

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 13 JULY 1876

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 13 July, 1876.

Ipswich Waterworks.—Want of Confidence Motion.

IPSWICH WATERWORKS.

Mr. PETTIGREW, pursuant to notice, asked—

Why is it, after accepting contractor Brigg's tender for labor connected with the Ipswich Waterworks, that they do not allow him to proceed with the work immediately?

The PREMIER said—

The Government have not prevented Mr. Brigg from proceeding with the work. Mr. Brigg's tender was accepted on the 12th instant.

Mr. PETTIGREW moved—

That the House do now adjourn,

and said, that he did so for the purpose of getting a much more satisfactory reply than that which had been given to him by the honorable Premier. Mr. Brigg had been announced as the successful tenderer some

weeks ago, and his name had appeared in all the papers as the successful tenderer; and yet it appeared that it was not until his (Mr. Pettigrew's) question had been tabled on the previous day, that Mr. Brigg had been allowed to commence the work.

The PREMIER said, he might inform the honorable member, that after the tender of Mr. Brigg was accepted, the matter had to go through the Cabinet, and then to the Executive, in order to be ratified; but he had written on the papers, the word "Immediate," in order that there should be as little delay as possible.

The question was put and negatived.

WANT OF CONFIDENCE MOTION.

Upon the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on the motion—

"That Ministers do not possess the confidence of this House necessary to enable them to carry measures of importance to the public welfare,"

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Sir, I certainly thought that the honorable member for Stanley, who moved the adjournment last evening, would have led off the debate this afternoon; but that honorable gentleman seems simply to have moved the adjournment for the purpose of breaking up the discussion, and allowing it to come on at a later time. Now, sir, I must confess that I listened to the arguments brought forward by the honorable mover of this resolution with—I scarcely know what name to give it—with a great deal of dissatisfaction.

Mr. PALMER: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: When the honorable member chose to repeat a long list of grievances which he attempted to father upon the present Government, simply because some of the members of it belonged to the late administration, I think it was about the furthest fetched argument he could have got. I think also that when the honorable member endeavored to back up those arguments by some quotations from "Todd's Parliamentary Government" as to the constitutional usage in such cases, he not only failed to prove his case, but succeeded in proving exactly the opposite. The very argument used by the honorable member, last evening, could be used against the late Government, perhaps, but certainly not against the present. Now, what is the case? The present Government, so far from being composed of the late Government, contains three new members, and there is one who has only been three months in office; whilst of the late Government there is only the honorable the Premier. The late Colonial Treasurer, who took an active part in the administration of the Government during the absence in England of the late Premier, has left the Government. I do not see, therefore, how the actions of the late Government can be fathered on us. Those honorable members who wanted to bring charges against the late administration have

already had an opportunity of doing so during the present session; and we know with what result. It has been stated by the honorable member for Ravenswood, who has taken a very active part in this matter, and who has spoken very strongly on the subject, that it was in consequence of the vote of want of confidence in the earlier part of this session that the Ministry has been reconstructed. But I think the honorable member was in error in making that statement, inasmuch as the cause of the reconstruction was the illness of the late Premier, and also the projected absence from the colony of the late Colonial Treasurer, which is to take place at a very short date. It was not from any opposition given in this House that the late Ministers resigned, but in accordance with an expression of opinion from their own supporters, that it would be impolitic to grant moneys to a Government whose Treasurer was about so soon to leave, and that it was but fair to ask who were to be the successors before the money was voted. I think that should be sufficient answer to the statement that it was in consequence of a vote during the present session that the Ministerial changes had taken place. It has been stated by honorable members, and by parties outside of this House, that the vote to which I refer was something like an adverse vote. To that I reply, that if it was, there have been many adverse votes in this House. I think the honorable member for Port Curtis, when at the head of the Government, had more than one adverse vote—when he had only a majority of one, which was obtained in a manner well known to every honorable member. We know how the honorable member's Government was continued in office on one occasion by Mr. Pritchard crossing over, and by so doing losing for ever the confidence of those who returned him. We also know that another honorable member, the late Mr. Handy, kept the Government in power by voting with them at the last moment. Therefore, I think on the subject of adverse votes, honorable members opposite should say very little.

Mr. McILWHAITH: What have we to do with that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is another matter I wish to deal with. A great many strictures were made by the honorable mover of the resolution as to the appointment of my honorable colleague the present Premier, but I think if the honorable member had recollected for one moment, he would have seen that there was no choice in the matter—that His Excellency the Governor had the power and exercised it as he thought proper. It has been asserted by the honorable member for Port Curtis, notwithstanding it had been previously denied, that the whole thing was a job—that there was a stipulation made that if Mr. Macalister resigned the Premiership he was to be appointed Agent-General. But the best answer that can be given to that charge

is the statement which was made by Mr. Macalister himself in this House.

HONORABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : Oh, oh.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : It is very easy for honorable members to laugh, but facts are facts, and I will point out to them that there was no foundation for such a statement. I know very well where it emanated from.

Mr. PETTIGREW : Where ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : From the honorable member himself. The real facts are these, as stated by Mr. Macalister, that when he tendered his resignation he offered no advice to His Excellency the Governor. His Excellency had not asked for any. Under those circumstances, I ask, how it was possible that Mr. Macalister could have imposed any condition upon his successor when he did not know who that successor would be ? Mr. Macalister had, in fact, as much to do in nominating the present Premier as the honorable member for Port Curtis had.

HONORABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : Oh, oh.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I am really astonished that any set of thinking men can suppose that stipulations could be imposed by a man who had nothing to give in return. But that is not the only thing which had been most industriously circulated to the detriment of the Liberal party.

Mr. PETTIGREW : Who do you call the Liberal party ?

Mr. PALMER : What about Mr. Mein ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The same argument applies to Mr. Mein as to the other, and I can assure honorable members most confidently that there was no stipulation made either that Mr. Macalister should have the Agent-Generalship or that Mr. Mein should be appointed Postmaster-General. These matters were decided on their merits ; and, as regards the appointment of Mr. Macalister, if it requires any defence, I am here quite prepared to defend it. I state, most unhesitatingly, that Mr. Macalister is the only man who should have been appointed Agent-General ; if there must be an Agent-General, there is no man who is so well qualified in every way to fill it. Mr. Macalister has deserved it ; there is no man in the colony who has sacrificed more than he has for it ; he has sacrificed his professional prospects for the benefit of the colony, and he is now sacrificing himself to the party : he might have been a wealthy man had he not devoted his time and energies to the party of progress. There has been another thing industriously circulated to try and injure the position of the Liberal party, their past leaders, and their present leaders. It is this, that it has been stated in this House, and has been said in the public prints, that Mr. Hemmant was sent for by His Excellency the Governor to form a Government but had refused to do so, and had subsequently made overtures to the

honorable member for Port Curtis to form one from the other side of the House. Now, the first part of this statement was denied by Mr. Hemmant when he addressed his constituents at Bulimba, and the latter part has been denied by the honorable member for Port Curtis, so that that ought to be sufficient. There are only two men in the colony who can give an account of what took place—namely, His Excellency the Governor and Mr. Hemmant—and I think, therefore, that any statements made to the contrary must be taken as mere hearsay against the positive denial given by Mr. Hemmant. These statements have been circulated for the one purpose of breaking up the Liberal party, as also the statement that their late leaders were selling the whole lot.

HONORABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I was told that the honorable member for the Kennedy was the informant of what I have mentioned, but I wrote to Mr. Hemmant and got from him the most positive statement to the contrary.

Mr. PALMER : Contrary to what ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Why, to the statement made by the honorable member for the Kennedy to the effect that His Excellency had sent for Mr. Hemmant, who had refused to form a Ministry. But the statement I am most anxious to contradict, and that most positively, is that Mr. Hemmant made overtures to the honorable member for Port Curtis, when he found he could not carry on the Government himself. I think the same thing appeared in a newspaper, in a letter from the Brisbane correspondent of the *Wide Bay and Burnett News*, which I have no doubt some honorable member will be able to identify. There have been other slanders circulated, and that very industriously, and also statements which I am quite sure have only been made with the object of catching a few votes. One of these catch-vote statements appeared in the paper the other evening, which no doubt would carry weight with some honorable members. I am quite sure that many of those honorable members whose names appear in that paragraph have never been consulted, but their names have been bandied about as likely to form a new Ministry. Now, although everything may be fair in war, yet I think there should be some slight grounds for publishing a rumour of that kind.

Mr. MOREHEAD : What is the name of the paper ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The *Telegraph* of last evening. I wish to warn honorable members that, before giving their votes, they should endeavor to ascertain the real history of the numerous statements which have been made ; for, after having done so, I think they will be rather chary of going further. It was stated by the honorable member for Maranoa, last evening, that, in my speech to my constituents, I said that I

was not prepared to go on with railway extension. The quotation read by the honorable member last night was :—

“Before another mile of railway was undertaken, there ought to be a competent engineer appointed who would be responsible not only to the Government, but to the country.”

He brought that forward as an argument that I am opposed to the construction of railways; but he forgot to read a few lines lower down :—

“This want might be remedied in a very short time. The House would, no doubt, be asked to vote the salary of such an officer; and, as soon as he was appointed, the railways might proceed.”

If the honorable member had read the whole of that extract, I should not have felt called upon to advert to the subject.

Mr. McLLWRAITH: That was not quoted by me at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I noted it down on my paper at the time.

Mr. McLLWRAITH: Well, you made a wrong note.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will now proceed, sir, to deal with the arguments brought forward by the honorable member, in moving this motion. The honorable member stated last night—

“There was not the slightest doubt that the reasons given by the Government for withdrawing from the railway policy which had always belonged to the Liberal party were based upon a state of things brought about by themselves. The late Ministry entered office with a surplus of £240,000, and they had left with a deficit variously estimated at from £40,000 to £100,000, while the Treasurer left office within two or three days after making the announcement of that deficit, and before his speech could be answered in the House. This was due to the culpable practice of undertaking public works to gain political support.”

Now, sir, this culpable practice to gain political support was brought about by whom? The honorable member for Maranoa was the first Minister for Works in the Macalister Ministry, and he continued in office until he was succeeded by the honorable member for Maryborough, who is the head and front of this motion of want of confidence. These two members had between them the disposal of not only this £240,000, but they are also responsible for the present deficit; and the whole of the arguments brought forward by the honorable member for Maranoa, instead of falling on the shoulders of the Government, rest on the shoulders of those two honorable members. And I think when the country sees it in that light, they will no longer blame the present Ministry for what they had no hand in, but those who had the manipulation of the public works of the colony. There is no doubt the honorable member for Ravenswood has been to blame. He has been blamed by the late Treasurer;

and if the honorable member for Maranoa intended last night to throw discredit on the present Government by that statement, he made a great mistake; he has thrown discredit on one of his strongest supporters in this movement.

Mr. McLLWRAITH: No.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I maintain, sir, that the late Minister for Works had the disposal of these moneys, and so far as the last remark of the honorable member for Maranoa that “this was due to the culpable practice of undertaking public works to gain political support,” is concerned, I think the Government need take very little trouble to justify themselves with members of this House. I should like to ask, sir, what has brought about this combination between the occupiers of the Opposition benches and the honorable member for Ravenswood? That honorable member and some other honorable members on this side of the House—I think the honorable member for Stanley—have taken an active part during the debate in trying to throw discredit on the present Government, and to oust them from office, but I say the Government have accepted office from a sense of duty; and whatever may be said, they intend to do their duty, and if defeated, they will, at all events, be defeated like men.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: But, sir, I say that this system of going about circulating reports for the purpose of trying to gain credit and to bring about a state of things which some honorable members desire, is a course of proceeding which we might very well retaliate, if we chose to do so; but we decline to go into anything of the sort. I should like to know what the honorable member for Ravenswood proposes to do in the event of this motion being carried. He has stated it as his opinion that the present Government are too weak to carry on the affairs of the country, and that it should be replaced by a strong Government, and I would ask, who the members of that Government could be? Is the honorable member for Ravenswood to be Minister for Lands, with the honorable member for Port Curtis at the head of the Government? and is the land policy of that honorable member, as enunciated at Maryborough, to be adopted by the opposite side? And are their respective policies to be made to fit together? If they cannot be fitted together, how is it to be supposed they can form a strong Government? It is possible that the honorable member for Ravenswood imagines that with the assistance of the whole of the Opposition he may succeed in turning out the present Government, and that then, having the ball at their feet, they will be able to unite the Liberal party under their banner; but I think the Liberal party should look with suspicion on any set of men who require an Opposition so entirely opposed to them in every shape and form, to assist them in

turning out the present Government. We know very well the object of the Opposition in trying to turn out the Government. That they would try to do so has been predicted for some time. It is now something like two years ago since it was mentioned that before the ten years' leases fell in, they would make a strong struggle to gain the reins of power, so as to have the manipulation of the lands. It may be that they disclaim any intention of renewing those leases, but there are other ways of dealing with the lands, and if they have the disposal of them, there can be little doubt that they will be shut up from settlement for a long time to come. I think the honorable member for Ravenswood threw down the gauntlet when he said the Government are too weak to carry on the affairs of the colony, and that the Liberal party are prepared to fall in with him; and if the other side are prepared to stand alongside of him and support him, then, I say, as was said by the honorable member for Toowoomba, the political millennium has come. I think I may also refer to another honorable member who is opposed to the present Government, that is the honorable member for Stanley. Now, the grounds of his opposition, I think he stated very plainly to his constituents. He has been disappointed; but that is a personal affair with the Premier, not with the Liberal party, and I cannot understand how a man could sacrifice the interests of his constituents and his party for a merely personal matter. There is no question of policy that the honorable member can bring against the Government, nor can any honorable member on the other side, or in the House. They are not in a position to state the policy of the Government. They tried to father the policy of the late Ministry on the present Government, which they had no right to do, and which the present Government declined to take on their shoulders. The present Government have a policy which they are prepared to place upon the table of the House; but it will not suit the Opposition to allow this. They want to close the mouths of the Ministry, so that, in case we should go to the country, we shall go with nothing to show. But, sir, we have progressive measures, plenty of progressive measures; and the only arguments brought forward against the Government last night, by the honorable member for Maranoa, which were simply repeated by a member on this side of the House, would apply directly to the opposite course. I never heard the honorable member using such arguments, and I know he knows what an argument is well enough.

Mr. McILWRAITH: What about?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The argument was labored from beginning to end. I also want to know, sir, whether the Opposition are prepared to adopt the policy of the honorable member for Ravenswood, in regard to the borrowing of money—to borrow money

to give to the banks, so as to compensate them for the withdrawals caused by sale of lands in the Western Railway Reserve. A more rotten system I never heard of in all my life, and it was condemned in very strong terms by the leader of the Opposition. I think if there is to be a coalition between the parties who are to form the next Government, they will doubt less have the honorable member for Ravenswood; and if his policy of borrowing money and his land policy are to be adopted by the other side, by all means let them do so.

Mr. PETTIGREW said he believed there was no man in that House, or in this colony, who would doubt for one moment that he was a liberal; and he believed he could take his liberalism, so far as liberal principles were concerned, a great deal farther than any member on the Treasury benches. Nay, more, he believed his family suffered more from liberal ideas, and in the liberal cause in the old country than any member in that House. But he wished to take a high stand to-night; he wished to tell that House and the country at large, and the Liberal party, whoever they might be, that they had better be very careful what they were about. When he was first elected to that House he was returned as a liberal, and he had up to the present hour been so, and he should continue to be so as long as he held a seat in it. But, he had learned the meaning of the word "liberal." He had seen men change seats in that House, from one side to the other, and the moment they arrived on the benches on the Government side, they called themselves "liberal." Now, he denied the right and the title of any man sitting on that side or the other to take a particular name. He said, "Liberal is, that liberal does," and "The best proof of the pudding is in the eating of it." Now, they had to deal to-night, and they had had to deal since he came down to the House this session, with what was called a Liberal Government. A Liberal Government if they pleased! who lived on their prescriptive right to liberalism; and he was not aware, nor was anybody else aware until the honorable the Premier discovered it, that if a member sat on the cross-benches on the other side, he must be opposed to the Government. He was not aware of it before, and he wished to have that righted at once. He had consulted "May" on the point; and he found that his friend, the honorable member for Blackall, sat on the other side of the House, probably for convenience sake. He (Mr. Pettigrew) sat there himself last night. The benches on the Government side were sometimes too full—they were all so sincere on that side of the House—and he went over to the other side for convenience sake, and got a nice comfortable seat to hear, to look, and to admire what was going on. Now, although he did so, did it follow that a man had forsaken his principles—principles that were imprinted on his mind

from his birth up to the present hour? Was he going to forsake them for the present Premier, a gentleman who graduated for four years on the other side of the House, or rather on that side under the honorable member for Port Curtis, when that gentleman was Premier, and who then, when that honorable member would not place him in the position of Minister for Works, graduated over to the benches on the other side, and assisted to get up the combination which, without himself (Mr. Pettigrew) would never have occupied the Government benches. He found the brains, and that honorable member found the capital. He was much amused at the Premier's speech the other night, and the less said about that the better. It was a most lamentable spectacle he had ever witnessed out of a tap-room, to put the mildest construction on it. Why, if contractor Bashford, of Ipswich, who was the *factotum* of the Premier, had a glass of beer, and anyone proposed his health and said something about the measures required for the colony, that man would make a better speech than the Premier of the colony did the other night. And he (Mr. Pettigrew) undertook to prove it any night they liked to go and listen to him. When the honorable gentleman who now occupied the position of head of the Government consulted him, it was not as to his being Premier, but with reference to forming a Ministry on a broad and substantial foundation, and his (Mr. Pettigrew's) name was not then mentioned in the list that was brought forward. The honorable gentleman said, "I will look after your interests by and bye;" and he (Mr. Pettigrew) said, "Never mind about me, but make a broad foundation," and his reply was, "I will have a broad foundation." Well, that honorable member came to Brisbane and invited him (Mr. Pettigrew) to come down with him; and he (the Premier) said he could be returned for any electorate in the colony. Of course that was a great point, that he could be returned for any electorate in the colony. But he (Mr. Pettigrew) soon discovered the little game he was practising with the constituencies of the colony—and Rockhampton too. How was Rockhampton done? It was done by the most cowardly, the most dastardly, the most—he had no hesitation in saying that the man who set sect against sect was a coward. And how did the honorable gentleman get the news through? He got it through the same night by means of his position as Postmaster-General and head of the Telegraph Office; and those telegrams were read not only in Brisbane, but read in the public streets of Ipswich, and published in the *Telegraph* newspaper. There was a charge for that honorable member to get over! That was the way the telegraph wires were worked, and could they trust such a man as that to manipulate matters? Why, where would they be? Where would even the honorable the Speaker be if he went to the Warrego? Why,

he might find it reported that he had hung some man there twenty years ago! But if the Liberal party were going to suffer all this—if they were going to be humble, to be meek, and to be mild—he could not help them. All he could say was that he was a liberal, that he was an advanced liberal, and that was what the present Premier was not, as he (Mr. Pettigrew) should show him tonight. Well, after coming to Brisbane, the Premier denied that he made a bargain with Mr. Macalister.

The PREMIER: I do deny it.

Mr. PETTIGREW said: Then he asserted it; and his assertion was worth a thousand of the Premier's denials. He asserted it point-blank and deliberately, that a deliberate bargain was made. He (Mr. Pettigrew) was not present at the bargain, but he knew it, and he should have a few words to say about the denial. The honorable the Premier wanted to form a broad Ministry; and instead of that he actually put himself into a set of wire-pullers, and they manipulated matters until that gentleman came to him on Monday or Tuesday and began to talk to him. He (Mr. Pettigrew) said, "What have you done?" and he replied, "You know we don't want orators in our Government; we don't want men that can speak." Why, thank goodness! he had got men who could not speak at all. The honorable gentleman also said, "We are going to have a respectable Government." They were all to be respectable men, and he almost insinuated that he (Mr. Pettigrew) was not respectable; and the opinion he formed was that he was not respectable enough to have anything to do with them. He (Mr. Pettigrew) had his fist closed to put the Premier's head as near the gutter as he could, but he kept his temper; he thought it was very much better to do so and to humour him; and he thought the colony had got much more amusement out of the matter than out of a police court case. Now, with regard to the honorable the Colonial Secretary, that honorable gentleman commenced his speech by referring to charges against the late Ministry, and he (Mr. Pettigrew) had no hesitation in saying that that Ministry would have been defeated if they had not resigned. That was as clear as the sun at noonday. It was simply by promising they would resign, and that that side of the House should have the formation of a Government, that they were not defeated. That was the real secret, and the reason why he and others voted for them. The fact was, a caucus meeting was held, and it was decided that as soon as that side had arranged matters the Government should resign, and he believed no member on that side of the House would deny it. The result was they did resign, so that his statement was perfectly correct. And then his friend the Premier—for he was his friend—he was not at all a bad-looking gentleman, who was proud of himself and his goodness, and he (Mr. Pettigrew) always admired a man who was

proud of his goodness—was sent for and was quite prepared to form a Government on the seniority principle. Now, it had been shown that the seniority principle was a very rotten one; but, at the same time, he could not adopt the doctrine propounded by the honorable the Attorney-General. The honorable member for Maranoa laid it down that when a gentleman was called upon to form a Government he should be a prominent individual; that he should be an intelligent gentleman, a man of some weight, or the leader of the Opposition, and the honorable the Attorney-General challenged that honorable member upon that, and asked him if he was a prominent and intelligent member, and so on. He was perfectly astonished at the honorable the Attorney-General asking any honorable member if he was a prominent member. The Premier was prominent in the manipulation of matters. In fact, he was prominent in everything that constituted a great mind—so prominent that Disraeli fell into the shade and Gladstone was nowhere. Why he had got the telegraph line within five miles of Cooktown, and the genius of that honorable gentleman found out that he could then run a horse messenger. What wonderful genius! Why, the colony of Queensland ought to rejoice and be happy that they had got such a master mind; that they had got a man so far beyond trivialities. And he said the honorable the Attorney-General did vast injustice to his Premier in referring to any gentleman on the cross-benches or the Opposition benches as having a master mind equal in the slightest degree to the present Premier of Queensland. The honorable the Premier claimed to be Liberal; but he (Mr. Pettigrew) denied in the most solemn terms he could use in that House that he was a Liberal at all. He arrived there a wolf in sheep's clothing, and before he (Mr. Pettigrew) sat down he would prove it to the Liberal party, if proof could do anything for them. That honorable gentleman was one who had served four years in a Conservative Government, who had associated himself with another party to sell the Liberal party, the same as he would sell the sheep with the station, to the squatting party. And when the honorable the Attorney-General talked about dummies and about dummying the lands of the colony, he (Mr. Pettigrew) now charged the Premier of this colony as being one who associated—who had family associations—with dummies.

The PREMIER: I deny it.

Mr. PETTIGREW said, then, he would prove it. He held in his hand a document that he got from the Land Office yesterday, and any honorable member could look at it and fifty more if they wished, for he had his pocket full of them. Now this land, 6,420 acres, was taken up by James McFadden.

The PREMIER: I know nothing about him.

Mr. PETTIGREW said, this James McFadden was a shepherd of Mr. Thorn's father;

at anyrate he was a shepherd. Well, the rents were paid up; the balance of rent, £1,082 2s. 6d. was paid, and the transfer to Mr. John Thorn was approved on the 28th of August, 1874, when Mr. Stephens had actually his Land Bill before the House; that was a fact. That was the way things were manipulated in Ipswich, and why he (Mr. Pettigrew) got such an answer to his question. Then "proof of fulfilment of conditions by George Ord and William Thorn; witness, Charles Thorn, J.P." There was a bailiff actually appointed by that House, and paid a large salary, and that bailiff never went near the land, because according to the documents in the Land Office, he was appointed on the 20th March, 1874, and the transaction took place while the present Premier was a member of the late Government, and he could go there at his leisure. Talk about dummies! They must be honest before they charged other people; they must be honest; they must be faithful; they must be in a position to go at them straight forwardly and honestly. The present Premier he knew had been "trimming" to the other side, and he believed he would give any amount of deeds provided they would keep him in his present position; and the honorable gentleman could go and tell his constituents that from him (Mr. Pettigrew). When the late Government took office the first part of their policy was to deal with the dummy question, but they had only dealt with the Darling Downs. Why did they not deal with land infinitely superior, on this side of the Main Range? Eskdale had been made a set upon. The proprietor of that run thought it would never be looked at; but during one of the gold-seeking expeditions, the Premier went out there, and brought back some blue grass, and said the land was equal, if not better, than that on the Darling Downs; and a gentleman who passed over that country twenty-four years ago, told him (Mr. Pettigrew) within the last two days, that it was better than any country on the Downs, that was classed as first-class pastoral. He said the late Government could not deal with the dummy question. There was always a make-weight—a huge weight coming from the Post-Office against it; and he (Mr. Pettigrew) actually began to believe that this dummying was all fudge; but he did not know so much then as he did now. He had asked the honorable the Minister for Lands:—

"What special object, if any, have the Government, in not appointing a land agent and commissioner for the Ipswich district?"

And the happy, the glorious answer he got, was—one officer for Ipswich and one for Helidon. Now, what was the meaning of one officer at Helidon, he should like to know? How was that answer concocted? He was sure the honorable the Minister for Lands never dreamt of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I did.

Mr. PETTIGREW : said, at any rate, they wanted daylight thrown on that transaction. They wanted a land-agent and commissioner at Ipswich, and they wanted more information. Why, over £16,000 worth of land-orders had passed through the Ipswich office; and the honorable the Minister for Lands had yet to learn a great deal. Now, there was a charge made last night against the other side of the House, and he was honest and strightforward enough to state that that charge was not true; it was not honest, and ought not to have been brought. In 1874, when the most valuable clauses of the Land Bill then brought forward were defeated by the action of the honorable the Attorney-General—the Attorney-General of the present Liberal Government—the Bill was sent to the Upper House; but instead of asking for the resumptions of land which were granted last year, what did Mr. Stephens do? He came down to the House and asked, not for resumptions, but for confiscations. He (Mr. Pettigrew) would take the case of one or two runs. In Mount Stanley Run 120,820 acres were asked to be resumed, and at that particular time he did not believe 5,000 acres had been taken up in the resumed half of the run. Then there were 33,000 acres asked to be resumed from Toromeo Run in the West Moreton district, and not a single selection had at that time been taken up on the resumed portion, nor had any been taken up to the present time; so he had been told by the owner of the run. He could go through the whole list put on the table that day. That list was a farce. The present Government did not want an acre of land to put up in that neighborhood, and he charged them that they had no wish to get the land, and that they would be disappointed if they did get it. If they asked for what land was really wanted, both that and the other House would grant it. What was he told by Mr. Stephens when he brought forward his resolutions asking for large resumptions? He (Mr. Pettigrew) said to that gentleman, "What do you mean; do you mean to resume the whole country; is there no more revenue to be received from that country?" "No," he replied, "I intend to make the Upper House so thoroughly unpopular, that we will be able to rectify it." That was the exact language he used; and a more disgraceful thing than to break up and ruin private families, because it suited the purpose of the Liberal party or any party, he had never heard of. The Ministerial side of the House had made a big bounce about dealing with leases; what were they going to do with them? There need not be much mystery about the matter: if a person leased a building for ten years, if the lease expired he simply went out, unless he got a renewal of his lease. It did not require an Attorney-General to explain that. What, then, was all the noise about, and why were the party on the other side to have special privileges? Looking over upon

the Opposition benches, he did not see a single squatter from West Moreton; that was a significant fact, for it said that when the land was wanted the people must have it. The fact was the whole cry was absurd, and Liberalism must take up a very different position if it wished to be thought honest and respectable. He was now coming to a matter which members on his own side of the House might very well consider. The Estimates had, he believed, been published, but it was said they were favorable to one constituency and not to another. The present head of the Government no doubt was quite prepared to offer any terms whatever, and so anxious was he to do this, that on the previous night he jumped up and met the remarks of the honorable members for Cook and Wide Bay with "Oh, all right, old fellow; all right." What was the meaning of that? Did the honorable gentleman think he could introduce his "all right" policy, and do anything he pleased unless the House agreed to it? Did the Premier imagine for a moment that he had arrived at the dictatorship of the colony? The question of the abolition of classification was a delicate one, and he was happy to say that the honorable Minister for Lands had offered to give him every assistance should there be anything wrong, before the Select Committee for which he had moved. He had put that motion upon the paper because every one of the Ministers seemed to say that classification was a farce. Why should it be a farce? A commissioner was appointed to go and examine lands; he had been not only appointed, but paid £100 a year travelling expenses, and he either went to examine or he did not. Classification ought not to be given up, and if there had been fraud on the part of the commissioner, or in any other way, it ought to be dealt with in the manner in which the honorable the Attorney-General said he was prepared to deal with matters in connection with the land. He was glad to hear the Attorney-General come out so boldly in this question, but at the present moment there were deeds being passed and things being done that he had no hesitation in saying were detrimental to the interests of his constituents. He did not wish to say anything against the present commissioner for Ipswich, but there was a sort of jealousy he did not understand, and if a poor unfortunate German happened to get into the Rosewood Scrub, put his house down there, and dig up some three acres of land around it, then the commissioner by some fluke arrived there, and soon found out that they were three acres of agricultural land. This unfortunate German, with his wife and children, lived by the sweat of their brow, working hard from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof; and then down came the commissioner, spying out the industry of the people, and classifying them as agriculturists. That same commissioner

would go on to the wealthy man who had bigger selections, or who had got some friend at court, but could never see an acre of agricultural land there. He defied any man to ride through West Moreton and take up 7,000 acres of land, and not find three acres equal to any in Rosewood scrub. These were stubborn eternal facts. The present Government said they were liberals, but he would show them a different trick, when they came up for election. There was another abominable thing in connection with the new Land Bill—one of those things, that unless it were altered, would deprive the Government of his support or that of any other liberal member representing an agricultural constituency: it was that when small men applied for a little bit of scrub country, instead of allowing them to ballot for it, there was the Brisbane Queen-street arrangement of auction for the small settler. This he did not hesitate to say was the most abominable provision in any of the Land Bills of the colony. He had carefully watched the statement of Ministers upon that one point—as for the Premier no one could understand what he did say—and his conclusion was that it was the most detrimental and excruciating clause ever put into a Land Bill against the small settlers of the colony. And yet the Government called itself liberal! He hoped some future Attorney-General would arise who was ambitious to sit on the Treasury benches, and who would move an amendment that if carried would altogether destroy this clause in the land measure. The Attorney-General had said during the debate that the House must take the Government as a whole, and not as individuals, and that they were competent to carry any measure that might be brought forward. That might be the opinion of the future Premier, or rather the gentleman who ought to have been Premier if there had not been treachery in the camp, but it was not the opinion of everybody. And what was the opinion of the Premier of Queensland respecting his own colleagues? He could tell those honorable gentlemen. On the previous Saturday night there was, in Ipswich, a street preacher at one corner of the street, and at the other was the honorable the Premier, who like all other men in the possession of power, had no difficulty in getting an audience around him. The Premier had to compete with the preacher, and while the latter was telling his hearers something about the future the former was telling his something about the present. He (Mr. Pettigrew) did not himself hear what was said, but he had no doubt of the truth of the report, and could, if required, bring the witnesses before a committee of the House. What did the honorable the Premier say of his colleagues? He said that the appointment of Mr. Mein was utterly against his wishes, and then he said, "I suppose we shall have to go to the country, but I must get a better Government

than I have at the present moment. Too much Brisbane, sir. They are not popular, sir. I must get shut of three of them at least."

HONORABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear.

Mr. PETTIGREW: The Premier dare not deny it.

The PREMIER: I do.

Mr. PETTIGREW said he was prepared to prove it before any inquiry that might be instituted; that was the way to fix it. This then was the opinion which the Premier entertained of his colleagues. How could it be expected that the House or the country could respect such a man? The honorable the Colonial Secretary stated that the charges brought by the honorable member for Maranoa were brought against the late Government; and he wanted to argue from this that the late Government had the confidence of the House. This he denied again as he had denied before; and so clear was it that the late Government had not the confidence of the House, that unless they had allowed it to be understood that they would retire immediately they would not have got a vote on the night when a motion of want of confidence was raised. In fact, the honorable the present Minister for Lands cleared out of the House before the division, and the honorable member for Toowoomba also went away, while others left the House in disgust. That vote was as thoroughly adverse as any vote ever given in the House, and there was probably no man in the House more thoroughly adverse to the action of the late Government than the present Colonial Secretary, who, at a late hour, was manipulated to join the Government, to make it respectable. Unfortunately, the honorable the Colonial Secretary, in bringing charges against the late Government, brought charges of a very serious character; arguments had also been advanced for the purpose of showing that the late Government were perfectly pure. Instead of that, they were probably the most corrupt Government that ever came into the House since the formation of constitutional government in Queensland. He had taken a little trouble upon the subject. There was a gentleman called Mr. Hodgkinson in the House during last session; and whether he voted for his own appointment to be sent out to the North-west Passage he (Mr. Pettigrew) knew not, but he had it on the undeniable word of the present Premier that the Premier found it to be too expensive to keep him in the House.

The PREMIER: It is not true.

Mr. PETTIGREW said it was perfectly true, and if the honorable gentleman the Premier took out his cheque-book it could be proved. The Colonial Secretary said there had been no stipulation with the late Premier, and he (Mr. Pettigrew) had no doubt that the Colonial Secretary was no party to anything of the

kind. The honorable the Colonial Secretary was above it, but if the honorable gentleman heard the way in which the present Premier spoke about him and his incompetency to make an oration, he would open his eyes. This was what the Premier said of his Colonial Secretary, although he would find it difficult to go to the country without him. He (Mr. Pettigrew) had not the slightest doubt there was not one of the Ministers who felt comfortable on the Treasury benches; they were too much like fish out of water; they knew that very soon the end must come. The Attorney-General, especially, knew which way the wind blew, and would be perfectly satisfied if he could come back and manipulate himself into the next Government. He (Mr. Pettigrew) knew the Attorney-General's principles perfectly, and how he came into the late Government; knew also the opinion formed by the late Premier of that gentleman when he took him into his Ministry. The honorable member for Brisbane had no business to say that he (Mr. Pettigrew) was in opposition; he was for the Liberal party, but the Liberal party pure and simple. He was for the Liberal party more than they were themselves, but he would have it pure, sterling, and honest, with no dummy at its head. The honorable the Colonial Secretary commented upon the fact that the honorable member for Ravenswood would borrow money in England at four and a-half per cent. and lend it in the colony at five per cent. What a miraculous genius it was to discover what the effect of this would be! It was to be hoped, for the sake of the mercantile profession, that the honorable gentleman would at least acknowledge that this was a perfectly safe financial transaction. There seemed at present to be a frightful doubt about borrowing money; but if such money could be used advantageously in the interests of the colony—in reproductive works—it was the duty of the Government to do it. Why did they not stop emigration? Why did they appoint an Agent-General, or, rather, a Plenipotentiary Extraordinary? Why pay him £2,000 a year? Honorable members seemed to laugh at the idea, but take Mr. Macalister's passage out and back, and all the rest, and it came to that amount. What did the honorable gentleman want at Philadelphia when the exhibition was closing? Was it a pleasure trip? He (Mr. Pettigrew) hoped the Premier would pay these costs out of his own pockets, for the House should never pay it if he (Mr. Pettigrew) could help it. He had the greatest respect for the Honorable A. Macalister—the Honorable A. Macalister, C.M.G.—but that gentleman ought to have gone home simply as Agent-General, and with no further titles; and if the Ministry had been fools enough to give him permission to draw upon the cash-box and take away 600 sovereigns, as it was said he had done, and had given him a salary of £1,250, there should be, at some time or

other, a full inquiry into the matter, and the Ministers should be favored with a little mathematical knowledge before the session was over. He approved of the appointment as Agent-General, and would vote for it if it was constitutional, but it must be at the exact price of his predecessors. At the same time he could not but feel that the honorable member went home to England upon terms that were unfavorable to the progress of the colony, and the idea of sending him to Philadelphia, where he would not arrive till the end of August, while the exhibition closed in October, was ridiculous. The idea of Mr. Macalister going to America to help Angus Mackay was a simple farce. The Honorable Arthur Macalister was, no doubt, deserving of good treatment in the House, and would have got it but for the way in which the appointment was made, and that was a way derogatory to the dignity and generosity of Parliament. The entire Parliament would, no doubt, have voted the appointment had it been asked for, but instead of that it was obtained by a regular wire pulling arrangement and system of trimming. He (Mr. Pettigrew) did not wish to be hard upon Mr. Mein who had got the appointment of Postmaster-General; only if this was the way men were to be rewarded for long and faithful service to the Liberal party, the effect would be disastrous. The system upon which the Liberal party, as it had been lately constituted and worked, had been invariably this—that some family connection had been worked in to fill vacant positions, and he believed there was not a single department of the service in which the late Premier had not got some member of his family. The present Premier was working the same thing, instead of appointing men as he ought to do by way of promotion from the departments. The Attorney-General had laid down the principle that votes spoke louder than words. When the Attorney-General destroyed the only liberal Land Bill ever introduced into the House; when he made a statement to his constituents that when he joined the late Government he had arranged to carry out an Education Bill; when he went and made his constituents believe he was a thorough Liberal on the land question—were these occasions when votes spoke louder than words? What did happen? The Attorney-General came down to the House and voted diametrically against the Liberal Land Bill. He (Mr. Pettigrew) happened to get into a discussion with the honorable gentleman in the newspapers, and had the audacity to challenge a statement made to the Oxley electors. The duty of the Attorney-General was to apologise when he had made a mistake, and he (Mr. Pettigrew) maintained now that the honorable the Attorney-General, when he addressed his constituents, stated that he had settled the Education question and would not join the late Government unless they agreed to his Bill.

Having said this, he had a most ample apology to make to the Attorney-General and to his constituents for ever uttering that statement, because he found he was wholly incorrect. When the Attorney-General joined the late Government, the question was brought before the Cabinet, and the late Premier said, with an adjective—"Terms? Why, what terms does he want except to draw his pay?" It seemed then that there were terms, and he (Mr. Pettigrew) humbly apologised to the Attorney-General for stating that he made no terms whatever. Having disposed of that little delicate question, he would now pass on to another matter. If there were to be any further proceedings taken with the dummies, why issue deeds to men who were quite as bad, or probably worse, than those who had dummied the land? He believed, and he knew, and he believed the Premier knew it also, that homesteads had been dummied where nobody ever lived on them; they had not only been dummied and conveyanced, but had been actually sold to the department of which the present Attorney-General was the head. Such was the notorious fact, and what he said was that if one man was stopped all should be stopped; there should be none of this family party business; and his opinion was that if the honorable the Attorney-General was not so anxious to take fees and touch up the people who had a trifle of money, the House would hear less of dummyming than it now did. The fact was that in the eyes of the Liberal party, as it had been constituted by the late Government, dummies meant men who could pay fees; if they could not pay the fees they were not dummies at all. The present Premier was of the same mind as himself, that there was more dummyming going on than was suspected, and that the good men who spent money on the land were literally persecuted; while the poor man, as he was called, who never fenced in his land, dummied away like fun, and if you went to touch him you touched straw. He (Mr. Pettigrew) would undertake to say that the Attorney-General would never bring an action against a man of straw; he rather preferred plucking the fat goose. The next time the honorable the Attorney-General wanted to go for a dummy he had better go direct for the present Premier; that was the finest dummyming speculation in all Queensland at the present time. He would draw the attention of honorable members to a paper that had been laid on the table on the previous evening by the honorable Minister for Lands, in connection with the resumptions. He found that the resolution laid on the table was somewhat after the style of the one that was tabled at the close of the session of 1874. He would read the resolutions so that honorable members might understand what it was. It was:—

"That, in order to encourage the settlement of population in the Settled districts of the Colony,

and in pursuance of Section 10 of 'The Crown Lands Alienation Act of 1868,' this House resolves to resume from the leases of the undermentioned Runs the areas hereinafter specified, as described in the Schedule laid on the Table of this House of the lands proposed to be resumed from the Runs in the said Districts."

Now he found that that embraced the settled districts of the Moretons, of the Darling Downs, and some others; however he wished to point out that of the halves of those runs which had been resumed, leases were given to the occupiers of the same, and he understood that the same resolution as that he had read was brought forward in 1874 by the then Minister for Lands, and was not carried. A point, however, had been made of that on the previous evening, and reasons were given why it was not carried. It was stated that the honorable members opposite were opposed to it, but he had no hesitation in saying, as one who was at the time a supporter of the Government, that at that particular period the House offered no opinion on the matter; in fact it was looked upon as a burlesque at that particular time to place the other Chamber in a false position. He would undertake to state, without a fear of contradiction, that if the present honorable Minister for Lands intended to offer any more land to selectors, he had better withdraw that schedule at once, for there was no more chance of his carrying it now than there was of its being carried in 1874. He stated that in all sincerity, for he wanted to see the industrious hard working people of the colony get lands when they required them, but he did not want a mere bait put before them in order that the Government might afterwards say that the squatters were opposed to them, whilst it was in reality the honorable gentleman on the Treasury benches who wanted the present occupiers to remain in possession of the land. What, he would ask, was the use of resuming land on Cooyar Creek except to allow the present occupiers to graze over it free, gratis, and for nothing? If that was the policy of the present Government he would tell them that they knew nothing beyond the four walls of Brisbane, and that they did not understand the requirements of the colony. At Cooyar Creek at the present moment, not more than one or two selections had been made on the resumed half, and the remainder did not pay one penny of revenue to the colony. The people used it at the expense of the Treasury of the colony, and would buy it at the expense of the hard working people of the colony, the men who would have their taxes increased to meet an over expenditure. The schedule before him should be withdrawn at once, and probably there was no man who understood it better than he did and the Premier of the colony. It was a matter that would do no good to any one beyond the present occupiers of the lands, who would be able to graze over the them free of rent, as they had done for years

past. The honorable Premier had told the people of Ipswich that one of his colleagues was not much of an orator, but no oratory was required in such matters as the land resump-tions. Instead of talking about oratory, why did not the honorable gentleman try to get as much revenue out of the squatters as he could, instead of playing into their hands, as he would be doing by passing those resumptions. He would tell the same thing to the people at every polling place in the colony—even if the honorable Attorney-General was against him—and he knew who would win the day. Moreover, the Legisla-tive Council refused, in 1874, to acknowledge the resumptions then proposed, and what prospect was there, he would ask, of that Chamber passing the proposed resumptions, which were similar, even if the Assembly passed them. He contended that passing them through that House in 1876 would be as great a farce as it was looked upon by every intelligent man to be in 1874. At that time there were no cries of "Divide," no division taken; but the mem-bers of the Opposition looked on and laughed, and those members on the Ministerial side of the House who had no brains, and who were prepared to be sold like a sheep farm, looked on and laughed. Now with regard to another matter: the honorable the Premier stated before he left the Legislative Council that although he had introduced a bill to amend the constitution of that body, it was his intention not to proceed with it; not only so, but the honorable gentleman stated un-mistakeably that he considered that they were a thoroughly respectable and honest Council, and easily to be bought—that he had found them kind and obliging, and that he could do anything he liked with them; so thoroughly obliging were they, that one day he swore in a member of that body, and on the next appointed that member Postmaster-General. He had now a few words to say in regard to the public works policy of the pre-sent Government, and in connection with that, immigration. They had introduced a sort of half public works policy, a sort of maudlin policy—in the South, and in the North, a policy of which nobody knew any-thing. Still the tide of immigration flowed on, and the colony was supposed to be capable of absorbing any amount; but he could tell honorable members that he had lately seen what he had not seen since 1866—a beggar had called upon him for alms. Why, there were hundreds of people at the present time out of work—immigrants might be taken from one depôt to another, it was all the same—there was no work for them, and he would caution the Government to check immigra-tion, unless they were determined to do some thing for the people at once. If they did not, the result would be, that they would im-poverish the working classes, until, at last, a man would be glad to work for nothing. What with Chinamen and blackfellows, their

white countrymen would have, at last, to ask the Government for bread, and what would they get? Why, they would get a stone. That was what they were drifting into, for the Government did not even dream of a public works policy; at the same time they were so pliable, that when the honor-able members for Wide Bay and Cook, on the previous evening, got up to air their grievances, they were told by the honorable the Premier, "You will all be provided for." Now, he considered that something more was wanted than promises. He had tried to bind down the honorable the Premier with promises, nay, more, by every oath that was known in Christendom; he had tried him by a thousand and one oaths, and yet it was no use. He had tried him as a Jew, with the old testament from Genesis to Malachi; he had tried him as a Christian, with the new testament, from Matthew to Revelations; he had tried him from a sheepskin to the Knights of Malta; but the honorable member got out of all. He did not try the honorable member on the Koran, but when the honorable gentleman went to Wickham Terrace, to the little tea party, there the Koran was brought out, placed be-fore him, and he was sworn upon it. But about the public works policy of the Gov-ernment, they heard nothing. It was true that the Premier had said something in his speech about borrowing £100,000, but what in the name of goodness was he going to do with that? Why it was only a fleabite to put roads in order with, and the first flood that came would wash the whole £100,000 away into the gutters, and of that, there was no man more convinced than the Premier himself; it would be simply a stop-gap. A public works policy, was it called?—a mere loan of £100,000 with which to bribe mem-bers of that House. Who was to be bribed in that fashion? The money was to be borrow-ed, and he would ask whether the honorable Premier supposed for one moment that one constituency would be allowed to get more than another. Did the honorable member suppose that they were to find all the money because of their innocence as the victims of the late Premier, and of others, and yet not to have any share; for his part he would see, whether the honorable Premier put one shilling or five pounds in the Estimates, that those Estimates should never pass unless the Stanley electorate was honestly and fairly dealt with, although he represented all constituencies. Now, there was an awfully shady transaction which he was ashamed to bring to light before honorable mem-bers, and which it would be better should be wrapped up as in a blanket and never see the day; still the truth must ever prevail. The late Government, in connection with cer-tain gentlemen, and with the assistance and connivance of the present Premier, had offered to sell the Liberal party to the other side of the House. He believed that charge was one

as fair and as honest as any that had ever been made; he knew it to be a fact also from what had transpired, and from what the honorable member for the Maranoa had stated on the previous evening, that the Premier had been a party to it. The station had been sold, the Premier had gone to England, Mr. Hemmant had left the Ministry, and with it a deficiency in the Treasury, and the poor sheep were to be sold; that was exactly the state of the case. He had something to say about the want of railways and public works. The stoppage of public works was ruin to the farmers to whom he was indebted for his seat in that House, and for whom he intended to say a few words. Last year, when public works were being carried on with spirit, the farmers were in a thriving and prosperous condition; but when those works were stopped, what was their position, as at the present time? Why they had no market for their produce and were nearly ruined; they had a home but no bread to eat. Yet in the face of that the Government talked about some trumphy loan for roads. More than that was wanted. Population was wanted, and something of a reproductive character for that population to do was necessary, to enable the farmer to pay where he purchased. Or was it that the Government wanted homestead after homestead to be abandoned, and the labor of years to go for nothing? He thought that the farming interest was one of the most important in the colony, and that it ought to be developed in this colony in a most unmistakable way; but instead of the Government giving them any assistance, they had even refused to give them an Impounding Act, or to give them any protection whatever; but promised that something should be given in the shape of a Land Bill, which they knew very well would never pass. The peculiar ideas which had been enunciated by the honorable Minister for Lands at Maryborough, would prevent that Bill from ever passing. Now what was wanted was not a Government whose Premier was denouncing his colleagues at one corner of a street of Ipswich, whilst a local preacher was holding forth at the other; but it was a Ministry of strength that was wanted, not one numerically strong, but one strong in intellect, and if the honorable Premier said he had all that strength, he (Mr. Pettigrew) would humbly bow to him and beg to differ from him. There was another matter, and that was with respect to the Pastoral Leases Bill, which they had been told the squatters were particularly anxious to get into their hands. Now, who gave them the privileges they enjoyed under that Bill? A manipulating Government, or a squeezable Government. A gentleman told him to-day that he did not wish the honorable member for Maranoa ever to come into power, because he would not be squeezable, and said he admired a squeezable Government, because he could do what he liked with them. Now, what was

the squeezability of Mr. Lilley, when he was Premier of the colony? He was so squeezable that one-sixth of the whole resumptions, he was told, would pass into the hands of the present proprietors of the runs. So much for a squeezable Government, and so much for the present Government, who were going to carry this precious Land Bill, which was to satisfy everybody. It reminded him of the big Bill he had heard of which was to give everything to everybody, and borrow five millions of money to divide amongst the people of the colony. He maintained that the present Premier had no earthly conception of bringing in a comprehensive measure, and the sooner he abdicated in favor of his colleague the honorable the Attorney-General, the better for the colony. When that honorable gentleman spoke to him about the formation of a Government he never told him (Mr. Pettigrew) he was to be the leader. He wished that to be distinctly understood, because he did not notice until about ten days ago that he had been misrepresented. He looked upon the present Premier as the most dangerous man this colony could possibly possess; a man who had manipulated the telegraph wires for political purposes; who had had telegraph messages sent through, and never paid for them, for political purposes; who had had those messages published in the newspapers, for political purposes; a man who had tried to set sect against sect, and creed against creed; who had tried to range Orangemen against Catholics, and Catholics against Orangemen—he said that man was not fit to lead a young, rising, and important colony like this. He maintained that a man who would condescend to such acts was unworthy of being Premier of Queensland, or to conduct its affairs. That honorable gentleman fancied that he could govern the colony in a dictatorial manner, and imagined that if he went to Rockhampton, he was so popular there that he could succeed in turning out the present representative of that constituency. A man who would set creed against creed, and faction against faction, and stir up strife instead of being a man and a christian—was, he said before the whole colony—a coward. He had no hesitation in saying, and was prepared to prove that at the very time his honorable friend the member for Wide Bay was being hounded down by a certain party in this colony because he happened to second the motion of the honorable member for Kennedy, the present Premier was using his best influence to return a Roman Catholic to that House, and he defied him to deny it. That was why he hated that sort of abomination. He said that this wickedness must be swept from the face of the land. It was one of those things that would end in bloodshed and cruelty. The result would be, that instead of people coming 16,000 miles away from such things, they were arriving in the midst of it, and they found the Premier of the colony fermenting that hotbed of sec-

tarianism. They found him using, what ought to be one of the greatest blessings they could enjoy—the telegraph wire—for the purpose of fermenting quarrels and raising sectarian jealousies throughout the colony, and he openly boasted of it. He (Mr. Pettigrew) said this state of affairs must come to an end, and it should come to an end. It was useless for men to step out of their way to bring people down to that House to try and influence him in his vote. He cared not if all the Stanley electors were before him at that moment, he should vote as an honest man, and as a thorough liberal. He feared no man. He was not like his honorable friend the Premier. If that honorable gentleman had walked into his meeting at Galton, he (Mr. Pettigrew) should not have trembled in his presence; but when he went into the poor Premier's meeting at Ipswich, he trembled all over, and it took him nearly three minutes to get over it. He (Mr. Pettigrew) had determined to have things worked differently to what they had been. What ought to be their blessings must not be made their curse; and, at all events, the telegraph wires must be kept perfectly pure for the objects for which they were first intended; and before that session closed, be it early or late, he had determined that the head of the Telegraph Department should be made responsible to Parliament, and not to the head of a department. That was too important a thing to hand over to either the Premier or any other Minister, to let him manipulate it exactly as he pleased. He did not intend to detain the House longer. He wished tonight to point out to the Liberal party their true and independent course. If wolves came amongst them in sheep's clothing, let them brand them as traitors and turn them out. The man who would sell that party was an enemy not only to that party itself, but to the best interests of the country; and he charged the present Premier, before that House and before all Queensland, as being that enemy. He spoke to the Liberal party, and they might judge of what he said as they pleased.

The PREMIER: I rise, sir, to answer a few of the slanderous statements made respecting myself by the honorable member for Stanley. The honorable member accused me of having entered into a compact with the late Premier to secure my present position, by offering him the appointment of Agent-General. I give that the most direct contradiction, and the best proof I can give in opposition to that statement is the fact that, after Mr. Macalister sent in his resignation, Mr. Hemmant was sent for to form an administration and not myself. In addition to that, we have Mr. Macalister's own words, that he offered no advice to the Governor.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: His word!

The PREMIER: I believe Mr. Hemmant met with the same fate at the hands of

His Excellency. He informed His Excellency that he was about leaving the colony for the old country, and could not, therefore undertake the formation of a Ministry, and he offered no advice, nor did the Governor desire it. The honorable member also stated that I selected land in violation of the Act.

Mr. PETTIGREW: No.

The PREMIER: The honorable member did and I challenge him to prove it.

Mr. PETTIGREW: I rise to contradict the honorable the Premier. What I said was, he had as much interest in those lands—

The SPEAKER: The honorable member is not in order in interrupting.

The PREMIER: I defy the honorable member to prove the accusation, that ever I selected land in violation of the Act. I have heard it stated that that honorable member himself and the honorable member for Ravenswood are dummies. I can say, in the case of the honorable member for Stanley, that it is patent to every one he is a dummy—that he holds a dummed selection—and I can prove it. In the case of the honorable member for Ravenswood, I do not believe it. We hear of everyone being dummies; but the only dummy I know in the House is the honorable member for Stanley, for he holds a selection, to my knowledge, that has been acquired in violation of the Act of 1868.

Mr. PETTIGREW: I know it; one hundred and twenty acres.

The PREMIER: With regard to the assertion of the honorable member respecting the meeting of the honorable member for Rockhampton, that I took advantage of my position as Postmaster-General to send telegrams, I can tell that honorable member and the House that I never sent a telegram to Rockhampton until the meeting was over, and I then asked merely for a fair and honest report of the proceedings. I knew very well how the honorable member for Rockhampton would fare with his constituents; I knew a want of confidence would be proposed; and I told the honorable member, before he left Brisbane, the fate he would meet. He cannot deny that. I did not wish to take any action which would influence the people of Rockhampton one way or the other. I have not communicated with them for some considerable time; but I informed that honorable member he was certain to meet with an adverse vote at their hands. As for communicating with Orangemen in Rockhampton, I never did anything of the sort, and I defy the honorable member for Rockhampton to prove it. Let him produce any telegram I sent. I say I never sent a telegram to any Orangeman, or to any person in Rockhampton, to go to Mr. Buzacott's meeting to oppose him that evening; and I defy him to prove that I did.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER on the Opposition benches: You got other people to do it.

The PREMIER: I received a telegram about eleven o'clock, containing a faithful, honest report of the proceedings, and I sent it to a newspaper. That was not influencing electors.

An HONORABLE MEMBER: You must have expected it.

The PREMIER: Of course I expected it. I know well the feeling in Rockhampton, and I told the honorable member who represents that constituency that if I went up there and opposed him I was certain to defeat him; and perhaps I may go there. I have never yet visited that particular portion of the colony, but I have a great many friends there, and probably before long I shall go there and meet the honorable member for Rockhampton in his own town. The honorable member for Stanley made some reference to land on Eskdale run, and the only recollection I have in connection with that is, that I was interested in a certain mineral selection there, and dropped £500 on it, while he came off scot-free. The selection was forfeited; we got nothing for the improvements, but the honorable member for Stanley, I believe, got his money back. Now, with regard to the remarks of the honorable member about selling the Government, I can only say that for the last six or seven weeks that honorable member has been continually urging me to sell the party, and he promised me, on behalf of the honorable member for Maranoa, that if I did so, I should have the post of Postmaster-General in the other House. He even went so far as to meet me every evening at the railway station and pressed me to sell the party, to join him and the honorable member for Maranoa in forming an administration, and to accept the position of Postmaster-General. But, sir, in the place of doing that, I shall endeavor to support the party of which I am a member. And although, at the present time, the gentlemen composing my Government do not hail from all parts of the colony, yet, I feel fully justified in stating that they are prepared to do justice to every portion of Queensland, and to all classes of the community. And, sir, I will say further, with regard to the policy I enunciated the day before yesterday, that there was never a policy put before the country to equal that one. With regard to the public works policy of the Government, I have no hesitation in saying it will compare most favorably with the public works policy of any previous Government. Should anything occur which might render it necessary that I should go to the country, there are the railways in the Dalby and the Wide Bay districts, and I may also say in the great Central district, to which we may point as indicating our scheme of public works so far as railways are concerned. And I may here state, that I blame the honorable member for Ravenswood for not having proceeded with the Western Railway more rapidly than he

did. It is now twelve months since the Act was passed, and seven months elapsed before tenders were called for, and it was only the other day the work was started. If ever there was maladministration and departmental blundering, it was by the honorable member for Ravenswood. The contractors have been allowed two years to complete the contract, and it should be constructed in twelve months. The contractors ought to give employment to double or treble the number of men they have employed at the present time; and I charge the honorable member for Ravenswood with a gross piece of departmental blundering. He is a fair speaker, but, sir, he is no performer; and I regret to have to say so, because he is a personal friend of my own. That honorable member stated the other day that a large number of men are walking about the country unable to find anything to do, and I may state for the information of the House and the country, that we have to thank that honorable member alone for that. With regard to railway and telegraph extensions, those who know of my course of action in connection with the department which I recently had charge of, will readily acknowledge—for I do not wish to blow my own horn—that whatever I undertake I get done smartly. I have been obliged on several occasions to take out of the hands of the Works Department the construction of telegraph stations in the western interior, which would not have been carried out if left to that department. And, sir, during the period of my connection with the late Government, I pushed forward in a minor way many public works, such as telegraph lines and buildings, and I think those who know me are satisfied that I am fully able in my present position as Minister for Works to push forward all necessary public works. I know, sir, the source of the leading articles in the *Brisbane Courier*, and the *Rockhampton Bulletin*, but I care nothing for them, nor do I for the honorable member for Maranoa, or the honorable member for Rockhampton; and, although I may not be an able orator, I am prepared to meet the honorable member for Maranoa in any constituency along the seaboard—anywhere out of a purely squatting constituency, and let them judge who has the master mind. I give that honorable member credit that he would not be a bad administrator, but I can say fearlessly that if ever he becomes Premier of Queensland, he will be the most unpopular Premier the colony ever had. I say, the honorable member will never last forty-eight hours as Premier of this colony, and if he does, I shall be greatly astonished. I know the feeling of the country, and we have confidence in every place excepting purely squatting electorates. The honorable member for Bremer made some remarks the other night but I look upon him as a simpleton; he is only a child. That honorable member when

sitting on this side of the House said the policy of the Government was humdrum.

Mr. THOMPSON: I rise in explanation. I never said anything of the sort. What I did say was that we did not possess ideas which would lead us into ecstasies or anything of that sort, but we would pursue a more humdrum course of doing our duty. The honorable member has taken the opportunity of calling me names—

The SPEAKER: The honorable member is out of order; he is going beyond the bounds of personal explanation.

The PREMIER: That honorable member ought to know better than to ask why I did not come down with a Speech. If I had prorogued the House more than one member would have lost his seat.

Mr. THOMPSON: Why?

The PREMIER: Because certain members had not taken their seats, and if a prorogation had taken place they would have lost them. The honorable member knows very well that on a former occasion some members lost their seats in that way, and had to be re-elected. There was the honorable member for Gympie; I was anxious that he should not lose his seat. I did not know whether he was opposed to the Government or not—I am very magnanimous myself in that respect, and entertain kindly feelings, and in order to act fairly and to save that honorable member and others from losing their seats we did not prorogue and come down with a Speech. I do not wish to take up the time of the House further, but am anxious to come to a division as quickly as possible.

HONORABLE MEMBERS on the Opposition benches: Go on.

The PREMIER: I am anxious to come to a division to night; otherwise I think we will have to adjourn the debate until Tuesday next. I should like to see whether we are to carry on the business of the country, or honorable members opposite are to do so. And the thought just strikes me that the honorable member for Port Curtis has stated that he has not resigned the leadership of the Opposition; and I should like to know what he thinks of the combination of himself and the honorable members for Ravenswood and Maranoa. If I recollect rightly, he said a short time ago that he would vote for the motion of the honorable member for Kennedy, because the honorable member for Ravenswood had nothing to do with it. Now, I should like to know if the honorable member for Ravenswood is to be a member of the Ministry, and who is to be the leader.

An HONORABLE MEMBER of the Opposition: What Ministry?

The PREMIER: The next Ministry. It appears that the honorable gentleman at the head of the Opposition benches is to take office with the honorable member for Ravenswood; and I recollect when the honorable member for Port Curtis spoke in very strong terms about the honorable member for

Ravenswood being brought into the House. I do not intend to make use of the expressions he used, but it was to the effect that he had been picked up in the gutter and pitchforked into the Ministry. I think he said something like that, but I stand to be corrected. How is it, sir, that within so short a time those honorable members can sit and sup together; the lion lying down with the lamb?

An HONORABLE MEMBER of the Opposition: Which is which?

The PREMIER: I should like the honorable member for Port Curtis to explain that. It has been stated during the course of the debate that Mr. Macalister is receiving more than £1,000 a year. I think the honorable member for Bremer said he was receiving £1,500; and I can now inform honorable members that Mr. Macalister is receiving only £1,000 a year as Agent-General, and he gets nothing for acting as Commissioner at Philadelphia. He will go there on his route to the old country; it is only a little out of his way, and he will probably stop there a few days. And if he should come back amongst us once more, no doubt he will be able to let us know something about the exhibition, and how science and art and other things are advancing. I will say no more at present. I think I have said sufficient.

Mr. THOMPSON: Defend yourself.

The PREMIER: I warn members of certain districts; I warn especially the members for Gympie, and Wide Bay, and Bundaberg, that if the policy of the Government is not endorsed to-night, and the other side come into office, they will find my prediction is true that the people of those districts will rue the day they ever returned them to sell those constituencies.

Mr. BAILEY said he should not have addressed the House to-night had it not been for the threat held forth by the honorable the Premier to the members for Wide Bay, Gympie, and Burnett, that if he, as one of those members, did not vote with the Ministry on this occasion, his seat would not be safe. He had now to tell that honorable gentleman, that his seat was perfectly safe, notwithstanding the present Ministry or any other. He stood there as a free man, ready to do his duty to his constituents without fear or favor; and he was not to be frightened by any threat, nor was he to be bought by any bribe. He was very sorry to have heard the unseemly personalities which had been banded backwards and forwards during the course of the debate between the honorable member for Stanley, and the honorable the Premier. It was the first time he had witnessed such an exhibition in that House; and he felt really ashamed of it. It appeared to him, that if there were any truth in the accusations brought forward by the honorable member for Stanley, that that honorable member must have been a party to the whole of the transactions; for if he knew that the Premier was a false

liberal, that he was false to his party, a dummier, and guilty of all the other charges he brought against him, it struck him (Mr. Bailey) as a very curious thing that the honorable member for Stanley should have been the first bird of a feather he should fly to consult with regard to the formation of a broad Ministry. And he was not at all surprised to find that broad Ministry sinking down to a narrow clique, which was supposed to represent the Liberal party of the country. They did not represent the Liberal party, nor would they if they sat on the Treasury benches for the next twenty years ever lead the Liberal party in this colony. What had been the course of events in connection with the re-election of those gentlemen? Why, in nearly every instance, when before their constituents, they declared sentiments exactly opposed to the policy lately shadowed forth. Up to that moment he had heard no reasonable policy declared. He could not jumble up the speeches of those honorable members and call it a policy. One was opposed to railway extension at present, and advocated that all works should stand still for twelve months, until they could pay their debts. Another said a general scheme was to be brought forward, but it must be fully considered; and if they were to wait until the Government considered it twelve months, and the House considered it another twelve months, and it then took a further twelve months to start the work, he was afraid all their population might be gone by that time. But they now said, in effect, "Rather than lose power, rather than be turned out of our seats, we are willing to do anything you ask." What confidence could be placed in men who were continually changing their opinions, who were not the same to-day as they were yesterday, and not the same yesterday as they were a week ago? He could have no confidence in them. They might be sincere, but they gave no mark of their sincerity, but every indication of the opposite. They were supposed to be a progressive and energetic Ministry, and the honorable the Premier had given an illustration of his energy in the Postal and Telegraph departments; but he (Mr. Bailey) might state that some weeks ago he arrived at a bleak, barren spot, where there was a telegraph station, and he saw a miserable man with his wife and family living in a house, for which £12 had been paid by the honorable the Premier. That was a very economical way of putting up suitable buildings for his officials to live in. But leaving cases of that kind out of the question, in what position did the Liberal party stand in respect to the Ministry? The Liberal party seemed to have been left out of consideration entirely, and the whole was centred in a Liberal Ministry—a Ministry who were serving their own ends under the cloak of liberalism. He had always understood the motto of the Liberal party to be, first, reform; second, retrenchment; and third, pro-

gress; and he would ask the honorable the Premier whether there was a department in the Government service in which reforms were not every day becoming more and more necessary? Look at the Civil servants, who were hard worked, and had to live on a paltry pittance, while men with political influence, who were loafing about Brisbane, were pitchforked into billets of £300 or £400 a-year over the heads of old and deserving public servants. Were there not reforms needed in the Civil Service; and reforms in the laws of the colony, when they knew that law was another name for injustice? Was there a single department where a reformer could not step in and sweep away a whole cloud of abuses? But what reforms could be expected from the present Ministry? Had they minds capable of grasping any scheme of reform? Again, on the question of retrenchment, was it not the fact that there were innumerable salaries now paid in this colony to men for doing nothing—that there had been a gross waste of expenditure throughout the colony? Yet no scheme of retrenchment was proposed. In the Custom House at Brisbane six men would be found doing two men's work. As to progress, the Ministry first of all proposed no progress; then they changed their minds a few days afterwards; but this was under pressure, let it be remembered, and he would warn the House that the man who did a thing because he was forced would soon find a way not to do it at all. For one, he could have no confidence in this Government; he said this conscientiously but reluctantly, because he had a great esteem for some members of the Ministry; and he felt sure that even his honorable friend the member for Maryborough would thank him for the vote he intended to give, especially if it released him from the necessity of sitting amongst a Ministry that could not succeed, because they did not possess the confidence of the country.

Mr. PALMER: Mr. Speaker: Sir, I think it is almost unnecessary to point out to members of this House how utterly incompetent the present Premier is to lead it, after the specimen he has given us of his abilities to-night, and also last night. I have listened to a great many speeches in this House, and elsewhere, but anything at all to be compared to the egotism, self-laudation, and want of common sense and decency that we have listened to from the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, I never before witnessed, and sincerely hope I never shall witness again. If it was at all necessary to endeavor to point out his short-comings, he has saved any member of this House the trouble. I never listened to anything equal to it in my life. His only argument in reply to the member for Stanley, who has taxed him, through the members of his family, with being the biggest dummier in the House and country, was the *tu quoque* argument—"If I am a rogue you are

another." Now, sir, there is another charge which has been made against him, which the honorable Premier has positively denied—that of pulling the wires—working the electric telegraph to his own use. While he utterly denied having done so, I am not in a position to prove that he has done so actually, but I am quite in a position to assert and prove that he has threatened to do so. On the very last night the House sat before the adjournment—on that very night when I was instrumental in stopping from his Government the proposed Supply vote of £100,000, and doing so on purely constitutional grounds—that honorable gentleman, sir, had the common sense to tell members of this House and others that I—what, sir? That I had thoroughly forgotten myself in opposing him; that I had quite forgotten that he had command of the wires, and that he would make me shake in my seat for Port Curtis. Now, sir, if he denies that, let him. And this is a sample of the statesmanship of the Premier at the head of the Liberal Government; and this I can prove as a positive fact is a threat made by that honorable gentleman because I opposed him in this House. To say I despise his threat is hardly necessary, and to say I despise the man who could make such a threat is even still more unnecessary; but that he did do it, and that by so doing he showed his own inherent weakness, will be patent to every one who reads the statement I have thought it my duty to make. He has set himself up, according to the character he has given himself to-night, as a man of immense mind, who is wanted to govern the country; but in alluding—as he did in the most irregular manner—to the remarks of my honorable friend the member for Bremer, who told him that if he wanted to get his policy before the House and country he might have prorogued the House for a day, and put another speech on the table when the House met, he betrayed his ignorance of the commonest forms of Government. He told us that if he had done so one or two members of this House would have lost their seats. I say, nothing of the sort; the House could have met, and the day after the prorogation could have taken place, and no member would have lost his seat; so that if the honorable gentleman had been at all anxious to put his policy upon the table of the House he could have done it. But he never meant to do it; he has no policy whatever; it is a perfect farce; it is like tilting at windmills to attempt to combat the policy of the present Government. Look at the speeches of all the members of the Government to their constituents when they went up for re-election, and you will find that they had not a policy amongst them. One proposed one thing and one another, but there was no such policy as that laid down by the Premier, or rather it was impossible to understand any policy he attempted to describe, excepting the policy laid down to us last night by the Attorney-General,

the real head of the Government as he calls himself by implication, for he says it is of no consequence who is the nominal head of the Government, whereby he certainly means to insinuate that he occupied that position. I say that when the Ministers went for re-election there was no policy laid down by them; they contradicted each other; they contradicted the Premier, and the Premier contradicted himself, as he always does, and as he has done in every possible way. The honorable member for Wide Bay, who has just addressed the House, I think, understands the character of the present Government better than any member amongst us. I thought him rather irregular when he got up the other night, because, as an old member of this House, he should not have followed the example of the member for Cook, who is a young member and did not know that he should not air his grievances under cover of such an address to the House. But the honorable member for Wide Bay knew he was out of order, and I was somewhat astonished; but, directly I heard his arguments and speech, I felt convinced that he knew the Premier and present Government better than anyone. He told us then that if he could state his grievances the Government would probably change their policy immediately, and he was perfectly right. They did change their policy immediately. I am sure the members of this House must have looked with amazement when he told those two honorable members who had aired their grievances that it would be all right—it would be all settled. Is that the way in which the Premiers of this House ever address it? Have previous Premiers ever considered that we are all born idiots, even if they did set themselves up as the Autocrat of all the Russias? Why, from this very fact the Premier is no more fit for the position than the smallest boy in the streets. The only thing I think he got upon his legs to-night for, was because he was anxious to know a great deal. Now, sir, there is a great deal he shall not know anything about. He shall not know why I join in this vote of censure, except that I choose to do so; he shall not know why the honorable member for Ravenswood and myself, who have been working on opposite sides for a long time, may happen to agree upon this question; he shall not know what arrangements will be made for a future Ministry. He has nothing to do with it. The question before the House is, whether he and his Ministry are competent to control the destinies of this colony. That is the question before honorable members, and with what comes afterwards they have nothing to do. At all events, I myself shall not dive any more into the future except to say that I shall be quite content if, by its votes to-night, the House says that the honorable Premier, at all events, is not the man to lead the destinies of this colony, but is, without exception, the

worst man ever put into the position he now holds. As to the general formation of the Ministry, I beg to say it was irregular from the beginning. I shall confine myself very shortly to that subject, but I look upon the formation of the Ministry as wrong *ab initio*. I say a Premier who puts himself up for sale deliberately as the last did, deserves all that has been said of him. But the point to which I am coming is, that his resignation was forced on him, as is well known to the House, although, on the last occasion of a vote of want of confidence, there was a small majority for the Government; still, to all intents and purposes it was a vote of censure, and it was patent to everyone that this was a Ministry that could not hold their position any longer. I say it was patent to both the House and the country; and the proper and constitutional course which a Minister, finding he was not able to conduct the business of the country and hold his position, should have adopted was, to tender his resignation to the Governor and have nothing more to say about it. In what sort of a way that resignation was tendered we do not know; we had no information from the only gentleman who could give it, and that was Mr. Macalister himself, who took care to let us know nothing about it. He gave us a little rigmarole, and said he had given no advice. However, we will judge of the advice he gave by the results. I think facts are sometimes stronger than figures; and, when we find how the thing was manipulated, I think we may come to a pretty just conclusion as to how the matter was arranged. I do not, for one moment, mean to question the prerogative of the Governor to go where he likes for a Minister; he may, if he likes, go to the grammar school and get the biggest boy, if he can get one big enough and old enough; but, if he does so, if he steps out of the usual constitutional course, and does not send for some prominent member on either one side of the House or the other, independently of the Ministry going out, he is not pursuing what I call a proper constitutional course. But I repeat, if he brings that big boy from the grammar school, and makes him Premier, he has a right to do so; but I have a right, and every member of this House, and every member of the community has a right to canvass the action of the Governor in this respect, and say when we meet here whether we will have this big boy, or this nominee of the Governor, to rule the destiny of the colony. On this occasion, I say the Governor stepped out of the usual course. He went to a member of the retiring Ministry, a member who was not in this House, who was not responsible to the country in any way, who was a nominee, a member of the Upper Chamber, and having done so, of course he must be prepared to face the consequences. And I say that even if the honorable gentleman who had been selected from the Upper

House were eligible, I should on that account alone deem it my duty to stand up for the rights of this House, the only elective chamber in the colony, and oppose the nominee brought into the Government, whether he afterwards qualified himself for the seat in this House or not. It would have been my first duty to raise my voice in warning against what I believe to be the most extraordinary and unusual course taken in selecting from a nominee chamber, a member who was in no way responsible to the House or to the country. I have also another objection to this. The person sent for by the Governor was a member of the Ministry going out of office; he was, in fact, part and parcel of that Ministry, and as I have before said in this House, by his selection, he having been one of the outgoing Government, the other Ministry coming into office have taken upon themselves the whole of the acts and the whole of the policy of the previous Government; they are responsible for it, and if they accepted office at all, under the circumstances, it was their bounden duty to carry out the policy of their predecessors. I believe it would have been better, even if they had done that, than come before us with no policy at all, with rather a policy that was one thing six weeks ago, another thing three weeks later, different altogether a fortnight since, and very shaky indeed when the House met; while, whatever policy they have now, is only one that has been bullied, or as the honorable member for Ravenswood said, squeezed into them. Therefore, I do not feel at all qualified to discuss the Ministerial policy, because, as I have said before, it is like tilting at windmills: they have none. Is there anything in the previous career of the honorable member at the head of the Government to lead us to repose any confidence in his management of affairs? What have we for many years known him as? Has he ever led any party in the House? Has he ever taken up any great measure, or brought any measure of consequence into the House, or supported us with eloquence, even such as that with which he has favored us tonight? No, sir: his whole course in this House has been one of petty scheming, and the only thing I have ever heard him boast of was with respect to electioneering dodges. This is no new opinion I have formed of the honorable gentleman. I expressed it, and it is on record, when he was made Postmaster-General. A greater schemer I never came across in my life, and if I had only followed out any of the petty schemes he once suggested to me, I should have made a very nice leader of the House indeed. I say then, this is no new opinion; I have recently seen no reason for changing my views on the subject, and I do not know why I should be called upon to support a Ministry of which he is the head, simply on the threat that he will do something terrible if I do not—that he will go to Rockhampton and beat the member

there; and, indeed, everywhere else. The constitution of the Ministry seems to me to be rather a curious one too. When a Premier with no great end, aim, or object, comes into power, I should imagine he would, at all events, have tried to secure as members of his Ministry, men representing the various pursuits and districts of the colony—men who could give him some information upon subjects of which he is himself lamentably ignorant, such as the wants of the various districts, and so forth. Instead of this, we find a Queen-street ministry. We have the inevitable Attorney-General, who I am afraid will be the Vicar of Bray of this colony for years, until some of our young men grow up with ambition to come into the House and dispute the place with him. We find, then, the inevitable Attorney-General. Then we have a Colonial Treasurer, a gentleman who gave a glorious example of his geographical knowledge by giving railway passes for Dalby to assist a number of workmen on their way to New South Wales in order to shorten the journey. This honorable gentleman has been taken out of the Works Department because he thought he had a special aptitude for financial matters, and pitchforked into the Treasury. We have not been able yet to see what he can do in his new capacity, but he is to all intents and purposes a Queen-street Brisbaneite and nothing else. There is not a record in the House of an instance where he has advocated any great measure for the good of the major portion of the colony, and he has invariably ignored northern questions. How then can we place any dependence upon his ability as a Treasurer? We have a very nice fellow, I must say, as Colonial Secretary, a man who can take his licking with a smiling face at any time, but a man more ignorant of geography of the colony is not in the present Ministry; I can remember when he thought the Lower Warrego was in some part of New Guinea. He had no better idea than that. That is not the man we want as Colonial Secretary; however good and amiable he may be, he is not the man to grapple with the work which requires a very innate knowledge of the greater part, if not the whole of, the colony. We have never heard him on any very great political question; his course has been hitherto sitting behind the Treasury benches and echoing its views, and, I think, no one occasion shying up his hat. Then I come to my honorable friend the Minister for Lands. Everybody knows that I admire that gentleman's character very much, and if he was not so versatile, I might even say volatile, I should like him a great deal more. But it is rather an extraordinary selection to make of a Minister for Lands—a gentleman who on the last occasion of a division in this House, when the fate of the Ministry depended upon it, could not find the time to record his vote. I do not think that says much for the strength of mind of a Minister

who from the very nature of his position ought to be the most decided man in the Cabinet, and the best able to say "No" and "Yes," not only in the Cabinet but to the people with whom he will come in contact in his department. His disappearance through that rat-hole that was spoken of, I must say, augurs very badly for his firmness in the Lands Department, and should have told very much against his joining a Ministry which he had not the courage to support. A better selection might have been made I believe, but at the same time I must say, if the present Ministry had a better leader, a leader to whom we and they could all look with confidence—if they had, as they once had, a leader who it could be felt on both sides of the House had really the power of carrying out any policy put forth, I believe this Opposition would never have arisen. I admit at once it is an extreme case, and it is only in extreme cases that the present action on the part of the members of this House would be justified; that is to say, attacking a Ministry before they have put their rag of policy on the table. But I think we have given full and sufficient reason for that action. We do not believe, in the first place, that they have a policy; in the next, we do not believe if they had one, and put it upon the table, the Premier is the man to carry it out; and, therefore, we say it is best in the true interests of the colony at once to say "stop," if we can. I believe it is the duty of the members of this House to vote conscientiously on this question, and to look at it in this way:—Are the present Ministry the men to whom the destinies of the colony should be confided at the present crisis? It is not their duty to look beyond that. If they can conscientiously answer this question in the affirmative, vote for them; if they think the Ministry are not the men, I hope they will give a very decided expression of that opinion, and vote the other way. The only way to judge of this Ministry is by their acts. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is a very good principle indeed. We must judge of this principally by two things, one of which I have characterised over and over again as a job, the other of which I shall now characterise as another job. We heard nothing from Ministers as to what the real facts of the appointment of Mr. Macalister as Agent-General are, his salary or emoluments, but what was dragged out of the Premier by the speech of the honorable member for Stanley; and then he said, that instead of £2,000 it was only £1,000 a-year. It is patent to us all that Mr. Macalister told us himself that he would not take the office of Agent-General—would not appoint himself—and would not ask for it. We read of his resignation. We then had a semi-authoritative announcement in the Government paper, the *Telegraph*, that he would not accept the office of Agent-General, and had no idea of taking anything of the sort. He was going on a tour in Europe, and would return in time for

the political arena next session! That was asserted authoritatively. Then we had the fact very shortly afterwards of this honorable gentleman being gazetted as Agent-General. The Government were warned, that in the opinion of a great many members of this House he was not fit for the appointment of Agent-General, and that if it was given to him it would be looked upon by the Opposition as a political appointment, and one which would involve the Agent-General going out with the Ministry. I stated it myself, and I had the authority of my side of the House for saying we strongly objected to the appointment. We looked upon it as a purely political matter, and said we could consider it as a job. We think that a party man of so many years' standing in this House, who had led a party for so long, was not the man to represent the Government in such a post. We warned the Government that if he was appointed, and by a turn of the wheel we came into office, we should look upon the appointment as a political one. I suppose we shall have, in a few days, a copy of the Executive Minute ordered by this House to be laid on the table, but to-night we do not know the terms of this appointment. Rumor out of doors says the appointment is for a certain time—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. PALMER: Then another rumor says that if the Agent-General is recalled his travelling expenses are to be paid—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. PALMER: Well, sir, I am very glad that we are getting it out by degrees; if the Government had taken a leaf out of my book they would have given all the information about this appointment at once, and not have allowed it to be dragged out of them. I always made a point of doing so, and I think it is the best plan. But what did they do? Why, upon being told that in the opinion of honorable members Mr. Macalister was not fit for the office, and that if appointed his appointment would be looked upon as a political one, one of their very first acts was to appoint that gentleman. If the Ministers had had the manliness to come down to the House before the adjournment, or even now, and state that, in consideration of the long time Mr. Macalister had been in harness in the service of the colony, or that he was in bad health, or in want of means, they thought that he merited some recognition, and they had proposed it, I believe there would not have been a dissentient voice. I will go further, and say that if they had even proposed a pension to that gentleman, I believe there would not have been a dissentient voice towards granting it, and although I am not an admirer of that gentleman's politics, and although I should have thought it a bad precedent, I should have been inclined to give him a pension; but the Government had not done so, and I firmly believe that they have, by their underhand jobbery, injured

that gentleman's prospects for the future. There is another reason why I think the appointment should not have been made, is that which was offered by the Government as their apology for making it—that the honorable gentleman was broken down in health. Now, I say, with the warning before them, in the case of Sir Charles Cowper, the Agent-General of New South Wales, who by the way, appointed himself—with the correspondence before them of that gentleman having broken down in health, the Government should never have made the appointment. Why, sir, a letter appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, almost at the very time this appointment was made, from Sir Daniel Cooper on the subject of Sir Charles Cowper's appointment. I cannot say that I altogether approve of the tone in which that letter is written, but whilst disapproving of that, I think the letter is true. He says in one paragraph:—

“I helped Sir Charles Cowper, and afterwards did his work most willingly, but I do say it was cruel to keep him to the collar until he could neither stand nor speak, and it may be a consolation that no Premier would dismiss him, but allowed him to receive his full salary as long as he lived, instead of making a pensioner of him, but, whilst I was doing all the work, the country was shirking its duty, and making its worn-out servant a pensioner of mine.”

I think Ministers in making the appointment of Mr. Macalister should have had that paragraph before them, because I believe that that represents exactly what they have done in their appointment. Sir Charles Cowper, when he went home, was in good health, but here we have the apology given to us for the appointment of Mr. Macalister that he was broken down in health. Then as to their next job—of that we had a little tinkling beforehand. I refer to the appointment of Mr. Mein. It has been the practice to criticise the appointments made to the Upper House, and a great deal has been said about those I made when I was in office; but I ask, whether there was ever an appointment made to the Upper Chamber, or one that ever could be made, that could be compared to that made by the late and endorsed by the present Government? Has there ever been an appointment to that Chamber made by a Premier before going out of office simply because the gentleman appointed was a partner of that Premier in business? Why it was the appointment of a man who has never shown any aptitude for political life, but who was pitchforked into the Upper House because, why—because he was a partner of the late Premier; but even that was capped by the present Premier appointing that gentleman, who could not possibly have had any experience of departmental business, as Postmaster-General and leader in the other House. That was the second act in, to say the least, a very curious transaction. If the country is to be governed by Macalister and Mein, and we are to have

Mr. Macalister's shadow, after that gentleman has left the colony, in the shape of Mr. Mein, all I can say is, that I shall not sit under that shadow, but shall do all in my power to put out the Ministry who made the appointment. The honorable Premier, when making his celebrated speech at Ipswich, with his usual brilliancy of argument, said most unfairly, that, because I deprecated the appointment of Mr. Macalister, I was an advocate of the American system of changing all public servants with a change of Government. Why, sir, I never in my life advocated such a thing; but the fact is, that the Premier got hold of the idea, and grew so fond of it, that he actually favored us again with it, in this House, the other night. I have never dreamt of such a thing; and I should like to know whether any speech I have ever made in this House would bear such a construction? There is a very great difference between saying that if an outgoing Premier should be put in the position of Agent-General for the colony, it should be considered a political appointment, and asserting that there should be a change of public servants with every change of Government. That has not been my practice at all, for I can safely say that no one has done more than I have done during my tenure of office to keep men in the Civil Service, and no one has appointed so few persons out of the Service. But, sir, there is another very vital point to be considered in connection with the sending home of Mr. Macalister as Agent-General, and that is, whether immigration is to go on at the present rate? Now, there is a time to carry on immigration and to encourage it, and a time to control it; but it appears to me that this great Liberal party—which by the way has no more right to call themselves by that name than they have to call themselves the Doges of Venice, have always run amuck at everything, and so they will do in regard to immigration—they will go on and on until they overdo it. We do not know whether they have ordered immigration to be slackened for a time, but we see no sign of their having done so, as vessel is coming in after vessel crowded with men, for whose employment no provision is made. We have seen lately one notorious instance of the way in which immigration is being over-done, where a vessel chartered for Maryborough has been ordered by the Government to come to Brisbane instead, in consequence of the over-crowded state of the labor market at the former place. Of course the Government will turn round and tell us that they have not been long enough in office to arrange those matters; but I say, sir, that they have been, as they are like the *pot au feu* of the French cook, they are part of the old Ministry of 1874—there is the old stew still going on; some portions of it have been eaten or devoured, but still the stew remains the same *pot au feu*.

It is the same Ministry, although they have got from bad to worse—small by degrees and beautifully less. I say, sir, that it is their duty now, if they have not done it before, to regulate this immigration. We all know that after we have had a few good seasons we may expect a few bad ones; in fact, we were told last session by no less an authority than the present honorable Colonial Secretary that we were going to have a great crisis. If that was the honorable member's opinion then, why has he not warned his colleagues to slacken immigration? I should like to know what is the use of sending home an Agent-General to force on a stream of immigration, which the colony is not prepared to receive; unless, indeed, that gentleman has been sent home to check it. There is another thing which has not been alluded to in the course of this debate, and that is—Who is in charge of the Home Office? I should like to have that explained by some honorable member of the Government. Is it that gentleman who has already proved himself a traitor and a spy? Are the destinies of this colony left in his hands? Is he to be retained in the office? Is he to report by private letters upon Mr. Macalister as he did upon Mr. Daintree? Is there a spy to be sent home over Mr. Macalister, who requires it a great deal more than ever Mr. Daintree did? It has amused me on reading over the speeches of the various Ministers, to find that with the exception of the Premier, they all agree on one point, however much they differed on others, and that is, that they were not asked to select their leader; they told their constituents so—but why on earth do they serve under him? Is it patriotism of the clearest type, or is it not rather the dirty thousand a-year? I cannot understand men being under a leader they have not been allowed to select. I could not do it; and it would be very difficult to get me and most of the honorable members on this side of the House into such a team. But I suppose they consoled themselves as the honorable Attorney-General did last night, with the idea that the honorable Premier was only the nominal head. Then it has been said that they have not had time to frame a policy—I think it was the honorable Attorney-General said that—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I did not say so.

Mr. PALMER: Well then, perhaps I dreamt it, or somebody else said so. But fancy a Ministry coming down to this House without having a policy. I should think that the very first thing the Premier would have asked a man when forming a Government would be "What is your policy?" At any rate, that is the question I should ask. I am prepared to say that their policy is a shifting one; it is one which has shifted every day since they met this House; and if they can get a vote or two by changing, they will change it every day of the session, until they get the support of a majority. But I trust they will not go on for long; and I think there will be a good test

soon of whether a Ministry so utterly incompetent as they have proved themselves to be are the Ministers to carry on the business of the country at this particular time. Now, I have spoken in general terms of this Government, but I have, in common with many honorable members of this House, a grievance against them. I say that they are not fit to control the destinies of the northern and western districts of this colony; for although they may have some knowledge of the requirements of the southern portion of it, they have none of those of the North. I say, sir, that we have a right to demand that not only should those interests be represented in this House, but that they should be represented in the Government of the country. Without that is done, I do not believe any Ministry will stand. It will be a fatal day for this colony when we have the same thing as when I entered this House—a purely Brisbane Ministry; for we shall have again the old cry of separation raised, and to some purpose.

Mr. AMHURST: We have it already.

Mr. PALMER: We shall have it again, and I believe that if it is raised, it will end in separation. For my own part, I am not afraid of it as far as the North is concerned, but I do not wish for it, for I think it would be a great pity indeed if this enormous colony should be cut up into small portions. But I am confident of this, that so surely as it is attempted to force a purely Queen-street Government on the country, that will be the inevitable result. We have, it is true, heard something about Shire Councils and Municipalities, but I can assure the Government that if they remain in office, they will have to do something more than that, before they can satisfy the North. We must have financial separation, pure and simple, something like the principles embodied in the Bill I introduced in 1872. You must divide the colony into districts, and give those districts larger powers than I proposed to give them, as the colony has increased since then. You must have local councils, who shall have power to raise taxation for local purposes. No tinkering will do, we mean to have that, and we will have it. The honorable Attorney-General last night—and strange to say, his speech has been very much applauded by some honorable members, although it was the only speech we got out of the Government, and the only lucid interval was, when the honorable gentleman was on his feet—well, the Attorney-General, much to my astonishment, endeavored to raise the old clap-trap cry of the old squatting party. Now the honorable gentleman knows as well as I do, that the old squatting party does not exist, and therefore it must only be for party purposes that he brings it up once more. I will say this, however—that what some persons have been pleased to call the squatting party have given the country more liberal land measures than it has ever had since;

they forget who brought in the Homestead Areas Act—that it was introduced by my honorable friend the member for the Bremer. Then again in regard to the opposition given by honorable members on this side of the House to the resumptions which the honorable Attorney-General took the trouble to read about last evening, when he mentioned the names of the members who voted in the division against the resumptions—that honorable gentleman knows as well as I do that the opposition was not on the resumption of the lands, but on the principle that we should have legislation before confiscation. We have never objected to resumption when land has been required, but that and confiscation are two very different things. I was glad to hear it said by the honorable member for Stanley, this evening, that the object we imputed to the Ministry of that day was a correct one—that it was to try and get up a clap-trap cry against the Upper House. What have we to do with the land if it is resumed? We have more now than will be used for many years, and I may here remark that it is a most extraordinary thing that Government after Government, on resuming land, get hold of the wrong pieces everywhere. The Government of last year went in for wholesale confiscation of runs, and the present Government want to repeat that on a smaller scale. It has been stated also that it was well known that the opposition would make a bold stroke in 1876 or 1877 to get on the Treasury benches, in order to have the manipulation of the ten years' leases. I do not know who was the author of that prophecy, but I have not heard it anywhere except from the brain of the honorable Attorney-General, who appears to have dummy on the brain, and does not wish to work it off. After the information that honorable gentleman has received this evening, he must surely feel it his duty to file an information against the Premier. To think that the great Liberal party should have a dummier at its head! Why, sir, the idea is monstrous, and I hope that the honorable Attorney-General will do his duty and work that dummy off his brain. I have always held the opinion, and I have not concealed it, that on the expiry of those ten years' leases I shall look upon those lands as Crown lands, to be dealt with by the wisdom of this House; but for the honorable the Attorney-General to ask the honorable member for Maranoa to lay down his plans for dealing with those lands before that honorable member is in office, is a piece of sheer nonsense. What I say is, and what I have always held is, that squatters should not be meddled with until the ten years' leases are up, but when they do expire, that then the lands belong to the Crown. If the honorable member for Maranoa was in office, I believe he would soon let the House know what his intentions are; but, as I said before, the honorable Attorney-General has land on the brain, and it is a peculiar feature of that madness that the

person affected by it thinks every other person is equally affected by it with himself. Now, what do we want with these lands in our possession on this side of the House? Are there any dummies, are there any land-holders under the Act of 1868? There are not; and, what object then can we have in wishing to have the dealing with these leases? I will say this, that if I were to bring in a liberal Land Bill, it should not contain the provision that a man could not own land on the Darling Downs, unless he was prepared to live upon it as a serf. My idea of a liberal land law is, that no one, after buying land, should be made to live on it, unless he chooses to do so. Proper reservations should no doubt be made for homesteads; but I see no reason why, because a man lives in Brisbane, he should not own land on the Downs. I believe I have detained the House long enough; and I will conclude by repeating, that bad as the Ministry is, the leader of it is the worst; he is the most dangerous man in the colony to be at the head of a Government, and if he had more brains he would be worse. He is the most dangerous man; and bribery, and corruption, and trickery of all kinds would stalk through the colony, if he could have his own way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: My honorable friend opposite commenced his address with certain references to my honorable colleague at the head of the Government, and to the peculiar qualifications he possesses as leader of the Government. I understood him to say, that my honorable colleague might be compared to an over-grown school-boy, adding other things. And the honorable member concluded his address by informing us, that the honorable Premier was one of the worst men, if not the most dangerous man in the colony. Now, this is a curious combination of character, that the honorable Premier is at once a simpleton, and the most dangerous man in the colony. My object in addressing the House is, to take notice of the remarks of the honorable member who moved the motion of want of confidence. I must congratulate him certainly upon the moderateness of the tone he assumed in addressing the House. We have travelled into numberless discussive questions hardly bearing upon the question before the House at all; and I must make this statement: that the honorable gentleman almost admitted that he was scarcely justified in bringing this motion before the House at the time he did. The honorable gentleman quoted certain precedents, which, I understood, went to prove that it certainly was not customary, at the outset, to meet a new Ministry with a direct vote of want of confidence such as this. The honorable gentleman almost apologised to the House for the course he had taken, and at the same time admitted that he had no great objection to the men, but he said he was so well acquainted with their policy that he did not care, even now, to judge them by any

measures which might be laid upon the table of the House. I wish here, Mr. Speaker, to take exception to the doctrine just laid down, that the present Ministry inherit either the merits or the demerits of the past Ministry. They inherit, I believe, all the traditions there are of a liberal policy in the colony. We have heard one honorable gentleman to-night, the member for Stanley, representing himself as an hereditary liberal. I do not profess to be an hereditary liberal in the sense in which he described liberalism, but I profess to be an hereditary liberal so far as liberal services in this colony and in this legislature justify me in saying so. I confess I have, on many occasions, exercised my right to protest against the mistaken policy, in details, of even the Liberal party. I have heard it said that the Ministry now in the House, though inheriting those traditions, and though even, I may say proud of what has been effected in this colony by the Liberal party, yet hold themselves bound to the public works policy of the late Ministry. I certainly do not. I joined the Ministry of the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government with a distinct understanding as to the principles upon which I did so. I cannot speak for my colleagues, but I can speak for myself, and I can say that, at any rate, on one point I had a definite and distinct understanding with my honorable friend. That understanding was, that the principles embodied in the Western Railway Bill of last year should be embodied in some measure which was to be brought before this legislature during the present session, and which was to be made applicable to the various districts of the colony. I consider that in justice to my constituents, without that understanding I should not have been justified in joining any Ministry, no matter what they might be called. I have simply stated in these words why, as a matter of principle, I joined this Ministry, and what condition I made when I did join it. I confess the Liberal party were placed in considerable difficulty. It was well known that Mr. Macalister, who had led the party for some years, or who, at any rate, was recognised as a leading member of the Liberal party, was obliged to retire, I will not say on account of ill-health, but because he could hardly undertake the arduous duties imposed upon him as leader of the House. It was admitted that, to some extent, he required rest. The honorable gentleman had been to England, and performed certain important functions there, and on his return, feeling that he could not undertake the responsibility of leading the Government any longer, it was intimated amongst his private friends and followers that it would be desirable if he resigned the leadership of the party. Another prominent member of the party, Mr. Hemmant, who had distinguished himself very much as Treasurer—a gentleman with whom on several occasions I had to disagree on most important matters of policy—

had also made up his mind to leave the colony for private reasons, and this, taken in connection with a certain amount of disunion amongst the party, rendered it evident that a change must come about. That was apparent, and I felt that I could no longer support the then Ministry, with the certainty that two of its most prominent members were about to leave the colony in a short time. That I felt dissatisfied with their policy I announced, but owing to my loyalty to them as a party, I did not feel bound to vote against them. That has been referred to in a tone of deprecation by the honorable gentleman at the head of the Opposition benches; but I do not know that it was at all discreditable or dishonorable that I, under those circumstances, should have retired from the House and failed to record my vote with the members of the Opposition. However, the result was, that two members of the Liberal party having made up their minds to retire, it devolved upon the members of that party to decide what was to be done. The agreement came to was that the Government should resign, and Mr. Macalister having tendered his resignation, His Excellency was pleased to accept it. It is true that the honorable gentleman, who had previously led the Government, was entrusted by the party with full power to tender advice to His Excellency should he desire it. He was authorised to explain the position to His Excellency, and to designate a successor; but His Excellency did not choose to ask Mr. Macalister's advice. Upon that point I intend to say nothing more than that I believe His Excellency did no more than he had a perfect right to do. As to the discretion of His Excellency, I shall not attempt to question it. It is most desirable, I think, that the leader of a party forming a majority in this House should not only possess the confidence of His Excellency, but also the confidence of the majority he purports to lead. However, when I was asked by the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government to join his Ministry, I did hope and believe that I might be of some use in that Ministry; and I decided that if that honorable gentleman was prepared to pledge himself, at any rate to one measure, which seems to me of the utmost importance in the interests of my constituents, I should join him, and do my best in assisting to carry out what I believe to be liberal principles and liberal legislation. Such was my intention, and I hope that the conclusions which I came to on that occasion were justified by the real merits of the case. Such being the case, and the Government having been formed on a new basis altogether, we have appeared in this House with the expectation that at any rate we should have a fitting opportunity afforded us of bringing our measures before honorable members; but instead of that, we are met, at the outset, by a direct

vote of want of confidence. I do not question the right of the honorable member for Maranoa, or any other honorable gentleman opposite, to adopt that course. They are probably opposed to what has been called the Liberal party. I do not wish to raise the question as to who are and who are not liberals; but, at any rate, the gentlemen ranged on the opposite side of the House are directly opposed to those ranged on this side, and as such, I do not take any exception to the fact that they have brought forward this vote of want of confidence in the manner they have done, except that I think it would have been fairer and more generous to have allowed us at least one week to introduce our measures, and to be judged by those measures and the manner in which we conducted the business of the House. That would certainly be fairer and more generous; and I will go so far as to say that the action taken is somewhat premature. Why should they proceed to judge us now upon what they are pleased to say is our policy, and upon what they are pleased to attribute to us as traditional feelings of the Liberal party, which in some respects is disputed by us and affirmed by the other side? With regard to the personal qualities of the Ministry, I think they have scarcely had time to judge us; and I think also that the present Prime Minister may claim some toleration on the part of honorable gentlemen opposite. It is a novel position, at any rate, for him. He has, with tolerable success, led the Upper Chamber; and no doubt the gentlemen of that chamber are exceedingly tolerant—more tolerant, I am sorry to say than honorable gentlemen in this House—but from the experience he has had in that chamber, it is not too much to suppose that, at all events, in time he would acquire that confidence and that familiarity with the usages of this House which we hope he may still attain to. In addressing myself to the remarks made by the honorable member for Maranoa, I must, in the first place, congratulate him upon the very hearty way in which he committed himself at once to a railway policy. The honorable gentleman has, on several occasions in this House, done so; and I think we are, to a great extent, indebted to him for the proposal to carry a railway to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Mr. McILWRAITH: No.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The honorable gentleman was certainly popularly identified with the proposals that were made in connection with that scheme, which was subsequently modified. However, he was, in the first instance, committed to the extension of railways into the distant interior by means of land grants; he considered that in the absence of borrowing large sums of money, that system was preferable to no railways at all. The honorable gentleman made a very able speech in connection with the subject

when the Western Railway Bill was discussed, and I was happy to hear him express himself in so decided and definite a manner in favor of railway extensions throughout the length and breadth of the colony. He was justified, from personal knowledge of both colonies, in comparing Queensland with New Zealand, and he said, if a railway policy was justified in that colony, much more so was it justified in this. In that I agreed with him, and I think it will be admitted on all hands, because of our territory being so much greater than that of New Zealand. We have a very large extent of saleable land in the interior, to be made available, in the first place, for pastoral purposes, and, finally, probably, for agricultural purposes, though I think the latter must be expected to be at a very distant date. Such being the case, I feel assured, knowing the character of the honorable gentleman and the way in which he has committed himself to a railway policy in connection with immigration, that if the worst comes to the worst, and he succeeds in carrying his motion, if he is consistent at all, he must bind himself to carry out the railway policy he has indicated; and if he has any regard for his political reputation, it must be based on a decided wish to carry out railways throughout the length and breadth of the country. But, though in that respect I must congratulate the honorable gentleman, I cannot agree with him on many matters he brought under the notice of the House, and especially the way in which he criticised the policy of the present Government. I think it was hardly fair, for instance, to assume that he knew the railway policy and the land policy of the present Government. He had no right to assume anything of the kind. He has afforded us no opportunity of stating our policy on both these questions. It is true he may regard the basis of the policy of the Macalister Government as our policy, but I boldly assert that that is not our policy. There are distinctions, at any rate, in our policy; and until that policy is brought forward, he is not justified in saying our policy is exactly the policy of our predecessors. He also emphatically asserted that we have no intention of committing ourselves to any railways during the session. But how does he know? How is he entitled to make any such assertion? He does not allow us to produce our measures, but meets us at once with a vote of want of confidence. It is tantamount to saying you shall not declare your policy. I can affirm positively, and I can stake my position as a member of the Ministry on my statement, that unless it was the intention of the Government to introduce a measure purporting to deal with the question of railways in various districts the colony, I should no longer continue to hold a seat in the Government. My tenure of office is dependent upon it, and if this Ministry are not prepared to bring forward such a measure, neither am I prepared to con-

tinue in office. Nothing could be more explicit than that. But I know, and can now affirm, that it is the decided intention of the Government to bring forward a large measure with a view to secure railway extensions, and it will depend, of course, on the decision of the House, whether it is carried into effect or not. The preliminary steps will be taken by us, and it will depend entirely upon the House whether they will assent to the measures we will bring before them. The honorable gentleman also based a lengthy argument on the question also raised in the discussion on the Western Railway Bill, that though he it was not justifiable to apply the proceeds of the land, when sold, to the payment of the cost of the construction of railways, the money might be appropriated to the payment of the interest on the railways when formed. That, I think, is the effect of his argument, and it is quite consistent with the proposal we make. In the first place, however, we consider it necessary that land appropriation should be made on the principle of the Western Railway Bill, and having thereby secured a guarantee that the capital and interest will be paid, it will be the duty of the House to pronounce an opinion as to the advance to be made for the railway, and whether the land should be made available as security for the interest or the capital amount. It is quite possible that it will not be prudent to sell any larger portion of these lands than would meet the interest. That is a subdivision of the question upon which the House has a perfect right to judge for itself, and which I believe the Government would be willing to submit for their decision. They will, however, consider it necessary to affirm that the land should be appropriated in various districts, and be looked upon as security for the local debt of that district; and I believe thereby we shall be able to make a great advance with the principle of financial separation, which the honorable member for Port Curtis has referred to. The honorable gentleman took exception to the fact that the honorable the Premier had proposed to raise £100,000, by way of loan, to be expended on the roads of the colony. He pointed out that if this were carried into effect, and it became known to the Stock Exchange, in London, it would have a serious effect on the value of our debentures. On that point I beg leave to differ very materially from the honorable gentleman. The members of the Stock Exchange would not consider whether the money was expended on roads or railways, so long as the expenditure was for the benefit of the country. What the members of the Stock Exchange and the financial people of England look to when they lend money is, whether those to whom they lend constitute a progressive and prosperous country or not. They are freely content to leave to us the details of that expenditure, and whether we think it desirable to spend the money on roads or

railways are matters of detail which I can assure the honorable gentleman those from whom we borrow do not take into very serious consideration. If the colony is solvent, if it is prosperous, if our revenue is sufficient to justify the payment of interest upon loans that we borrow, then the details of the management of the money may be very well left to ourselves. What I really believe is this: that the only question the monied centres of Europe look at is whether those who borrow from them are really a vigorous go-ahead people; and if we show that we smoke a good deal, and drink a good deal, and do other rather more wicked things than these, perhaps, it is taken as indicating that the community is one of considerable intelligence and energy; and if our revenue is buoyant, then there need be no fear of being able to borrow the necessary funds to carry out these great public works. I was astonished at the honorable gentleman raising this question, that the borrowing of £100,000 for expenditure upon roads would cast any doubt upon the value of our debentures.

Mr. McILWRAITH: I am sorry to interrupt the honorable member; but he is only referring to a small part of the general argument I brought forward, and he bases his argument on the fact that it was the only reason I gave.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I admit it was only one of the arguments the honorable member used; but still, he took a very decided objection to it. I was sorry to hear the honorable member for Ravenswood also take exception to the expenditure of considerable sums of money on public roads. The honorable member said it would be possible to spend even the whole of the money which we propose to raise by loan upon the Gympie and Maryborough road, and that then it would be thrown away. That seems to me a ridiculous argument; because the honorable member knows very well there is nothing gives greater satisfaction to settlers than the judicious expenditure of money for the improvement of roads.

Mr. KING: I wish to correct the honorable member; he has mistaken what I said. I merely objected to the borrowing of money, except for permanent improvements. We should have permanent works if borrowed money is spent.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Roads are permanent improvements. There is often no other means of access to some parts of the country than by roads, and the formation of roads and bridges is one of those things which it is of the highest importance to spend money upon and for which we may legitimately borrow. There are many districts where we cannot afford to make railways, but where we can afford to make roads, and no one knows that better than the honorable member for Ravenswood. The honorable member has been good enough to compliment me, and to state that I might endeavor, at any rate, to ad-

minister the office I hold with satisfaction to the country. I hope I shall do so. I cannot be expected to know all that is expected of me, and I really do not profess to be so conversant with many matters of detail connected with the present Land Act as some other honorable members of this House. But my friends in the Ministry, and amongst the party with whom I serve, believed I could be of use in the department which I now preside over, and under that belief—although for myself I should really have preferred some other department of the Government—and rather in deference to my friends, I consented to accept that office, not from any belief I was in any way fitted for the administration of the department, because I had never applied myself to it. I did express myself on one or two occasions in a somewhat decided manner upon the land question, but I did not then understand that my opinions met with the approval of the majority of this House. The honorable gentleman also said that even if the Government of the present time brought in, or proposed, half-a-dozen railways, he would not believe in them. That is an honest expression of opinion, but I do not see why he should say we are not prepared to bring in any railway measure.

Mr. McILWRAITH: Because you told me so yourself.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I never said anything of the kind. I said I could not expect any Government to which I belonged would propose to the House a crude system of railways without sufficient surveys. I never said anything more than that. I do not suppose the honorable gentleman himself would propose to ask the permission of the House to commence railways until he had sufficient surveys, and until he had deliberated fully upon the construction of those lines. I have never professed to assert that I should like to carry out railways anywhere and everywhere, without proper plans or without due precautions; and I think a most dangerous thing for the Liberal party to commit themselves to would be the abstract affirmation that it was desirable to push railways into the country without having proper plans and sections, and full information respecting the lines they proposed to construct. We have surely sufficient lessons already before us of the injurious effects of premature action in these matters. It was upon this ground, when the matter was discussed last session on the item of the salary of the Chief Engineer, it was generally agreed that it was most desirable that an Engineer-in-Chief should be appointed. When the then Minister for Works brought forward that vote, it was admitted by the House that our past transactions with our present Chief Engineer had not been satisfactory. I wish to say nothing derogatory to Mr. Stanley's engineering skill, but I say facts have transpired which do not lead me to infer that Mr. Stanley's opinion upon any railway policy that might be brought

forward, or upon any lines that might be proposed to the House, would be received with any great satisfaction. The honorable member for Maranoa himself, I understand, was pleased to express himself as dissatisfied with Mr. Stanley as an engineer.

Mr. McILWRAITH: Never.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Well, that honorable gentleman, when Minister for Works, took some very decided action in connection with Mr. Stanley, and I was led to understand, when the vote to which I referred to was being discussed last year, that permission would be given for the appointment of a Chief Engineer, and that that permission would be acted upon. I am, therefore, surprised that the late Minister for Works, the honorable member for Ravenswood, did not act upon that decision of the House. It was looked upon as a most important matter, and yet, when we came into office, we found that nothing had been done. It is not possible all at once to appoint an Engineer-in-chief. A new Ministry coming into power have a great variety of things to look into, and some of them are new to office, and to the business of the country, and have many things to learn. I think, under these circumstances, it is scarcely fair that a certain discrepancy in their policy should be brought home to them. They have a great deal to learn; they must necessarily lay themselves out to find what is the actual position of the country, before they can propound a policy. A good deal has been made of the divergencies of opinion expressed by different members of the Government, on the occasion of meeting their constituencies, and this necessarily arose from the fact that we had never been brought together before as a Government. For myself I can say I had only rare occasions of consulting with my honorable friends at all. We had, upon some lines of policy, agreed, but upon details we did not profess to have arrived at any conclusion; and such being the case, it was very natural that in our statements to our constituents, some differences of opinion should be expressed. For myself, in addressing my constituents, I did not claim to express the opinion of the Government. I stated distinctly that until the Government met as a Government, re-elected by our constituencies, we were not in a position, constitutionally, to propound any policy at all; and that until we met in the House, as a duly constituted Ministry, we could not be expected to pronounce definitely and decidedly upon our policy. We are now responsible for that policy as it appears in the Bills we have laid on the table of the House, and which have not yet come on for discussion. I would now say a few words with regard to the honorable member for Ravenswood, and his position in connection with this present vote. I agree with the honorable gentleman most thoroughly, in affirming as he did, that the present time is a most critical one; no

doubt it is a very serious time, and one respecting which the representatives of the people should do their best to meet the urgent claims of the country and of the public business. I hope the honorable gentleman will understand, that I do not yield to any member of this House in my anxious desire to give the best consideration that can be given to any measures which may be proposed either from this or the other side. But I do say, that at this present time, there is a higher duty than the supporting of a Government, or the placing of a new Ministry in power. If another Government be placed in power, we must inevitably have some delay. For myself, if the House wills it, I have no objection to make a change, if it be for the good of the country; but I do deprecate this change at a time when I am convinced that the affairs of the country demand the very serious attention of all who wish for its welfare.

AN HONORABLE MEMBER: Whose fault is it?

THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS: At all events, I am not aware that you can attribute it to me. I, at any rate, have taken my seat in the House for the first time as a Minister for many years; and am not responsible for any of the measures to which repeated references have been made during the debate. What I was saying was, that there never was a time when the public affairs of the colony demanded more serious and full attention; and I regret that there has been a certain amount of frivolity imported into this debate, especially to-night, by honorable gentlemen professedly in opposition to the Government. I think if they could have discussed measures calmly, and reviewed the real position of the country, it would have become them better in their capacity as parliamentary representatives. The honorable member for Ravenswood has told the House, that there are men walking about throughout the country, working not only for wages, but for food to eat; I believe it; and in addition to the reasons alleged by the honorable gentleman, I will give another: I say that at the present time the interior districts of the country are being populated by Polynesians; and that to a very great extent, this accounts for the discontent and want of employment existing amongst the Europeans of the inland districts. It may interest the House to know that the Government have a measure, if they are permitted to introduce it, dealing with that most important question, for it is an important question scarcely less vital than that of public works. The honorable member for Ravenswood must be well aware that this is one of the reasons why there exists the discontent—the justifiable discontent, I might even say—of the European population in the interior. Have we heard a single word about this from him, or from any honorable members opposite?

Mr. PALMER: No, it is not true.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: It is true, I regret to say, and if I have the opportunity I can prove it before long. I know from sources of information at my command that there is the utmost discontent with respect to these islanders, who are brought here under a system approaching to that of slavery, to displace European immigrants brought out from the old country or elsewhere, and who, in consequence, often lack both employment and wages. The honorable member for Ravenswood also stated that, in his opinion, this motion was justified by the fact that the Ministry were not to be trusted. How does the honorable gentleman judge us? Has he had many means of knowing whether we are worthy of trust or not? He has had some knowledge of his late colleagues, at any rate, and they, I presume, are worthy of being trusted by him. I do not know whether he considers that I am not to be trusted, but it seems that, at any rate, my honorable friend, the member for Brisbane, is not.

Mr. PALMER: Certainly not.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: Well, I do not blame honorable gentlemen opposite for not trusting us, and I am willing to give them all the credit of their disbelief; but I do think it strange of the honorable member for Ravenswood, who, until lately, was a member of what he always called the great Liberal party, to take up this position. I myself have never been a member of what was called the great Liberal party, but have all my life belonged to what I would term a sound constitutional Liberal party. I may be a member of what might be called a little Liberal party, but I do not confess to have been a member of that party to which the honorable member for Ravenswood has frequently referred; for he has laid down axioms with regard to its expressed policy to which I have not adhered. I think, therefore, sir, that, under the circumstances, it was certainly somewhat premature in the honorable gentleman to announce that he was willing at once to give his adhesion to a vote of want of confidence brought in this form. He certainly might have given us some chance, if it had been only a week, or ten days, or a month; that, at least, might have been expected from an honorable gentleman who has to within such a brief period of time been a confidential member of the party which we represent. More than that, I must take leave, seriously, to blame my honorable friend for what he is pleased to consider the defective ability to be found on the Government benches. I have no hesitation in saying that the honorable gentleman was anxiously desired as a colleague by myself, and had every opportunity of joining the Ministry. There were three members of the present Ministry who were willing to have given way in any one of their departments to the honorable gentleman, if he could have joined the Government; when we were endeavoring under great difficulties, under

difficulties which I admit, to establish a Government, surely an old and tried friend of the party might have attempted to do his best for that party. I cannot see, if I was content to serve under the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government, why the honorable member for Ravenswood could not also be content. If the honorable the Attorney-General was content, why not the honorable member for Ravenswood? The nomination of Prime Minister, I may say, was not in our hands, as the circumstances arose, and we did not raise the question of the right of His Excellency to nominate the Premier, and on my part I clearly felt it was my duty to do what I could to further the objects my colleagues had in view. But the honorable member for Ravenswood apparently did not see his way to assist us when we were in serious difficulties. The honorable member did not see his way, I believe, to do so; because, although I was authorised by my honorable friend at the head of the Government, to place at the disposal of the honorable member for Ravenswood, either the Department of Lands, or Works, or the Colonial Secretaryship, none of these would suit the honorable gentleman, unless he could become Prime Minister, and that it was not in our power to offer. The honorable member has referred to this Government and its present constitution; I think I understood him to say it was a family arrangement, and I could hardly believe my ears when the remark was made. I am not aware that I am related in any way to a single member of the present Ministry, or that the members of the present Ministry are related to one another. It is true, we have been stigmatised as a Brisbane Ministry; and here I take exception to the doctrine laid down by the member for Port Curtis, for however desirable it may be for Ministers to represent different parts of the colony, I do not think it is absolutely essential. The main thing is to secure good men competent to discharge the duties of their offices and departments. If this is secured, no serious objection can be taken simply because they are to be found in the North or the South, provided they are prepared to do justice to both North and South alike.

Mr. PALMER: But you are not competent.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Well, sir, I do not ask the honorable gentleman to believe that we are competent; nor do I question their right at any time to bring forward a motion of this kind, provided there be grounds for the proceeding. But I do not believe the honorable member for Ravenswood is justified in the course he is taking. He is fastening upon us his quarrels with or grievances against the late Treasurer, Mr. Hemmant. I do not intend, at the present time, to enter into the question whether Mr. Hemmant or the honorable member for Ravenswood was justified in the position they took in

the late Ministry; but certainly Mr. Hemmatt is no longer a member of the Government, and a new Ministry having been constituted free from the engagements and responsibilities of their predecessors, yet abiding, as I hope, by the traditions of a sound constitutional Ministry, I think we were entitled to the support of the honorable gentleman; and the last thing I should have expected from him is the direct opposition he is now according to us. I do not know what hopes the honorable gentleman opposite may have of his new team, but I daresay he is quite competent to govern them. He is an old hand at the whip, and he has frequently told us that he is capable of keeping his team in order; and it is quite possible he may get together a very fair one. In the honorable member for Maranoa he will have a very effective stayer—a good wheeler. In the honorable member for Ravenswood he will have a rather fiery leader I suspect, and if he sits behind these gentlemen I expect he will make them perfectly acquainted with his capacity for handling the ribbons. For myself, I have never expressed or felt a wish to be subject to this sort of discipline, but there is no accounting for tastes. On a late occasion, we were told that the Prime Minister has a right to gazette out any of his colleagues that he chooses; it is an extreme right to enforce, and it was exercised once in the Ministry with which I was connected. The honorable gentleman has quoted this as an occasion which might favorably be followed, but I do not think he himself would ever adopt such an extreme measure; all that is necessary between honorable men, bound by an honorable compact, is, that they act together, and if any subordinate is found unable to act with his leader, that intimation should be given in a friendly and decent manner. I should not have referred to this, but it was mentioned the other day with respect to the possible formation of a new Ministry. On my part I would never consent to form any Ministry where any such action as that suggested could be possible. I wish now to refer to the remarks made by the honorable member for Bremer, and the honorable member for Port Curtis, in reference to the appointment of Mr. Macalister as Agent-General, and as I know something of the facts I hope I may be permitted to trespass upon the time of the House a few minutes longer. The appointment has been characterised as a job. The honorable gentleman opposite so characterised it, and whatever opinion may be held as to the express terms made use of in connection with the question, I am quite willing to give him the benefit of his opinion. Perhaps he will now permit me to tell him, and the House, the circumstances, so far as I know them. The appointment had been looked forward to for some time; it was generally discussed throughout the press, and, if I know anything of public opinion throughout the colony, it has

not been objected to. It is, no doubt, a fine topic to handle for the purpose of party recrimination, but the appointment has, I believe, met with the general approval of the entire country. Now, as to the facts. The honorable gentleman, Mr. Macalister, returned from England somewhat benefited in his health. The appointment of Sir Charles Cowper was referred to as a parallel case, but he was an older man than Mr. Macalister now is.

Mr. PALMER: And a much better.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: Perhaps so. Mr. Macalister is an old friend of mine. I was not always an admirer of his politics, because they were unstable, but I have enjoyed his personal friendship, and that fairly entitled him to my courteous consideration. The honorable gentleman, it must be remembered, resigned unconditionally, and so far as my connection with the present Ministry is concerned, I have no reason to suppose any compact was made with Mr. Macalister, that he should be appointed Agent-General. All I know entitles me to come to the conclusion that there was no such compact. Let me briefly relate what occurred. Previous to my going to my constituents at Maryborough, I was anxious to know the exact position of affairs with regard to Mr. Macalister. Various reports had appeared in the newspapers. The present Premier had not been in communication with Mr. Macalister for some days, and I was anxious to know what was to be decided, because it seemed to me a matter of some importance that the appointment should be filled in as soon as possible, since the place had already been vacant some months. Accordingly, having understood that nothing had up to that time—several days after the formation of the Ministry—been done, I was desirous of knowing what was likely to take place. With that my honorable friend the Premier and I visited Mr. Macalister to satisfy ourselves as to the credibility of certain rumours which were then afloat, various accounts having appeared in the newspapers throwing doubt upon Mr. Macalister's willingness to accept the position should it be offered to him. We were not certain what he would do, and as I have said, my honorable friend and I went to see Mr. Macalister himself, on the day of my departure for Maryborough. The question which was then put to Mr. Macalister was distinct and plain, namely, whether he would accept the Agent-Generalship. He said he would do so, and he was told by my honorable friend and myself that we were not then in a position to make the appointment, but that the appointment, when he was willing to accept it, would be made if our acceptance of office was endorsed by our constituents. I held myself, so far as I was concerned, that I was not entitled to take any share in the appointment of so responsible an officer until I was placed in a constitutional position that would authorise me to do so. The appointment accordingly, though agreed upon on the occasion I have

referred to, which was the first on which any understanding was come to with Mr. Macalister, was carried into effect after the whole of the Ministry had been selected. We did not act until we were constitutionally entitled to do so, and then we appointed Mr. Macalister. For myself, looking around amongst the men who might possibly have been appointed Agent-General, I confess there was no one who seemed so well as he to comply with all the necessary conditions. Mr. Jordan's name had been mentioned as a previous Agent-General, and a useful lecturer in England; but there was no one who, under all the circumstances of the case, it was better to appoint than Mr. Macalister; and this being so, I not only agreed, but cordially agreed to the decision of the Premier and the rest of my colleagues. Certainly, this can be said of Mr. Macalister, and as a justification of his appointment, that, having gone to England, he successfully got at the bottom of what had been, and is now admitted to have been, a most successful conspiracy to rob our Government of the funds at their disposal. This, at any rate, he had done, and possessed as he was of the qualifications of long office, familiarity with the politics, business, and public affairs of the colony, there was no man who seemed so well to combine the necessary qualifications for the office. I will add, that in subsequent conversation with the honorable gentleman it was arranged, though not by any special stipulation on his part, but from a sense of justice on ours, that as soon as possible a Bill should be brought into the House to define the position of the Agent-General; and as the Government will be prepared to bring in that Bill on an early occasion if they are afforded an opportunity of doing so, honorable gentlemen on both sides of the House will then have an opportunity of expressing their opinion as to the exact position which the Agent-General should occupy. This clearly ought to be defined by Act of Parliament, and the honorable gentleman at the head of the Government and myself volunteered to bring the matter before Parliament, and ask that an adequate remuneration should be fixed. That is the account I have to give as to Mr. Macalister's appointment, and I ask whether it is in any way consistent with the opinion started on the other side of the House, that it was a political job deliberately perpetrated with foreknowledge of what was to happen: it was done when the Government were at liberty to appoint whosoever they liked, and if the Government had not considered Mr. Macalister a fit and proper person, he would not have been appointed. Some remarks have also been made as to the appointment of Mr. Mein as Postmaster-General. Naturally such appointments always give some kind of dissatisfaction. The honorable gentleman at the head of the Government was, himself, in the same position I believe, when he was appointed. Mr. Mein's appoint-

ment was not decided upon until within a very few days of his taking his seat in the House. I do not understand why the honorable member for Bremer need have taken such strong objections to Mr. Mein. My first acquaintance with Mr. Mein was connected with politics, and I may here say that although not occupying any prominent position in politics, Mr. Mein enjoys the respect and confidence of many experienced politicians. The first time I met him was during an active canvass, when I contested the seat for Brisbane with the honorable the Colonial Secretary, and, I believe, Mr. Mein's active influence on that occasion did much towards settling the election. I am glad to say I have had the opportunity, since then, of becoming more acquainted with Mr. Mein. I can speak from my own knowledge of the useful work he has done in the cause of education, having, while a leading solicitor in the town, filled with great success the office of acting headmaster of the Grammar School on behalf of the trustees. I merely mention the facts to show that Mr. Mein is not the insignificant personage he has been represented to be; I believe he is by his professional skill and honorable character entitled to a seat in the Upper House, and, if so, to a seat in the Cabinet, and I can tell the House that he enjoys the complete confidence of his colleagues. Deprecatory remarks have been made as to his business connection with Mr. Macalister, but surely this has nothing whatever to do with his capacities for the office he has been called upon to fill. He has occupied a high position in society here; he has attained to an influential position as a solicitor, and is trusted by many clients; he is also in the confidence of ourselves as a friend and politician; as such we feel entitled to appoint him our representative in the Upper House, and I believe Mr. Mein will do no dishonor to the choice. I will now pass on to say a few words of my honorable friend the member for Wide Bay. I felt with him in the remarks he addressed to the House to-night, that there were circumstances connected with his district and mine which naturally cause him to be very anxious about the political future. I have no doubt he would much rather not enter into these jarring combinations if he felt that the real business of the country could be proceeded with satisfactorily. I do not know that the honorable gentleman was justified exactly in bringing against us an accusation in connection with the Civil Service. I do not know exactly what he referred to. He asked for retrenchment, and if he wishes for that, he should give us an opportunity of showing whether we wish to retrench or not. If he is anxious for reform, he is certainly not anxious to give us an opportunity of carrying out any reform, for he does not give us a chance of doing so. The honorable member referred in his speech the other day to some sweet lullaby, to some "sweet by-and-bye"

that some brass band is in the habit of playing in his district. I did not understand the honorable member, for, so far as I am concerned, I do not know of any sweet by-and-bye connected with my district; but I can tell the honorable gentleman that I have left no stone unturned for the benefit of my district, and I wish I could say the same of him, for, had he stood by me as he should have done, my district would not be in its present position. I can only say, that if the honorable member for Ravenswood had insisted that the principle on which the Western Railway is being constructed should be applied to Wide Bay, he would not only have materially assisted me, but would have been able to dictate terms to the late Government, his colleagues. But the honorable member did not choose to leave the Government then, when he could have dictated terms, but was content to remain longer, and then to resign at almost the commencement of a session. I say, with regard to my district, that neither the honorable member for Wide Bay, nor the honorable member for Ravenswood, did their duty on the occasion to which I refer. The honorable member for Wide Bay was not in the House at all when I advocated the railway for my district, and I was indebted to my friend, the honorable member for Dalby, for support. I ask, then, what right has the honorable member for Wide Bay to tell me that I am committed to a policy of "sweet by-and-bye." I tell that honorable member that he will soon be committed, if he perseveres in his policy, to a good-bye to this House for ever. I will also go so far as to say of the honorable member for Ravenswood, that enjoying, as I know he does, the confidence of so many of my constituents, I am not afraid to contest results with him there. I believe that they have as much faith in my determination to carry out a policy in accordance with the circumstances of the country—that they know I will not do any thing rashly, but that I will follow out a policy I believe to be suited to the position of the country, and that I deal with matters cautiously if they are to be effectively dealt with. I value the friendship of the honorable member for Ravenswood, but I know he is sometimes a little less discreet than he should be. I value the energy of the honorable gentleman's character, but I cannot forget that that energy leads him to rashness sometimes, and I therefore refuse to be guided altogether by him; and I think that the Liberal party might well look to a wiser, a firmer, and a more discreet head than is possessed by the honorable member for Ravenswood.

Mr. IVORY said he must commence the few remarks he had to make by congratulating the House upon the speech of the honorable gentleman who had just sat down; and the contrast it bore to the speech of the Premier must, he thought, be patent to every one in the House. If the honorable gentleman who had just sat down had been

the leader of the party opposite, possibly the vote they were now called upon to discuss might not have been placed before them. But when he said that he might also add that if there was one argument more than another which would guide him in his action, it was the speech he had just heard, for the honorable member who made it had disclosed to the House what they had wanted to know, which was, that there was not unanimity in the Ministry—that, in short, the honorable member had himself sat down under a man in whom he had no confidence; and that, if the honorable member for Ravenswood had sacrificed his feelings and had consented to sit down under a Bombastes Furioso like the present Premier, their position now might not have been so degrading. There were some remarks of the last honorable member who had spoken which he could not allow to pass without comment. He could say, with regard to the other speeches from the Ministerial side of the House, that with one or two exceptions, they were beneath contempt. The last speaker had stated most emphatically that the interior of the colony was being populated by Polynesians. Now, he would ask, through whose fault was that? Was it not through the action of the Liberal Governments they had had of late years? Was it not because no efforts had been made to get the European immigrants into the interior? They were allowed to remain on the coast, and every effort was made to retain them in the towns; they were never induced by legislation, or by facilities offered to them, to go into the interior to be of the use they would be there. Such being the case, and the labor of the Polynesian being so much more cheaply got on the coast than that of the European immigrant, there was no doubt that the Polynesians were pressing into the interior. He might say, speaking for himself, although only a hundred and fifty miles removed from the port where the electors were that the honorable member represented, that for the last two years he had scarcely seen a man walking along the roads asking for employment. The honorable member said, also, that he regretted that such an amount of frivolity had been introduced into the debate; but who in the name of fortune started it, or how could it be otherwise when an honorable member like the Premier was sitting on the Treasury benches? There would be frivolity imported into the debates at every sitting, so long as that honorable gentleman did not sit down under the tutelage of his nurse, and hold his tongue. The honorable member also said that the present Government had still to learn the position of the country before they could finally frame their policy. Now, that was a pretty position for a Government to be in. Surely the honorable Premier, who had been a Minister for some years, should know it; surely the honorable Attorney-General, who had been a member of the Government since its commencement, nearly, should know it, and

the Colonial Treasurer should know it, as that honorable gentleman was an old colonist. They must all have been neglecting their duties to a very great extent if they had not by the present time ascertained what was necessary for the colony. The House had heard from the honorable member for Stanley a very good comment upon the position of matters at the present moment. They could well understand, after hearing that speech, why they should have been told by the honorable Attorney-General that dummyism was past and gone, and that it was now a question of no moment. That was easily understood now, inasmuch as it had been disclosed that evening, through the speech of the honorable member for Stanley—who had for long been a friend of the Premier—that the honorable Premier himself was the greatest dummer in the colony—

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, I must rise to a point of order. The honorable member is imputing acts to me which he has no right to do; he is accusing me of dummying; I deny it, sir.

Mr. IVORY said he was merely repeating what had been stated over and over again in that House, that the honorable gentleman was one of the greatest dummiers in the colony. He would repeat, that it was his own impression that it was so. But had not other honorable members had been called the same—had he not himself been termed the champion of dummiers, and he did not hold a single fraction of land in the colony. He had, moreover, stood up in that House, and said that if there were any dummiers it was the duty of the honorable the Attorney-General to proceed against them with all the power the law gave him, but the honorable gentleman said that it was no use his doing so, as he could not convict them. He did not say that if he was Attorney-General he could convict the honorable Premier of dummying, but he would launch the charge against the honorable gentleman again, and say that he was, in his opinion, the prince of dummiers.

The SPEAKER: I understood the honorable member to deny the charge.

Mr. IVORY said he did not state that the honorable gentleman was a dummer or the prince of dummiers, but he stated that that was his opinion; his opinion might be wrong, but it remained the same in whatever way it might be expressed. He could scarcely pass over the explanation which had been made by that honorable gentleman that evening and on a former occasion; but he noticed that the policy of the Government had grown from a grain of mustard seed into a large tree during the present debate, so rapidly had it increased. The honorable gentleman should have enunciated in the first instance a full and comprehensive policy; for, had he done so, there was a probability that the motion of the honorable member for Maranoa might never have been placed on the table. No sooner, however, had that motion

been tabled than the honorable nurse of the Premier got up and said that his bantering had not expressed himself perfectly, but that he would show a full policy, and one that had not been told to the House before. Were they to submit to that—to the honorable gentleman telling them such a tale as that, after a vote of want of confidence had been moved. He considered that the position of the Government was most degrading in the eyes of the country, He was certain that from one end of the land to the other it would be scouted as a farce. There was no doubt that, as long as the honorable Premier remained in his present seat, he would furnish the House with no end of amusement. There was one thing which had amused him greatly—it was the compliment the honorable gentleman had paid to the honorable member for Ravenswood, being a very good speaker. He certainly would not compliment the honorable gentleman himself upon being that; and he thought if the honorable gentleman had remained where he was, in the calm precincts of the Legislative Council, it would have been much better for him and for his reputation. He would pass over any remarks of that honorable member, as they were really beneath contempt, and would refer to some which had been made by the honorable Attorney-General. He had been very much amused with one of the statements made by him, that the Government were not bound by their individual statements made at their elections. Now, he would have thought that at those times they would have taken care not to have made any statements that they would have to swallow afterwards. He must say that he did not see what the country was to be guided by further than those statements, and by the exposition of their policy given by the honorable the Premier previous to the vote of want of confidence motion being tabled. It was not the fault of the House if the honorable gentleman could not express himself in a lucid way; knowing he could not do so, why had he not got his Attorney-General to come forward in the first place and say what the policy of the Government was. One of the very strongest arguments against the present Ministers was, the very different way in which they each looked at matters during their elections; not only that, but the way in which all of them spoke of their head. He must say that he thought it spoke very little of them to cast stones at the man who had put them into the positions they then occupied. The honorable Attorney-General said that there was not a man on his (Mr. Ivory's) side of the House with the exception of the honorable member for Maranoa who was in favor of a railway policy, but he might tell the honorable gentleman that he for one should support a system of railways, inasmuch as it had been proved that railways could now be made at far less cost than had hitherto been the case, and so long as they could see their way clear to have railways, he should advocate the extension of them at

a moderate cost. He believed that hitherto a great deal of money had been frittered away in the useless ornamentation of railways, which was not wanted in this colony. The honorable member had further accused the honorable member for Maranoa of being opposed to the construction of railways out of the proceeds of the land; but that was far from being the case, as the honorable member had consented to that system, only providing that they must borrow money in the first instance. In other words, he understood his honorable friend to say, that by not selling the land until the railway was made the value of the land would be very much enhanced, and would go farther to meet the cost of construction; and he must say that he agreed with him. He would confess that last year he was very much taken with the idea of constructing railways from the land, and he stood up for the principle to some extent, but he must say that he considered the proposition of the honorable member for Maranoa was better than the crude plan of last year. He had also expressed an opinion that the lands in certain districts should be made to pay for the cost of constructing railways in those districts, and during the previous debate on the want of confidence motion, he stated very plainly that he should oppose all resumptions in the Burnett district, were they not devoted to the construction of railways there, with the exception of land in the neighbourhood of centres of population, so that people in those centres should have the same privilege of selection as those living near the coast. He did not see why settlement should be confined to a margin along the coast, as there were other centres of population, such as Roma, Nanango, and others which were rapidly springing up into large towns, and surely the people there were entitled to have a certain district around them in which they could select land at as cheap a rate as in the coast regions. In fact, in all parts of the colony, he held, the centres of population had as much right to have land—a certain amount of land open for settlement—as the people along the coast had. He considered that the honorable the Attorney-General had been guilty of most gross disingenuousness in some remarks he had made. The honorable member had a certain special pleading way with him which he had learnt in the courts of law, and quibbled and twisted what people said into what they did not say; thus he had tried to paint him (Mr. Ivory) as black as he could, and had in fact branded him as the champion of the dummies. He had told the honorable gentleman that he believed he delighted in dummyism, as if he had only acted as he had wished him to do there would have been no talk of dummying; but the honorable gentleman was now trying to lush it up for the simple reason that the Premier did not wish him to say anything more about it. The honorable member had stated, also, that honorable mem-

bers on his (Mr. Ivory's) side of the House had voted against the resumptions last year, but if the honorable member had been straightforward and honest he would have read the debate on that occasion, and what had been said by honorable members on the Opposition benches in reference to the resumptions. He would have known what the honorable member for Port Curtis said—that he did not object to resumptions, but to the manner in which it was proposed to make them. Another strong point, or red rag which had been tried to be flaunted in the eyes of the Government benches, was the cry about the Opposition being so very anxious to have the manipulation of the ten years' leases. Now, he stated long ago—almost on his first entry into that House—when the first resumption resolutions were brought forward, that he would much sooner have faith strictly kept with the present lessees during their tenure, and that at the expiration of the leases the lands should revert absolutely to the Crown, and that all right, title, and interest of the lessees should then lapse, and he still held to that. He said the lessees had no claim whatever when the leases expired, and that the land would then be open to be dealt with in any way that House might consider proper; and, as far as his private opinion went, if the Ministry could be credited for the slightest spark of honesty—which, of course, individually they might possess, but which collectively he gave them no credit for—he should say that possibly a good plan of dealing with them would be to put them up to auction, the same as forfeited leases of runs. He should now read an extract from the speech he made with regard to the resumptions last year. He said:—

“The last gentleman who addressed the House, had called the opposition—as was pleased to call it—that had taken place to these resolutions, a factious opposition; but as far as he (Mr. Ivory) had been able to see, there had been no opposition to it. Every one had, more or less, admitted that the resumptions were necessary; but there was one opposing remark with regard to them which had not been answered, and that was, that the question should not be dealt with until such times as certain returns had been laid on the table of the House.”

Those were some returns he had called for to throw some light upon the inequality of those resumptions—large areas being proposed to be taken from some runs, none at all from others, and small areas from more. He could not see any reason for this, and he therefore moved for those returns; and until they were laid upon the table, that side of the House refused to grant the resumptions. But they never refused for one moment to grant resumptions—large resumptions—if they were proper and were required. On the contrary, they were willing to grant them; but they refused, as he went on to say on that occasion, to take the *ipse dixit* of the Minister for Lands that those were the best lands that

could be got. He thought that sufficiently did away with the cry that the Opposition refused the resumption; and another proof of that was, that no sooner did those resumptions go to the other House, which was called by the occupants of the Treasury benches the head quarters of the squatting party, than they were passed. With regard to immigration, he might say he had always held the same views, ultra views, on that question. He believed in continuing immigration steadily, and without ceasing, and that it was necessary that some opening should be provided for the immigrants. He had always considered population the wealth of the colony, and he should always, he hoped, be found a firm advocate for a steady flow of immigration. He would simply conclude these few remarks by stating that it seemed to him, that through some action on the part of a gentleman whom it was not customary to mention in that House, a certain party had been put upon a pedestal, to be worshipped by the Liberal party. The position of that gentleman reminded him very much of the golden calf that was set up by Aaron in the wilderness to be worshipped by the Israelites, and he was very much afraid that that gentleman would share the same fate as that golden calf came to—that he would be pulled down and ground to powder; but he (Mr. Ivory) hoped he should not be compelled to drink any portion of it. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. KING said he rose for the purpose of answering the rather personal attack of the honorable member for Maryborough, who had taken exception to his action with regard to the vote of want of confidence in the present Ministry. That honorable gentleman asked what right he had for saying he did not believe the Ministry were prepared to carry out the works policy they had enunciated; and his (Mr. King's) answer was this: It was considerably less than three months ago that he proposed to the Government, of which he was then a member, a policy of public works somewhat similar, as he understood, to that which the present Ministry now proposed. Two members of the present Ministry were then members of the Cabinet with him, and he had to resign his position in that Ministry because he would not abandon his policy. He did the honorable the Premier the justice to say that at first he supported him in that policy, but directly the late Colonial Treasurer opposed it, that honorable gentleman also agreed to differ from it. The honorable the Colonial Treasurer, in addressing his constituents, stated that during the present session it was not the intention of the Government to proceed with further railway extension.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Why?

Mr. KING said the honorable member could give his own reasons if he pleased, but he stated that fact plainly. The present Colonial Secretary also said in his speech

that above all other things he praised the late Ministry for omitting the Maryborough and Gympie Railway from their scheme of public works. Now, considering that four of those members must, within three months, and most of them within two or three weeks, have changed their opinions on the question of public works, he had good reason to doubt them. For instance, if the honorable the Attorney-General, and the honorable the Premier, who were members of the former Cabinet, that was pledged to the construction of the Maryborough and Gympie Railway, threw him over when he attempted to carry it into effect, there was no reason why they should not throw the honorable member for Maryborough over also. And when he considered the attitude of two other members of the Cabinet to whom he had referred as being hostile to the construction of this railway, he was justified in feeling very doubtful whether the present Ministry would construct that railway if they remained in power for another three years. The honorable member went further, and alluded to circumstances which occurred shortly before the formation of the present Ministry, and, although he (Mr. King) did not wish to complain that he had stated anything that occurred between himself and that honorable member or any member of the Ministry, still, he thought it would have been better to have asked permission to allude to it. The honorable member had, however, made a great mistake, which no doubt he would correct after he (Mr. King) had spoken. He thought any communication between gentlemen as to the construction of a Ministry, should be held as confidential—at any rate, until it came to the knowledge of one party, that reference had been made to it in public by the other—and the first intimation of what passed between the honorable member for Maryborough and himself, came from the Ministry themselves. The statement the honorable member made just now, that he (Mr. King) declined to join the Ministry, because he could not be Prime Minister was incorrect, and he expected the honorable member would presently get up and retract that statement. Since the honorable member had set the example of stating what took place, he considered he was perfectly justified in going fully into the matter. In the first communication opened to him by the honorable member for Maryborough, that honorable member told him distinctly it was a stipulation—he could not say whether a stipulation made by himself or the whole of the Ministry—that the Premier should remain in the Legislative Council, and he (Mr. King) understood at that time that the Attorney-General was to be leader in the Assembly. It would be in the recollection of honorable members, for the time had not long gone by, that when he left the late Ministry, there was a disposition on the part of the members of that Ministry and their most obedient supporters to make

him the scapegoat for all the sins charged against them. He was attacked most unfairly by his late colleagues; but the fact, as stated by the honorable member for Maranoa, that he had the choice of three portfolios in the present Ministry, was sufficient to show they could not have had such a bad opinion of him after all, although it had been said he was the worst Minister for Works in the colony. Of course, it was open to any man to put his own valuation on his own services; but he did not pretend to set a high value on his services, and he certainly should never quarrel with any number of gentlemen with whom he was about to become associated as to the precise position he should hold. But he felt that he should lose his self-respect, and the respect of the party to which he belonged, if, after being treated in the manner he had been, he should consent to go back to the Ministry in any capacity they might choose to offer him. The conditions he made with the honorable member for Maryborough were, that if he joined the Ministry, they should accept his policy of public works, and that he should be leader in the Assembly. The honorable member would no doubt do him the justice to say, that when he made those conditions he had no expectation that they would be accepted; because he (Mr. King) told him he could not expect gentlemen who had so short a time before rejected his policy to swallow it then. He did not think it likely the Attorney-General would consent to his leading in the Assembly; but he did feel, that having worked so long with the Liberal party in that House, he could not refuse to assist them if they granted what he thought was a very reasonable demand. He thought, taking into consideration the way in which he was treated by some members of that party after his retirement from the late Ministry, which was known to the majority of honorable members, he was entitled to make some conditions which would imply on their part that they recognised that he had not been in fault, and that he did not go back simply as a hanger-on of the Ministry. He hoped the honorable member for Maryborough would, when he (Mr. King) had finished speaking, get up and acknowledge that his statement was not correct. He (Mr. King) did not believe the honorable gentleman made that incorrect statement knowingly or intentionally, but that he had happened to use a wrong expression when he said he (Mr. King) stipulated that he should be Prime Minister instead of leader in the Assembly. That honorable member had spoken of him as having left the Liberal party. Now, he did not know what liberalism meant. It was a mere personal term which any gentleman could claim, and he should not like to decide who was liberal or not liberal. But he had served with what was known as the Liberal party in this colony before any member of the present Ministry was in the House,

—at any rate, when the honorable member for Maryborough was out of the House and no other member of the Ministry was in it, except the honorable the Premier, who was then on the other side—and he had adhered consistently to that party ever since. And now he saw his policy of public works, which the Government rejected only a few months ago, brought forward, or professed to be brought forward, by them as a Liberal policy, and yet he was told he was not a liberal, because he did not approve of the five gentlemen who were supposed to be the leaders of the Liberal party. He considered he had reason to complain of being quite as badly treated by the present Ministry as by the last Ministry, who tried to obtain a clean sheet for themselves by throwing all the blame attributed to them on to him, and the present Ministry were doing worse; they had taken possession of his public works policy, and he thought he might also claim credit for introducing the scheme of railway reserves in Queensland, which they had also appropriated. That, certainly, was not an original idea of his—that land should pay for railway construction. It had been acted upon long ago, but he was the first person who spoke of it in Queensland, and introduced a measure to the House for the construction of railways on that principle. He did think it rather hard, as he said before, that the last Ministry should endeavor to fasten their sins on him, and that the present Ministry should appropriate his policy and his measures, and then say he was not entitled to call himself a liberal because he would not support them.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I consider it is necessary to say a few words in explanation, with reference to what the honorable member for Ravenswood has just stated. I think he has somewhat confused ideas of the Macalister Ministry and the present Ministry, and I differ from him as to the connection between the two. I look upon the present Ministry—though I hope a Liberal one—as disconnected entirely from the past Ministry. I disclaim any responsibility whatever, and I think my colleagues may be justified—though some of them were members of the past Ministry—in disclaiming any responsibility connected with that Ministry. This is a new Ministry, formed subsequent to the resignation of the Macalister Ministry, and it is not responsible for their acts in any respect. Except in so far that they both profess, the one to have been, and the other to be, a Liberal Ministry, their constitution is distinctly different. I think my honorable friend, the member for Ravenswood, no doubt retaining a feeling, and, possibly, justly so, of not having been fairly dealt with by his previous colleagues—and notably by Mr. Hemmant—has connected that old feeling with the existing Ministry, and may have looked with some distaste upon joining them in any capacity whatever.

I do not blame him for that, but, I contend, this Ministry is distinct altogether from the previous Ministry. In regard to the particular reference made to the offer which I was authorised to make on the part of my honorable friend at the head of the Government to the honorable member for Ravenswood, I believe I have somewhat incorrectly stated what actually did occur, and that the honorable member's version is more correct than mine. I used the words "Prime Minister," and probably it should have been "leader of the Lower House." At that time it certainly was not stated, and I did not understand myself whether the honorable the Premier was to retain his seat in the Upper House, or to come into the Assembly. I was not aware in what capacity he would finally elect to accept office; and I readily acknowledge to the honorable gentleman the fact that he has correctly stated what actually took place between us. I think these communications are not really confidential. I conduct myself on these occasions as if they were in one sense proffers made in the interests of the public. If there are matters named as confidential, then I feel bound to treat them as such; but if some other gentleman were entrusted to make the proposition to me, I should consider that a communication to which I was not bound by the seal of confidence, if it is in the interests of the public. I hope I have committed no breach of confidence in stating what I have done in reference to my honorable friend. That I was most anxious to induce my colleagues, and that I succeeded in inducing them to some extent, to secure the adherence of the honorable member for Ravenswood, is possibly the case. Having great admiration for his character, his pertinacity of purpose, his determination, and his ability in debate, I was most anxious to secure his services, which I considered of great importance, and I regret exceedingly he did not see his way to join us; and it now appears that he did not do so in consequence of having met with a rebuff from the previous Ministry. On that, I join issue with him; I think he might have extended to us an amount of toleration he might not have been prepared to extend to the late Ministry, seeing that we were starting afresh on a new basis of policy.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I wish to say a word or two in explanation of what has fallen from the honorable member for Ravenswood. From that honorable gentleman's remarks, the House is given to understand that I objected to the construction of railways, and of the Maryborough and Gympie line especially; but what I did say was to the effect that I thought the Government had done perfectly right in leaving that out of their policy this session, and I thought they ought to have left out the other as well; and I took that view after hearing the statement of the late Treasurer. I did not take

exception to the construction of that railway, in the way stated by the honorable member.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have also a few words of explanation to say in reply to the honorable member for Ravenswood, with reference to what took place in the Cabinet of which we were both members. The honorable member accuses this Ministry of having adopted his policy, but I hope we have not done so. If I recollect rightly, and I am willing to be corrected if I am wrong, the policy of that honorable gentleman was, that a large number of railways should be constructed entirely by loan; and when some members of the Government asked what provision was to be made to meet the interest on that loan, no answer was given, or the answer that was suggested or made on the subject was such that we could not submit it to the House. As for the idea of carrying out the principle of the Western Railway Bill in connection with new railways that it was proposed to ask Parliament to authorise during the present session, such a thing was never mentioned in the Macalister Cabinet at all.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was then put and negatived without division.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I think, sir, it is no small compliment to the Government that they have been assailed on three distinct issues. The first is that they have no policy, the second is on the ground of personality, and the third, that they are responsible for acts committed under the administration of their predecessors. Now, sir, I think it can be fairly contended that the present Ministry is no part or parcel of the late administration. It must be admitted that the members of that administration who have taken office under the new Ministry have had some hardship imposed upon them by having to seek re-election, and coming into the House again in an entirely new position. I think that is sufficient in itself to prove that the present administration is in no way connected with the late Ministry. I say, the present Ministry represent the Liberal party in this House; they are identified with liberal traditions, and, I hope, will always carry out a Liberal policy, such as a Liberal Ministry should at all events enunciate. The position of the present Ministry has, however, been amply justified by my honorable colleagues this evening, and I rise chiefly to reply to and explain certain statements—I would say exaggerated statements—which have been made by the honorable gentleman who has moved the vote of want of confidence. I believe, if my predecessor, the late Colonial Treasurer, had been in this place, those statements would not have been made so rashly; and I, therefore, deem it only right to point out the fallacy of several of them. They are so transparent, that honorable members of this House will not be influenced by them; but coming from the

authoritative source they have done, outside they would naturally attach to themselves considerable importance and attention. The statements referred to two or three matters of finance, and they have, to a certain extent, a basis of truth, which gives them a coloring of that character, that would lead the outside public to imagine that they have been well considered, and are substantially correct. I may say, in entering upon this subject, that it would have been better for me to have deferred doing so until I had an opportunity of enunciating the financial policy of the Government; but as that opportunity may or may not arise, I think it is only due to my predecessor in office to endeavor to disabuse the minds—I will not say of honorable members of this House, because, as I have already stated, these statements will not carry much weight with them—but of the general public, respecting them. The first statement is, that the late Ministry entered office with a surplus of £240,000, and they left it with a deficiency variously estimated at from £40,000 to £100,000. Now, sir, there is no doubt they did enter office with a surplus of £240,000, but the honorable member for Maranoa might have stated, as he knows, and as every member of the House knows, that that £240,000 was absolutely removed from the revenue, and as much placed beyond revenue operations as funds raised on loan account, and that virtually the late Administration took office with a balance of only £228 in the Treasury. I shall not further follow the operations of the revenue at this time: that will, perhaps, be better explained when I am prepared to lay the financial position of the country before the House. But, sir, I repeat that, from the statement made by the honorable member for Maranoa, the only inference would be that, during the late Administration, in revenue operations £240,000 had not only been wasted, but a deficit of £43,000 had accumulated in addition.

Mr. McILWHAITH: You have only given the contradiction.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I said the remarks of the honorable member were of that character to lead the country to imagine that a profligate course of expenditure had been incurred in connection with revenue operations, which had transformed a credit of £240,000 into a debit of £43,000; but the honorable member knew that that surplus was appropriated for purposes of public expenditure on works usually provided for out of loan, and that reduced the available funds in revenue at the command of the late Ministry to £228. I think that is sufficient explanation with reference to that, or ought to be. The next statement is:—

“They had failed to recognize the position of Queensland in the money market. There was never a period when capitalists were more on the look out for sound borrowers, and because there happened to be a deficit of £40,000, caused by

the action of Ministers themselves, they would refrain from borrowing at present.”

The honorable member for Maranoa is, doubtless, in his own estimation, a very high financial authority; but I take it that the Board of Directors of the Union Bank of Australia in London, are quite as competent in matters of finance. In explanation of what I am about to say I would mention that when the Loan Act of 1875 passed, authorising the issue of debentures to the extent of £1,695,000, one million of those debentures were immediately transmitted to the Government Bankers in London for realisation, and honorable members will find that the proceeds have been placed to the credit of loan account. In January last, the Treasury contemplated placing the residue of the loan upon the London market, and accordingly apprised their bankers of their intention. But on the 31st of March the Directors of the Union Bank of Australia informed the Treasury that it was a very inopportune time for such a purpose, and when I assumed the management of the Treasury a letter from the Union Bank, received on the 23rd of May, was the first thing that came under my official consideration. I will just read an extract regarding the prospects of the sale of stock during the current half year:—

“As regards the prospect of a sale during the current half-year the Directors could not anticipate a favorable result, the large amount of stock taken up by the dealers, in January last, still remaining, to a great extent, unplaced, as you will learn from the enclosed copy of a letter from Mr. Westgarth (28th March), who has just purchased £12,000 of the bonds at 91—which includes three months' interest—the price being thus lower, by 1 per cent., than that tendered at in December. We could not, therefore, look for purchasers among the dealers, whom we should, moreover, alienate by so soon again coming upon the market. The condition of the stock markets is at present most unsettled; colonial debentures sharing in the depression of the securities.”

Before the arrival of that letter the debentures, to the amount of half a million of money, had been transmitted, and owing to the absence of telegraphic communication, the fate of those debentures is as yet unknown. We have, however, observed that the money market in London has recently exhibited a very buoyant tendency, and, on the whole, I think we have every reason to believe that if peace be maintained, and the clouds of war are dispersed, there will be no difficulty in satisfactorily placing a further loan. At the same time I think the information placed before the Government by the Bank Directors, was of a character to justify them in waiting for more favorable reports before committing themselves to another loan. When this document was placed before me I held the opinion of my predecessor in office, Mr. Hemmant; I thought that in the absence of telegraphic communication, and

the uncertain condition of affairs in Europe, it might be desirable to postpone placing another loan upon the London market; but I have had reason to change my mind, and I now think that if we have the opportunity of carrying out our projects, I shall be able to show, when I present the financial statement to the House, that we do not in this respect intend to be bound by our predecessors' line of policy; we do intend to place another loan for such an amount as the House may authorise upon the London market during the present year. The causes which have induced us to arrive at this conclusion it will be more in place for me to explain when I come to mention the various items enumerated in the Loan Estimates. When that time arrives I will also give my opinion as to the policy hitherto adopted of Loan Estimates being placed before the House unaccompanied by Loan Bills, a policy which, to my mind, is open to grave consideration. It is too late, however, to-night to enter more fully into these matters of detail. The honorable member for Maranoa also said:—

“What would tend, far more than the deficit, to depreciate Queensland debentures was the placing of £100,000 on loan estimates for roads and bridges, and the action of the late Government, which was partially agreed to by the present, in transferring votes that had been borrowed for one purpose and applying them to another, while they would subsequently have to ask for fresh loans to carry out the objects for which at first the money had ostensibly been borrowed.”

I must express that I scarcely follow the honorable member's argument here. He must be aware that the loan funds constitute one amount *en globo*. Some items of expenditure are necessarily pushed on faster than others; some accounts may in anticipation of a fresh loan be overdrawn, but the form of a Loan Bill or schedule is never so altered as to permit of the appropriation of one sum for another purpose than that to which it was destined. The fact is, the matter is one which will hardly be understood, unless honorable gentlemen will address themselves to the consideration of the manner in which loan balances are held available. The comments made by the honorable member upon the speeches which had been delivered by the members of the present Government, were on a par with the criticisms of other honorable members; he has taken certain remarks and quoted them apart from their context. Had he given these Ministerial speeches with their context, he would have shown the House that they entirely dispelled the idea that the Government intended to advocate a policy of rest and stagnation. If any honorable member has the curiosity to read the report of my address to my constituents, he will find that I distinctly deprecated anything like a policy of stagnation in public works; but, at the same time, I felt justified in informing them that there was grave reason shown for a supervi-

sion of the Works Department, and for some authoritative information to be given before the country was committed to an expenditure which, in many cases, had been extravagant, and was attended with an undoubted waste of public funds, and for objects which might have been completed for a considerable less cost than that actually incurred. I do not think, after all, that anything said by myself or colleagues could be construed into the expression of a policy of inactivity; and I believe, if the House were this night to decide upon railway extensions, it would be fully six months before anything like reliable surveys could be obtained, or such reliable information as would warrant us in proceeding with public railway works. Our anticipation was, that the interval between the present session and the commencement of next year, when, as the Premier has already informed the House, it was our purpose, if we survived the session, to meet the House somewhat earlier than usual, would have been profitably occupied in preliminary surveys, and in becoming prepared, not only to ask the House for money to proceed with works, but to place before honorable members such information on the subject as would give confidence in obtaining the vote of every individual member. The honorable member for Ravenswood says, that we have taken his policy. The honorable member's policy, so far as I can see from the records he has left in the department, was clear enough; had he remained a member of the late administration, he would have come down to the House and asked for £350,000 out of loan for the construction of a railway from Maryborough to Gympie, and £500,000 out of loan to construct a railway from Bundaberg to Mount Perry. That was the honorable member for Ravenswood's idea of a policy; he would have come down to the House and asked for £850,000 to construct two lines of railways in districts where the want of railway communication has been but very recently expressed. Now, I would ask honorable members on the other side of the House, or on either side of the House, whether they would, for one moment, have assented to such a proposition? The honorable member for Ravenswood, and, perhaps, the honorable member for Wide Bay would have been an exception; but, beyond them, I do not believe any other honorable member would have advocated or supported such a measure, especially if they knew how the interest was to be paid; that interest was to be paid by the assessment of stock.

MR. KING: I wish to say that the Colonial Treasurer is mixing up a Bill prepared by Mr. Hemmant with my policy. The latter portion of the honorable gentleman's statement refers to the late Treasurer's Bill, and I never even saw it.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: I am bound of course to accept the honorable member's statement, but not only do I base my remarks upon

documents in the office, but from conversations with the honorable member himself in this building. At any rate he does not deny that he would have come down to the House and asked for £850,000 to construct two lines of railway in districts, as to which there have been grave doubts expressed by both sides of the House, whether they are ripe for railway construction at all. Our principle is, to provide for railway construction out of the proceeds of the sales of land in such districts; and that is a vastly different policy from that of the honorable member for Ravenswood, and it has the merit of not imposing additional taxation upon districts which do not derive any benefit from railways which are constructed for other localities. But what was the great financial policy of the honorable member for Ravenswood as enunciated by himself? Why, sir, he suggested that the Government should borrow three millions of money, that these three millions should be placed in the hands of the local bankers to enable their customers to go into the market and buy the lands which the Government were placing there, out of the Western Railway reserves. I am happy to say the good sense of the members of both sides of the House was against such a proposal, and I certainly cannot see what new element of attraction the honorable member has placed in his present policy to make him acceptable to honorable members on the other side. I should view with extreme concern so large a financial operation as that, and so long as I am in the Treasury department, such a scheme shall never meet with my approval. Again, the honorable member deprecates the idea of £100,000 being borrowed on loan account for roads and bridges. He points out that loans should represent nothing but reproductive works. Does the honorable gentleman know that railway salaries, to a large extent, at the present time, are paid out of loan? Yet in an exceptionally trying season like this he deprecates the setting apart of £100,000 for the construction of roads and bridges in the colony, although there never was a time in our history when the vote would have been more appropriate than at the present time, especially if we take into consideration that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a system of Shire Councils, or local bodies having supervision of their own roads and bridges and other public works. In that case it would be only justice to these local bodies that the roads and bridges should be put into a proper state of repair, so that the Government should be able to subsidise the efforts of these local bodies. They cannot be expected to discharge their trusts empty-handed, and unless a vote of this description be provided out of loan by the Government, it will be impossible to put the machinery of these Shire Councils, or whatever else it may be decided to call them, into efficient motion. There can evidently be no intention of the Government to popularise

itself by this measure, because accompanied with the Loan Estimate will be the schedules of distribution, and it will be open to the House to comment on such distribution, if that be unfair. I can assure the House the matter has received every consideration from the present Government, their aim being to make distribution as impartial as possible, and to provide bridges and roads throughout the length and breadth of the colonies. In continuing my remarks on this subject of the motion before the House, I feel, to a certain extent, bound to indulge in personal reflections which are at all times unpleasant to me; but which, under the circumstances, from a sense of public interest I cannot avoid. No one dislikes dealing in personalities more than I do; but I do think the honorable member for Ravenswood ought to consider the position he has held in this House in connection with the Liberal party. The honorable member ought especially to remember that he assumed a high position in that party when other men in the House had a good right to the post he occupied. They were not discontented at his appointment, for they recognised the services he had rendered in the post, and they were quite content to serve under him; although many of them might very fairly have raised the question of precedence. No doubt the honorable member was a very able Minister of Public Works when he first took charge of the department; but I do think, at the present time, he has a grave responsibility to settle with himself, and with the country, for choosing to split up the party with which he was formerly connected. He must know that the present is a time in the history of the colony when it is incumbent upon the party who has so long sat on this side of the House to unite in their efforts, to sink minor differences, and unite as one body to deal with the important question of land legislation. When that great work has been accomplished I hope we may see the line of demarcation between parties in this House, if not wholly obliterated, at least partly removed; but until that question is settled the Liberal party, as a party, have definite and earnest work to do, that requires the exercise of their united energies. I do not think I need further occupy the attention of the House upon this question; but I should like to say a few words upon the appointment of the late Premier as Agent-General. As a member of the present Ministry, I give my individual and distinct denial—and in the community at large, I know it will be received with as full credence as that of any other honorable member of the House—to the statement, that any compact whatever was made between the present Ministry and either Mr. Macalister or Mr. Mein, whose name has also been mentioned. There was no such compact made. So conscientious indeed were some of the Ministers that they refrained from considering the matter at all

until they had been re-elected; and I may say further, that so careful have they been of what they considered their duty to the public, until they can ascertain how they stand in the House, that they have abstained as far as they possibly could from making any appointment whatever. They have had many opportunities, as all new administrations have; they have been besieged with applications, but the Agent-Generalship is the only appointment they have made.

MR. MOREHEAD: What of the Clerk of the other House?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: That was a necessity, and it was not a Ministerial appointment: it was a matter submitted by the President of the Upper House, and the Ministry concurred in the recommendation; and in a matter of that kind I hope the House will never be wanting in the respect due to yourself, sir, or to the President of the other Chamber.

MR. MOREHEAD: You forced it on him.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Nothing of the kind. So far as I know, the recommendation came in the usual manner, and the appointment was made. However, in dealing with the matter of the Agent-General, I for one quite concurred in the appointment of Mr. Macalister at the present time, and I cannot help thinking that that gentleman was not treated with the generosity one would have expected. On the occasion of Mr. Macalister's last appearance in the House, I do think the honorable gentleman who had deservedly acquired so high a reputation as the leader of the Opposition, might have treated an old political opponent with more generosity; for a long time they had crossed swords with each other, and as, after all, it was the honorable member for Port Curtis who threw down the gage, the Ministry would have shown a very poor spirit indeed if they had not picked it up. Whenever that gage is thrown down, so long as I remain a member of the Ministry, I shall do my best to see that it does not lie neglected, and I will remark to the House that it was the threat made by the honorable member, the leader of the Opposition, which has forced me to offer these remarks. We have been treated as if we had no right to come into the House, or exercise the functions with which we have been entrusted; nevertheless, the appointment which has been called in question is one that will, I believe, give entire satisfaction. The only thing remaining for me to notice at this late hour of the night—and I here take the opportunity of thanking honorable members for the patience with which they have heard me—is the objection made as to the *personel* of the Ministry. That objection is a very small thing, for, after all, it is measures not men that we have to consider. Let the Ministry be tried upon their measures; if they are found to recede from their principles, or shift their ground after they have placed their policy before the

House, it is quite time to dismiss them from office, but I do say that simply to assume that men are incapable of carrying out the trust imposed upon them in a public capacity is to prejudge them most ungenerously. A few days only will elapse before our policy would be before the House; that policy would then be open to discussion, and doubtless a great deal of it would necessarily be open to cavil, and if it was found fault with, and the opinion of the House showed that it was not acceptable to the country, there would be a fair and distinct issue on which to turn out the Ministry. But simply to say that because the head of the Ministry is not altogether acceptable to some honorable gentlemen opposite, is not fair. I believe, with the exception of myself, that the Ministry is a most excellent Ministry, and one that will do justice to all parts of the colony, and act straightforwardly in their various offices; and if we cannot discharge our trust with credit to ourselves and with benefit to the country—well, then, we will retire and make room for others. However, sir, the whole issue of the present debate to my mind is this, and I know that I am liable to the charge of stirring up muddy water when I say so—the whole matter is this, that we have to deal with the public estate of the colony. The present session is the one in which that question should be settled; it is one to which the present Government have addressed themselves, and it is one upon which they are prepared to stand or fall. Not only upon that, but upon their own policy they have decided to take a firm position, and will either stand or fall by it. They have not been squeezable in any way, and I can safely say that they have not received any impression from the opinions which have been expressed since we met the House on Tuesday. Our policy remains unchanged. I will remind honorable members that we were allowed a very short time indeed to form our policy. We had all to seek re-election, and as a considerable period of time was involved in so doing, we had necessarily few opportunities of meeting together to discuss our politics. On that ground I consider we are entitled to meet with a generous consideration. But all we ask is, that we shall be allowed to lay our policy before the country; we do not ask for sympathy, but we do desire that the measures we intend to bring forward shall be known to the country, and that we shall be judged upon them.

MR. MACROSSAN moved—

That the debate be now adjourned.

MR. PALMER said that, as far as he was concerned, he should have no objection to go to a division that evening; but he believed there were some honorable members who intended to speak on the question, and who were determined to do so; and as he and other honorable members had had their say,

it was not fair to block them. One prominent member of the House was not very well; and then, again, as it was only natural that honorable members who had yet to speak were anxious to be reported, so that what they said should go to their constituents, he would ask the Government to agree to an adjournment until the following Tuesday.

The PREMIER said that, on behalf of the Government, and seeing it was the wish of honorable members opposite, he had no objection to an adjournment: at the same time, he had understood that it was intended to come to a division that night.

Question put and passed.