work done by contract and by the department. In reference to the bridges referred to by the hon. member, they would be high-level bridges, and there was also a sum of money down for a new bridge over the Dawson. As the hon. member knew, the Dawson Bridge was a large contract. It was in flooded country which could not all be bridged, but it would be a high-level bridge.

Mr. HARDACRE: He had it on good authority that the contract referred to by the hon. member for Barcoo could have been done cheaper and better by day labour, supervised by the officials of the department. When the Nogoia Bridge was rebuilt, it would be of great advantage to the locality if there could be a footway provided for passengers.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That will be provided.

Question put and passed.

LOCOMOTIVE BRANCH.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS moved that £316,718 be granted for the locomotive branch. In the Southern division the number of enginemen, firemen, and mechanics was increased by 156, and the vote for workmen coming under that heading was increased from £95,000 last year to £115,000 for the present year. In the Central and Northern districts also there was a large increase in the number of hands employed, which raised the vote considerably above the amount granted last year.

Mr. KERR asked if anything had been done to improve the lighting of the engine-shed and yard at Rockhampton? He knew that shunting had been done at night in the yard with only a roof lamp and the men striking matches to see the points. That was a state of affairs that should not exist.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS said that attention had been directed to the matter; also to the question of defective engines raised by the hon. member on a previous occasion. They would be inquired into, and steps would be taken to do what was necessary.

Question put and passed.

STORES BRANCH.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS moved that £4,628 be granted for the stores branch.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again at a later hour of the day.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 2 o'clock.