

**Record of the
Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament**

...
**Legislative Assembly
29th May 1860**
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Extracted from the third party account as published in the
Moreton Bay Courier 31st May 1860

The house met, pursuant to adjournment, and the Speaker took the chair at ten minutes past three o'clock.

SPEAKER'S COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATHS.

The SPEAKER announced that his Excellency had issued a commission empowering him to administer oaths to such members as might thereafter present themselves to be sworn. The Clerk of the house then read the commission.

ELECTION COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER laid on the table his Excellency's warrant to the following gentlemen to act as an Election Committee, viz., Messrs. Buckley, Coxen, Gore, Jordan, Macalister, Royds, and Thorn.

STANDING ORDERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Standing Orders of the House of Commons should be adopted till the house should have agreed to standing orders of its own. The motion was put and carried.

PAPERS.

Several papers were laid on the table of the house, and ordered to be printed, but no information was furnished to the press concerning them.

PETITION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY presented a petition from Messrs. W. Craies, H. V. Hassall, M. Ford, G. H. Wilson, jun., Owen Connor, and J. Fleming, representing that the return of Dr. Nelson was void, and that Pollet Cardew, Esq. having the next largest number of votes, was duly elected, and praying that the petition might be submitted to the Election Committee, when appointed. He moved that the petition be received.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded the motion, which was then put and carried.

QUORUM.

At the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, seconded by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL a bill was introduced to provide a suitable quorum for the Assembly, read a first time and ordered to be printed, the second reading to stand an order of the day for Wednesday.

THE ADDRESS.

The SPEAKER having reported that the house had attended in the Legislative Council to hear his Excellency's opening speech, and having himself read the speech to the house,

Mr. ST. G. Gore moved that a committee should be appointed to prepare a reply to his Excellency's speech, and that the committee should consist of Messrs. Herbert, Pring,

Mackenzie, Broughton, and the mover.

Mr. BROUGHTON seconded the motion, which was then put and carried.

The committee having retired, returned shortly with the reply.

Mr. ST. GEORGE GORE then rose, and said that as, on a previous occasion he had had the honor of moving that their present Speaker should take the chair, he would not at that time solicit the indulgence of the House on the grounds of a first appearance as a speaker. That day must ever be one memorable in Queensland history, and it might not be out of place for him to allude to another memorable day of which this was the 200th anniversary. On the day to which he alluded, England had freed itself from the iron destiny under which she had been groaning, and called to the throne of his father, one from whose grandfather our gracious Queen was descended. Far be it from him to depreciate the qualities of Cromwell, the greatest man who ever ruled in England, or to exalt the character of the most worthless of her monarchs, Charles II. But whatever might have been the sins of that monarch, there could be no doubt that his government was to a certain extent in accordance with the principles of constitution, or limited monarchy, a return to which was an inestimable blessing after the tyranny that had been exercised by Cromwell. (Mr. Gore here quoted from Macaulay a panegyric of the British constitution as restored and preserved by the Revolutions of the 17th and 19th centuries). He would not longer occupy the attention of the House, but would explain under what circumstances he had undertaken a task usually confided to pledged supporters of the government. When he had been requested by the hon. Colonial Secretary to move the address in reply to that delivered by his Excellency, he had reminded him of the usual practice, to which he (Mr. Herbert) had replied that the moving of the address would not prevent the mover from following his own opinion in all matters of detail. He (Mr. G.) had accordingly determined to accept the office he had been requested to perform, and would now only solicit the indulgence of the house for the imperfect way in which he had discharged it. Mr. Gore then proceeded to comment briefly on the several subjects touched upon in the address, remarking that, with regard to the paragraphs relating to the feelings of loyalty, and of satisfaction in having obtained separation, that were experienced by them, there was no room for difference of opinion. In respect to the reform of the representation, that was a matter of some difficulty, but considering the important and immense mass of business they would be called upon to transact, he thought that another general election would not be desirable, unless some sweeping reform were deemed imperatively necessary. They were all agreed on the importance of religion and education as subjects of legislation, and he had no doubt that when things were a little more advanced the Colonial Secretary would be explicit enough on these matters. The debt was a subject to be dealt with by business men, of whom, no doubt, many could be found in the house. The method of settlement proposed would, he thought, meet with general approbation. As to telegraphic and steam communication, the only question that could arise was whether the finances of the country would be able to afford the expense which it would be necessary to incur; this would be best answered after they had seen the budget which would be shortly introduced. The administration of Crown lands was a matter of paramount importance, but at present he did not support that any one was prepared with a measure to deal with it. He trusted that on this question there would be no hasty legislation. A pressing necessity existed for taking in hand the system that prevailed of tendering for unoccupied runs, and a bill, he hoped, would shortly be introduced which would meet with all the requirements of the case. Mr. Gore then briefly alluded to the paragraphs relating to immigration, the volunteer corps, and the estimates, and, in reference to that with which the address concluded, said that he trusted they would never give his Excellency or her Majesty cause to think otherwise of their loyal feelings. Having gone through the different topics of the address, he would beg the house to take in good part the remarks he had ventured to offer, and would remind them that, in case they showed their incompetence to legislate for themselves, there were persons in New South Wales who would gloat over their want of success. He would ask hon. gentlemen whether they were in possession of any legislative specifics absolutely necessary to the welfare of Queensland, and, if not, would suggest the convenience of their submitting to certain necessary delays. If any hon. gentlemen were anxious to exert their talents in office, he would beg them to consider whether, in

case of their succeeding in obtaining it, they would be in a position to form a strong administration. If they did not feel certain on that point, he would have them remember, and apply, for the benefit of those now in office, the golden rule of "Do unto others, as ye would that they should do unto you." Let them treat their antagonists as they would wish to be treated themselves. The rules of justice and fair play were equally applicable to the struggles of political warfare as to any others. If the members of their house would act up to these rules, instead of imitating the legislators of New South Wales, they would exemplify to the whole world what the good sense and good feeling of Anglo-Saxons could do. He would now move that the address, in reply to that delivered by his Excellency, as about to be read by the Clerk, be adopted by the house.

The address was then read as follows:—

"To His Excellency Sir George Ferguson Bowen, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Colony of Queensland and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c.

"May it Please your Excellency—

"We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to express to your Excellency our affection and loyalty to the person and government of our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to offer our respectful thanks for your Excellency's speech to this Assembly, now for the first time convened.

"2. We concur most cordially in your Excellency's estimation of the important influence that must be exercised upon the future of the territory by the inauguration within it of a separate Parliamentary constitution, and while we reciprocate the hope and belief that this community may prove itself to have been not unworthy of Her majesty's most gracious and considerate boon of self-government, we feel a deep satisfaction in learning from your Excellency that the inhabitants of all parts of the colony have been successful in their earnest efforts to testify, by their reception of Her first representative among them, that honest loyalty, that warm attachment, and that heartfelt gratitude which Queensland must ever feel towards her Queen.

"3. In accordance with your Excellency's suggestion it will become the duty of the Legislature, whenever the constitution now conferred upon this colony shall appear to stand in need of such modification as may be consistent at once with its own stability, and with the just rights of the people, from time to time to exercise, with a due sense of the responsibility incurred, the power indicated in that behalf by the order in council of her most gracious Majesty.

"4. The all important questions of Religion and Education, as well as such further measures as may be recommended for the advancement of the moral well being of this population, and for the prevention and detection of crime, shall receive the careful consideration of this Assembly.

"5. We shall not delay to institute such measures as may tend, on our part, to promote and facilitate an equitable settlement of the outstanding account between this colony and New South Wales; making it our object at once to maintain our just claims and cheerfully to acknowledge what may be shown to be our liabilities.

"6. In recommending to the Legislature an examination of the large and permanent advantages that will be secured to this colony by the establishment of a steam and telegraphic correspondence with the lines at present connecting Europe with the countries adjacent to our northern coasts, and of the safest and most feasible method of establishing such communication, your Excellency has but anticipated the desire of the Parliament to develop, not only by internal works of immediate necessity, but by broad and prospective operations, the political and commercial position of Queensland among other British dependencies in this quarter of the globe.

"7. We accept in their fullest extent your Excellency's sentiments with regard to the permanent importance of making provision for the just and facile administration of the Waste Lands of this Colony, as well as with regard to the high responsibility attaching to so great a trust.

"8. Concurring cordially in the desirability of affording time for a full and patient

consideration, before dealing comprehensively with questions of so varied and complicated a character as those concerning the disposal of the land, we will lend our ready attention to such special legislative action as your Excellency has recommended to us, with a view to the more immediate removal of obstructions to capital and enterprise.

"9. We shall approach the difficult question of Immigration with an earnest desire to determine it in the manner best calculated to confer a permanent benefit upon this Territory, as well as upon our most deserving and enterprising fellow-countrymen.

"19. We could have anticipated no other response than that with which the announcement of her Majesty's pleasure to accept, through your Excellency, the services of the volunteer Corps, has been already met. We trust that the movement will be permanent, and adequate to protect the colony in any emergency that may arise.

"11. The Estimates for the current and ensuing years shall receive our immediate and anxious consideration, in order that by strict economy, and by an equitable apportionment of the public revenues, the utmost advantages may be secured to the several districts and interests of the Colony. The special appropriations, to which your Excellency has directed our more particular attention, shall in their turn be fairly and carefully examined.

"12. The various other subjects adverted to in your Excellency's speech shall not fail to command our earnest attention.

"13. In expressing your reliance upon the patriotism and loyalty of this Assembly, we trust that your Excellency will not have estimated too highly our earnest desire and purpose, under the blessing of Providence, to recommend and, through those who may from time to time be your Excellency's Responsible Advisers, to carry into execution such measures as may have deserved your assent, and as may be conducive no less to the establishment of a sound system of independent government, than to the enduring welfare and progress of all branches of this community."

Mr. GORE having repeated his motion for the adoption of the address, in compliance with a suggestion from the chair,

Mr. BROUGHTON, rose to second the motion, observing that the circumstances under which he did so were similar to those mentioned by the mover. He would claim, after seconding the adoption of the address, to be considered an independent member of the house. That day might be regarded as a beacon, separating times past and future. The hon. member then said that a prophetic panorama passed before his eyes, and imagining himself launched into eternity, and landed a hundred years in advance of the present time, proceeded to give a glowing description of what he saw in Queensland from that point of view, enumerating in detail all the achievements of cultivation and art which would have been accomplished in the colony by the year 1960. He asked himself how all this could be, and replied that it could only come from the fostering and encouragement, by men possessed of the requisite intellects, of the liberty which had been bestowed upon them. Such men, he trusted, there were amongst them. He thought there must be something in the country of a good and great nature to call for the expressions that had fallen from their excellent Governor, and to rouse in his mind recollections of that land, teeming with historical associations, which had given birth to his lady, who had graced the proceedings of that day with her presence. He felt great pride and satisfaction in being a member of a legislature which would lay the foundation of a lasting edifice of prosperity for Queensland. The hon. member concluded by declaring his belief, under certain exceptional circumstances, in the advisability of dissolving the house, and by expressing his good wishes for its welfare and prosperity. (Cheers.)

On the Speaker's putting the motion,

Mr. BUCKLEY said that as the address was a lengthy one, and members could not have had time to peruse it properly, he would propose as an amendment that the debate should be adjourned till Thursday at 3 o'clock, to take precedence of all other business.

Mr. MACALISTER seconded the amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that before the House assented to the motion for adjournment, he would wish to call its attention to the inconvenience which would arise from such a course. One week had already elapsed since the opening of Parliament, and he had received intimations that it might be necessary, during the next week, to subject the House to another adjournment. As there was so much work awaiting them, and it was unconstitutional to allow any business to intervene between the delivery of the Address and the adoption of a reply to it, he would express it as his opinion that it would be most desirable that the debate should not be adjourned.

Mr. MACALISTER was somewhat astonished at the course attempted to be pursued by the government, because the request of his friend, the hon. member for East Moreton, was one which was not only made, but universally insisted upon in every Parliament in the Australian colonies. He did not conceive that the hon. member had done anything but what he was bound to do in justice to himself, the House, and the country. The address was not an ordinary one; it had not, he believed, been proposed by ministers at all. The ministers had not taken upon themselves the responsibility of the address. (Remarks of dissent from the ministerial benches). He was glad to hear that the ministers were perfectly prepared to support the address, and in that case, he thought that the course proposed by the hon. member for East Moreton was the most suitable one that could be adopted. The speech had touched upon a variety of topics which had not been alluded to in the address, and he thought it was ungracious to resist the wishes of those who desired to make some observations on it, unless the government could assign some strong reason for not going on with the debate. He thought that the House would agree with him that the debate should be adjourned. At the same time he would suggest the propriety of beginning the debate to-morrow (Wednesday) instead of Thursday. (Hear, hear).

Mr. BUCKLEY expressed his willingness to adopt the suggestion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL wished to address a few remarks to the House in answer to the speech of the hon. member who had just sat down. That gentleman had hinted that the Government shrank from undertaking the responsibility of the reply to his Excellency's speech. So far from that being the case, they had asked his Excellency to be allowed to take the responsibility upon their shoulders. As regarded the reason assigned for the adjournment, that members might have time to read the address, he would not undertake, as an inexperienced member of the legislature, to deny that such a course was in accordance with parliamentary practice; but he would say that, hon. members having had time to read the speech, if there was anything in the reply which could have induced them to consider a debate necessary, it would have been more decorous and gracious to her Majesty not to have allowed any business to intervene between the delivery of the speech.

Mr. LILLEY rose to a point of order. He believed it was not in accordance with parliamentary practice to introduce the Queen's name in such a way as to influence a debate. (Hear, hear.)

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL admitted to force of the objection, and apologised for the informality. As far as his experience went, he believed that it was not usual for any adjournment of a debate of that kind to take place; but, at all events, he thought the house should duly consider the propriety of allowing any business to intervene between the delivery of the speech and the adoption of the reply. Mr. Pring was here reminded that the mover of the amendment had agreed to the adjournment of the debate till Wednesday, instead of Thursday, and concluded by pressing the necessity of allowing no delays to take place in proceeding to the business before the house. At the fag end of the session they might be compelled to deal with questions of the most vital importance with a bare quorum of the house, if such delays were countenanced.

Mr. BUCKLEY regretted exceedingly that the hon. member who had just sat down should so far have forgotten the practice of parliament as not to be aware that three days had, on certain occasions, been occupied in debating the address moved in reply to her Majesty's speech. He

regretted very much the course which had been taken by the Government, and considered that the house should weigh well the questions of policy propounded in the speech, in reference to the colony and its inhabitants. He should move the adjournment of the debate till 3 o'clock to-morrow (Wednesday.)

The amendment was then put, and the following division took place:—

Ayes, 12.		Noes, 12.	
Thorn		Gore	
Moffatt		O'Sullivan	
Buckley		Royds	
Taylor		Broughton	
Raff		Watts	
Blakeney		Coxen	
Jordan		Haly	
Edmondstone		Richards	
Fitzsimmons		Forbes	
Ferrett		Herbert	
Macalister	} Tellers.	McKenzie	} Tellers.
Lilley	}	Pring	}

The numbers being equal, the Speaker gave his casting vote to the "Noes," and the amendment was then negatived.

On the original motion being put,

Mr. BUCKLEY rose and said, that he regretted that the opportunity he had sought for taking the reply into fuller consideration should not have been given; he also regretted that it should have been insinuated that his motion proceeded from any party spirit. In the few remarks he should make he would confine himself entirely to the subject of the address, without attempting to emulate the eloquence of some hon. gentlemen who had spoken on the question. In reference to the question of State-aid to religion, it was one to which an unusual amount of attention had been paid, and he thought that it ought to be dealt with with the least possible delay. So long as the present system prevailed, they could not hope for any but bad results. He felt convinced that the existing system promoted corruption, rather than pure and genuine piety. He thought that the question ought to be disposed of at once, and disposed of once for all. In reference to the settlement of the debt, he thought that the proposal submitted to them was of a satisfactory character, and hoped that the correspondence which had taken place with the government of New South Wales would prove so also; but he questioned whether they were in a position at present to deal with the matter. The settlement of the debt would require an examination of statistical details far more ample than they would be able to make at present. He would not go into detail on that occasion, but when the proper time came, he would endeavor to point out the particulars to which special attention should be given. In respect to the proposition of carrying the European telegraphic wire overland, it was monstrous in the extreme. The force sufficient to protect the line from injury would oblige them to incur a liability which, in the state of their finances, would be quite unjustifiable. They would find it necessary to adopt a submarine telegraph instead. The allusions that had been made in the speech to the land question were so vague as not to convey any meaning except in reference to the tendering system. It must be clear that that system would have to be altered in some way or other, attention being paid at the same time to fair and equitable claims. He could not help remarking on this subject that some of the warmest opponents of the tendering system were men who had profited most from it. With the speech in other particulars he entirely coincided. He would only further add that in reference to the bill about to be introduced to alter the quorum, he was most decidedly opposed to such a measure, and would dispute the authority of the House to attempt any alteration in the existing law.

Mr. RAFF entirely concurred in the opinion just expressed, that an ample opportunity ought to be allowed for considering the important topics treated in his Excellency's speech. Without consideration it was impossible for them to prepare an address which would give satisfaction either to his Excellency or to the house. He maintained moreover that the terms of the Attorney-General were of too dictatorial a character, and if tolerated were calculated to restrict the liberty of discussion in that house. (Hear, hear.) He had no desire to enter into the details of his Attorney-General's speech, and would therefore simply state that he differed from the Government on most of the questions mooted, whilst he thought there were many others of great importance that had been omitted altogether.

Mr. LILLEY had hoped that the ministry, having been allowed six months to prepare their measures, would not have begrudged the indulgence of a short time for the house to prepare an address in answer to the vice-regal speech. (Hear, hear.) Probably the granting of this indulgence would have tended greatly to facilitate the transaction of public business, but as the matter now stood, he thought the Government had rather challenged than endeavoured to avoid opposition. There were some subjects broached in his Excellency's speech to which he felt inclined to take exception, and among these was the one of public education. He had no objection to the establishment of a high class grammar school so soon as the circumstances of the colony permitted, but he sincerely regretted that the establishment of primary schools throughout the length and breadth of the colony was not made a subject of first importance by the Government. Upon this point as well as upon several others of importance, they had expressed no opinion, or shadowed forth any policy whatever. (Hear, hear.) Yet no one could deny that they were bound to extend education to all classes of the community. He also observed that there was a most important omission in his Excellency's speech. It was generally known that a large proportion of the inhabitants were deprived of the franchise, and yet no promise or hope had been held out that the evil would be remedied. Why did they not favor the house with some expression of policy upon this subject. If the Government were opposed to an extension of the franchise, undoubtedly the most manly, courageous, and straightforward course would have been to state so at once; and if they were in favor of it, the enunciation of the fact at the present time would certainly have been the most opportune, and given the greatest satisfaction. (Hear, hear.) Then again he noted that the subject of law reform had elicited no opinion from the Government, although measures of great importance for the disposal of real property had passed the Legislatures of both Victoria and Adelaide. Among other things the Government had proposed the appointment of Commissioners to determine matters with reference to the separation from New South Wales, and the division of the public debt; but it was easy to see that, without conjoint legislative sanction, no such arrangement could be legally carried into effect. Upon what basis, for instance, could they, under present circumstances, pretend to threat with New South Wales, which had an equal interest in the division of the debt. With regard to the land question, he agreed with the hon. member (Mr. Buckley), that the Government had expounded no policy whatever, and yet this, of all others, was universally believed to be the most important any Government could be called upon to deal with. The mere fact of introducing a measure for improving the tendering system, could not be considered as any advance towards a final settlement of the land question. As for the efficiency of the police force, he was not disposed to question the assertion put forth in the vice-regal speech. At the same time he could not see the necessity of the gilt buttons and gold lace with which that body had been recently favored; and he was not without hope that any errors in this respect would be duly corrected by the Assembly, when the Estimates came under consideration. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. FORBES was sorry that a course so directly adverse to the Government should have been adopted on the present occasion. Considering the short time the gentlemen composing the Government had been in office, he thought they were entitled to peculiar indulgence, more especially as they had propounded many measures which seemed to meet with general approval. Those gentlemen had hitherto carried on the government of the country as a matter of necessity, and so far they had been successful. Why, then, should not the house give them a fair trial? Were hon. members on the opposition benches so restless for place and power, that they could not

wait five minutes, or until the measures of the Ministry had been fairly brought before the house. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) There were many parts of the speech with which he did not agree, but still he was disposed to give the Ministry a fair trial. The hon. member for East Moreton seemed to think that the Government had made a mistake in giving their adherence to the proposed telegraphic line of communication; but he believed that the result would show that it was not only the most advantageous for the colony, but the most acceptable to the public at large.

Mr. FITZSIMMONS said he believed this discussion was got up for the mere purpose of asserting the dignity of the House, and could have no practical effect on the ordinary course of legislation. He therefore hoped that it would not be continued to any great length.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY disclaimed any idea on the part of the government to restrict discussion, and still less he was authorised to say, did his hon. and learned friend desire to assume a dictatorial tone towards hon. members in that House. (Hear, hear). With regard to the meagreness of the speech upon certain matters alluded to, he had merely to state, that it was framed upon those principles which were usually observed in every case of the kind. Wherever information was deficient the government relied upon the opportunity of being enabled to afford it when the measures came on for consideration by the House. (Hear, hear). Whatever might be thought of the conduct pursued by the present government, all that he could say was that when the proper time came they would be prepared to stand or fall by their policy. (Hear, hear). With respect to law reform, which had been omitted in his Excellency's speech—and perhaps injudiciously so—he would simply state that it was the intention of the government to introduce measures having for their object among other things the amendment of the law relating to real property, as alluded to by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. As for State-aid to Religion, that was left to a certain extent, an open question for the Legislature to deal with. His own opinion was that owing to the scattered condition of the population, State-aid to Religion could not be dispensed with for some time to come. Still he thought the question was one which ought to be referred to a select committee of the House, in order that an expression of opinion might be obtained thereon. Adverting to the subject of Education of a primary character, he had no hesitation in declaring that his opinions were decidedly in favour of the national system, that being, according to his view, the most suitable to the scattered condition of their population. (Hear, hear). The subject of Electoral Reform had not escaped the attention of the government, but considering the successful manner in which the late elections had been conducted, and the absence of any official complaints to the contrary, they had not deemed it necessary during the present session, or at all events until they had obtained further experience, to introduce any measure for an alteration of the existing electoral law. At the same time he was in a position to say that if any real grievance were proved in connection with the franchise the Government would be prepared to redress it or to give their support to any measure having that object in view. With regard to the appointment of Commissioners to decide the claims between the two colonies, he observed that the course adopted by the Government here, would be the same as that adopted by the Government of New South Wales, and would consequently have equal effect. This would be seen from a resolution which it was his intention to move very shortly in the house. Voluminous papers would also be laid on the table, whereby hon. members would be enabled to satisfy themselves as to the steps taken by Government. The land question was no doubt one of paramount importance, but he believed it was also one with respect to which hon. members greatly deprecated hasty legislation. It was from a consideration of this feeling mainly, that the Government had not announced the introduction of any measure on the subject. He might state, however, for the information of hon. members, that the Government had prepared the heads of a bill which if required they would undertake to submit to the house. Nevertheless, he did not think it would be advisable to do so at present, as a great diversity of opinion prevailed on the subject, and it was even a matter of doubt as to whether it ought not to be dealt with by two bills instead of one. As to telegraphic communication with England, that was another question which would have to be dealt with by a select committee of the house. He was aware that conflicting opinions had been expressed as to whether the advantages would be greater by carrying the line overland or by water, but, as he said before, that was a question for the legislature to determine. It was also a

question for them to determine as to how far they could embark generally in works of so gigantic a character. He would merely state in conclusion that the members of the Government would always be prepared to answer questions, or afford any information hon. members might desire, with that courtesy and attention which they had a right to expect from the legal advisers of his Excellency the Governor. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. JORDAN, who, owing to the noise in the streets, was scarcely audible for the first few sentences, was understood to say that he felt it necessary to make a few remarks in order to establish his right to debate the character of the proposed address. There were, in his opinion, certain important omissions in the vice-regal speech which were to be deeply regretted, and which required time for consideration, with a view to the preparation of a suitable address. In saying this he had no desire to endorse the opinion that the hon. and learned Attorney-General in the remarks uttered by him intended to speak dogmatically, but he nevertheless thought the government had failed to justify their policy, so far as it could be gathered from the vice-regal speech. Nearly every one must know that the feeling of the great majority of the inhabitants was against the continuance of State-aid to religion, and yet, to his great astonishment, he found that it was the intention of the government to perpetuate the evil. This was the more singular, as the government partially admitted the unsoundness of the principle, and only attempted to justify it on the ground that State-aid was necessary to sustain missionary efforts among a scattered population. With regard to immigration, he observed a long paragraph in his Excellency's speech, equalled only by the littleness it contained. No doubt numbers of poor and industrious persons could be brought to the colony if there was any prospect of their acquiring a possession in the land, but until this great question had been settled, he saw no hope of his Excellency's predictions being fulfilled.

Mr. MACALISTER denied that there was any ground for the insinuation of factious motives preferred against the opposition. Although the honourable member for Ipswich might have the Government under his protecting wing, it was no reason why the freedom of discussion should be burked. (Laughter, and hear, hear.) The members of the Government knew full well that the hon. member for East Moreton had spoken to them privately with regard to the desirability of an adjournment in order to give time for the consideration of the numerous and important topics dwelt upon in his Excellency's opening speech. That did not look like an attempt to take the Government by surprise, or to harass them by unnecessary opposition. (Hear, hear.) The speech was evidently one of such a character as to require the most mature deliberation. He would not go into details, but he must say that part of the speech having reference to the land question really did astonish him. The least he expected in the absence of any definite measure on the subject was a full and general exposition of the ministerial land policy. The proposed measure for reforming the tender system involved no policy whatever; it was one of those measures that any one might frame without having read an article on the subject or acquired any information of a local character. Indeed, so far as the speech was concerned, the Ministry did not appear to have any policy whatever. This was further proved by the reference to State-aid to religion. The Government did not pretend to have any definite views of their own, and they accordingly left the matter to be dealt with by the Legislature. He maintained that it was the duty of the Government to produce a policy to the House, and not the House to produce a policy for them. (Hear, hear.) Then again with regard to the proposed alteration of the quorum, he thought the Government were taking a step the results of which they did not clearly foresee. He believed that according to the Constitution Act the Government could at any time, if it thought proper, send ten paid officials to the country, who, if returned, would become bona fide members. He also protested against being pledged to any arrangement with regard to the Volunteer Corps or the Inspector of Police.

The motion was then put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the house agreed to meet at 12 o'clock, next day, in order to proceed to Government House, and present to his Excellency the reply to the vice-regal speech.