**WASTE LANDS SALES APPROPRIATION BILL 1862**

**House of Assembly, 18 September 1862, pages 874-83**

Second reading

**Mr. REYNOLDS** hoped the hon. member would postpone this Bill till Tuesday next. He was anxious to do an act of justice to the hon. member, but the returns which he had asked for on a previous occasion had only now been laid on the table, and he had not had time to examine them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL was very sorry that he could not oblige the hon. member. This Bill had, however, been prepared in answer to a resolution proposed by an independent member of that House, and he thought that sufficient time had certainly been given to hon. members to consider the measure. He need not enter at any very great length into the principles of the Bill. It was sufficient to carry the resolution of the House with the most complete effect. The measure proposed to enact that all monies received from the waste lands should be divided into ;two parts, and that one-third should be set aside for the purposes of immigration, and two-thirds for the liquidation of the National Debt and the prosecution of public works. He thought the measure proposed the most convenient way of carrying out the decision which the House had arrived at. It did not propose that this money should be spent in immigration, as it might happen that in any particular year it might be advisable again to suspend the introduction of immigrants. The Bill merely provided that this one-third should be set apart, so that should the introduction of immigrants be necessary, when the time arrived the Government would have resources for the purpose. He believed it would have been a good thing for the colony had they had a fund set apart for this purpose previously. The House having agreed to the resolution on which the measure was founded, it would be unnecessary for him now to say much more, but he would merely move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr, REYNOLDS regretted that he was not present when the resolution referred to had been carried by the House. Had he been so be could not have gone so far as the hon. member. He thought it was not a little singular that a question of such importance should not be kept for the consideration of the constituencies when other matters had been so kept in abeyance. He remembered also that when hon. members were returned to that Parliament it had been almost on a pledge that they would not resume immigration —(no)—for a certain time, and now it argued badly in his mind that at the close of the session, when they would have to go so soon before the country, they should by such an Act as this endeavour to bind their successors as to how they should deal with the waste lands of the Crown. It appeared to him that hon members thought their constituents would not approve of this measure—(no)-and so they now desired to pass it; but he thought one of the first acts of the new Parliament would have to be the repeal of this Bill. (No.) Well, this was his view. Well, this was a question of setting aside a part of the Land Fund for specific purposes ; and if that was desirable, he thought it was a question for the Legislature of the day to deal with. Perhaps some hon. members fancied they would not be in the Legislature next session, and so they now thought they should take the course which their successors ought to take. Suppose this Bill was in force, and one-third was set aside for immigration purposes? It was said it was not intended to spend this sum. Well, in 1861 and 1862 they would have say £50,000. Then in 1863 and 1864, another £50,000. That would be £100,000, and that might not have to be spent. (Hear, hear.) Well, what were they going to do with the money? The Bill said the Treasurer might invest it in Government securities. But supposing there were no Government securities, how were they to act then? They could not invest this in the Bank or otherwise. The Bill gave them no power to do that, and they were not always to go on increasing their national debt. Why, some hon. members now thought they had gone to the length of their tether already in this way. What, then, would be the consequence? Why, they would perhaps have a needy Government, or a needy Treasurer, as it was called; or they would have perhaps a needy House of Assembly, who would soon take this reserve fund for some other purpose. This Bill was, he considered, mere nonsense. If the land fund was to keep up, of which there was some probability, then they would have an accumulation of money which would not be required. They wanted more than mere man power in this country. They wanted capital to act as an impetus to man power, and by passing this Bill they would be only going a fair way to induce such a state of things as that which existed in 1841 and from that to 1851, when in consequence of the great amount of immigration there were thousands who were out of employment and positively in want of bread. (No, and “ When.”) He spoke particularly of from 1850 to 1851, and he had himself seen many positively in want of bread, and yet they wished to send more manpower into the colony. Let them look at the state of things when they stopped immigration in i860. Why, the Treasury was almost in a state of insolvency, and even at that time, when there were hundreds out of employment, those who supported the stoppage of immigration were called by a very high authority a set of nincompoops. (Hear.) Well, let them take Canada which was far larger than South Australia, and had a greater population. There not one fraction of the public revenue was expended in immigration, and no doubt the hon. member for Noarlunga, who said “hear,” would call the people of Canada a set of nincompoops. (Laughter.) Well, he was personally quite prepared even to be called a nincompoop when an exigency of this kind transpired, and he should oppose the system proposed. It would be a very different thing if the immigrants would come at their own expense, as they did in Canada; but it would be a great mistake to import large numbers at the expense of the public. Unless there was some impetus to laborers to come here of course they would not do so. When they saw money at 10 per cent.—Eight”)—well, 8 per cent, or even, say, 7 1/2per cent, they might be sure there was very little capital open for investment. (Oh.) This was proved also by the cash deposits in the Bank, which were now very much less than they were in 1855. (No.) Well, at all events, in that year the amounts deposited were £743,945, and in 1862 they were only £696,526. It was quite true that the Savings Bank deposits had increased, but that was not so much affecting the question. Thus, though the population had increased more than 50 per cent,, the deposits had decreased very considerably. He believed that if this Bill became law that they would not be able to keep their immigration intact when a needy Treasurer came forward to ask it for other purposes. Now let them look at what was the state of affairs from 1851 to 1859, a period of 10 years, when immigration was being carried on to a large extent. Why, they found that although nearly a million of money had been spent to bring people to this colony, they were far short of the number they should have. By the returns he found that in 1851 the population was 63,700. By natural increase and amounts spent for immigration, it had increased in 1852 to 69,156; in 1853, by immigration and the natural increase, it was 76,064 ; in 1854 to 82,146 ; in 1855 to 93,075; in 1856 to 107,227 ; in 1857 to 114,745; in 1858 to 122,589 ; in 1859 to 129,955 ; and in 1860 to 139,985. That was on the 3lst of December, 1860. By the census taken on the 1st of April, 1860, they found that after the expenditure of this million of money the population was stated at 119,000, being a loss during the 10 years of 20,985 persons, whom they should have had here. That was, they should have had in South Australia for the money they had expended 140,000 souls, where is they only had 119,000. He merely drew attention to these facts to show that the system they had been pursuing was one which was ruinous to them, because they were throwing away very large sums of money without the prospect of any return for it. He believed rather than have gone on the system which was pursued it would have been far better to have constituted a fund, and enabled parties to nominate their friends at home, and then to have assisted them to bring those parties out here. The old system was most disastrous to them, for they might be quite sure that their new comers would flock to the other colonies where there were goldfields. By such a system as he suggested, however, they would be likely to secure a class of immigrants who would stay with them. He thought also that under such a system it would be an act of justice to allow the Germans to come here under the regulations. There was, however, an idea now abroad that immigration at the public expense was the all glorious thing to obtain. But why should this be at the public expense? He thought it would be far better to keep the money in the colony till the immigrants did come, and then to expend it in finding them employment. When they had stopped immigration in 1860 they had found that up to the end of 1861—about one year and eight months - - there had been an addition of 13,220 to the population. (No.) He said by the Customs returns and census it was shown that there was that increase, and this without spending any money on immigration. (No.) These were facts which were against the hon. member for Noarlunga, who cried “No.” If they adopted this measure they would soon have a crisis of labor; they would have men again knocking at the door of the Public Works Office, and crying out for employment. There was another cry in favor of immigration—namely, that the farmers could not grow cheap wheat unless they had cheap labor. He believed this was one reason for this measure. The matter of protection was raised upon it, although the hon. member for Noarlunga did not like that. Well, he believed this would be of no benefit to the country at large. The price of wheat would be always governed by the state of the markets elsewhere, and therefore to say that the introduction of labor would benefit the community in this respect was a delusion, and a snare. If this was the meaning of the measure, why did they not come forward at once, and call it by its proper title, namely, a bonus to the agriculturists. (Oh.) This was a protection movement; however the hon. member for Noarlunga might hate the word, he really seemed to love it. It was very clear now that Victoria would not want very much of their wheat; indeed, they need not look forward to finding much of a market in either of the colonies. He would not now say much more on the matter, but would leave it till a future occasion when he had a motion to bring forward bearing on this question. He would then also have looked over the returns. He was sure the Government would carry the second reading, but if he stood alone he would be bound to oppose it. (Hear.)

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS would say a few words, but he would first ask the hon. member for the City, Mr. Reynolds, whether he had rightly understood him to say that in the year 1860 and ’61 by the Customs returns the increase to the population without Government aid was 13,000 and odd souls. He thought the hon, member must have received that information from the census returns, and if so he should have stated that a second census had been taken, when a large increase was found in the population, which could only be accounted for by the Superintendent by the fact that the experience they had attained in taking the first census had enabled them to do this one more successfully. The hon. member had said that this immigration question was simply one of protection to the farmers, but he had always understood that the refusal to continue immigration had the same objection in another way. He could refer to meetings without number to prove that the cry was, it would be manifestly unfair to import persons to compete with the capital of the laborers in , the colony. He felt sure the supporters of this Bill could not be charged with any protective ideas. If they would look at protection from all points of view hon. members would see that the very system would not be protective in its nature. This was simply the old argument in another form, against bringing out laborers to compete against those now in the colony. It was not the object of the Government 10 set apart so much annually to be spent in immigration, but simply to create a fund for that purpose, so that they would always have a sum of money oy them for immigration purposes. They had an enormous tract of country here which could be cultivated, and there were numerous industrial pursuits which should be carried out, and the whole population was not much more than that of a third or fourth rate town in England. This was a very important matter, and one which should certainly be dealt with by an Act and not merely by any chance legislation upon the subject. This was the settlement of a question which was of very great importance to the interests of the country, and he would certainly support the measure. He admitted that to carry out the system which had been previously adopted would not be a course likely to meet with the assent of the House, but nothing of the kind was contemplated by this Act. He did not think it necessary to follow all the arguments of a previous speaker, because he thought the House saw through them fully.

Mr. MAGAREY rose to oppose the motion. The hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, had told them that those who were opposed to immigration in 1860 had been called a set of nincompoops, but he could only imagine that that term must have been applied to them by some new chum, who was quite ignorant of the requirements of the colony. He believed the vote for the cessation of immigration was the means of saving the country from ruin or bankruptcy, and he thought if the persons who had applied the term nincompoops to those who supported the cessation had been aware that the laborers brought here at the expense of the public went away directly to enrich the neighboring colonies they would have been of a different opinion. If, for instance, they had been aware that the present Treasurer, when Commissioner of Public Works, had to employ a lot of men to cut through a mountain that ought to have been left in its natural state for the next 50 years, merely to find them something to do, they might have thought different. The hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, had told them of the difficulty which, no doubt, he had experienced himself of preserving a large accumulated fund intact, and he believed that was a difficulty which future Treasurers would continue to experience if such funds were placed at their disposal. He could remember that in a neighboring colony a fund of £700,000 had accumulated in this way, and how did hon. members think it was expended? Why, in shooting 20 diggers at Ballarat. If the Government of that colony had not had that fund of £700,000 they would have done in the first instance what they were obliged to do ultimately, viz., have given the diggers their just rights without attempting to put them down by brute force. He did not mean to say that the present Treasurer would expend any money in such a purpose as that, but there were other matters in which he might expend a large fund perhaps. If he (Mr. Magarey) were in the hon. gentleman’s position and had such a fund at his disposal, he did not know that he might not feel justified in handing it over to the hon. member (Mr. Sutherland) for making main lines of road. He objected that immigrants brought here at the public expense could not be retained here. Some might, perhaps, if only miners were brought, and he would not deny that that might ensure some secondary benefit to the colony, but it would not be just to the farmers to expend public money only in bringing out miners. If immigrants were brought here for the mere purpose of consuming the produce raised by the farmers they might almost as well be sent to Queensland or the other colonies, which we should then be more likely to retain as customers for breadstuff's. (Hear.) If miners were to be brought here it must be at the expense of the proprietors of the mines. If the price of land and the price of labor together were too high to enable the farmer to grow wheat at a profit we have no right to interfere with the price of labor, but we have a right to interfere with the price of land, and we must let the farmer have the land at what it is worth. (Hear.) He agreed with the hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, that the colony could derive no benefit from a system of protection; and if with the protection of labor imported for him by the country, the farmer can only make 4s. 6d. per bushel of his wheat, the country must lose the difference. (No.) The hon. member, Mr. Sutherland, said no. If the hon. member could disprove the statement that the country will lose the difference he would abandon his creed, and avow himself a protectionist. The hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands has argued that those who opposed the motion did so on the ground that they were protecting the labourer. But did the hon. Commissioner mean to say that ail the laborers in the colony had been introduced at the public expense ? He could remember it having been used as an argument in favor of immigration that every immigrant brought to the colony at the expense of the public brought another at his own expense, and if so, the introduction of labor at the public expense was at all events an injustice to one-half of the labourers in the colony. But apart from all these questions there was the question of public policy, and on that ground he said the resumption of free immigration was unnecessary, and that the money could be much more advantageously expended on public works. The first effect of a rise in the price of labour would be to bring a supply of labour. (No.) Then did the hon. member deny that demand creates supply? (“Where is it to come from?”) He need not go into that question now. (Ah !) He alluded to the general principle that a scarcity of labour, like the scarcity of other things, would create its own supply. Such had been the case in a neighboring colony, and would be the case here, and that result would be more speedily attained now even than heretofore, because America, in consequence of the war raging there, was no longer a place where the labourer could go with security, and labourers were already looking for other refuges. A little encouragement from the Government, or some simple machinery set at work by them, would induce a great number of persons to come here, and in quite sufficient numbers to supply the existing want. He did not mean that they would come here so as to enable the farmer to grow wheat at 4s, or 3s. 6d., nor was he sure that that would be a good result. It was much better to produce wool, copper, cotton, or tobacco, than to continue to produce wheat, if that could not be done at a profit. He was afraid that South Australia would not be able to maintain so dense a population as some of the other colonies. The rainfall alone would prevent it. It was humiliating to have to acknowledge that, and perhaps some members would shrink from admitting it; but he was obliged to confess that South Australia had not such a large amount of good land as the other colonies, and in attempting to settle a dense population upon the lands, they would only be tending to develop the resources of their neighbors. The House should not therefore assent to this Act, either as a matter of public policy or as a duty to their constituents. Although he was supposed to have come into that House unpledged on every point, he must acknowledge that it was the wish of the electors of West Torrens that immigration should cease ; and as this House was elected to ensure that very purpose, it would be a gross breach of faith to their constituents if after having stopped immigration for a time they now passed a Bill to make it perpetual. Depend upon it if the constituencies found they could not place dependence in men of property they would be careful not to elect men of property to represent them in future; and if the Lower House was reduced in its standing by men of property being excluded from it a temporary triumph would be purchased at too dear a rate. He hoped hon. members would consider that before they assented to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. DUFFIELD said he would not have spoken at all but for the allusion the hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, had made to him. He would tell that hon. member that he was quite as likely to gain information in his movements about the country, as the hon. member was in his occasional perambulations of the city. He could tell the hon. member, too, that in 1851, although he was a large employer of labor, he could never get a workman for less than 23s. per week, and although the hon. member had said thousands were starving at that time, he knew that he was selling flour at 18s. per bag, and beef and mutton was only 1d. or 2d. per lb.; and if laborers were starving under such a state of things as that, it must have been their own fault. He was ready to admit that there might have been a number of persons about Adelaide craving for the assistance of the Government, and so there always would-be while the Government would assist them. The coolness with which the hon. member had spoken to-day, struck him (Mr. Duffield) with the idea that he was sensible this was a forlorn hope, and that it was the hon. member’s last dying speech on the subject. The hon. member had asked what had been the result of spending so much money on immigration, and he had said that when we ought to have had a population of 142,000 we had only 119,000, and that we had, consequently, 23,000 less than we ought to have. But the effect of that expenditure was shown by the Statistical Register of that year; and he would tell the hon. member that no man of business habits would judge of his position by one solitary transaction, or one isolated case. The hon. member came forward to-day and argued in favor of the very system of immigration which he (Mr. Duffield) advocated six years ago in his first speech to the electors of Barossa, therefore the hon. member was following at a distance the opinions of those who took more enlightened views than himself; and, although the hon. member was very nearly deserted now, he hoped that some six years hence he would see the hon. member as far advanced in his views on the subject of immigration as he (Mr. Duffield) was to-day. The hon. member said the object of the Bill was to cheapen labor. But what is cheap labor? The value of the wages a man receives must be estimated by what he can buy with them. If a man can buy a loaf of bread for a penny, he is as well off with his penny as if he received a shilling and had to pay the shilling for his loaf. He would support the Bill, and he would only say further that he hoped the progress of South Australia for the next 20 years would be as great as during the last 20.

Mr. N. BLYTH said he would only occupy the attention of the House a few minutes. He must express his hearty approbation of the measure, and it told very much in favor of the Government that when the scheme was introduced by an independent member they came forward with an amendment, and boldly adopted the measure as their own. They could not too soon separate the fund arising from sales of waste land from the general revenue arising from taxation and other sources. He looked at it that for every acre sold they ought to have something to show, and by this Bill they would have for one thing an increase of population, which was the greatest increase of wealth, and they would have, too, useful public works. He would address himself more particularly to the subject of the appropriation of the public works fund. He objected to any of the proceeds of the waste land salts being applied to the payment of the interest on the national debt. Such a policy appeared to him to be simply suicidal. All public works should as soon as possible be made to pay the interest of the money borrowed for them as well as the cost of management; and until they could do that the interest should be paid by taxation. Adopting the line of argument indulged in by an hon. member of that House as to the course that should be pursued by the proprietor of an estate, he would ask could anything be more absurd than to sell real estate to pay the interest upon the mortgage? He would like that in the 4th clause the nature of the public works fund should be more clearly and concisely defined, it should, he thought, be applied to the repayment of the instalments of the national debt; but as circumstances arose, he would have it applied to that or to the prosecution of useful works and the employment of labor as might seem most desirable. It was also, he thought, possible that at some future time the rents of Crown lands might be dealt with separately, and he thought the rents might fairly and legitimately be applied to the payment of the interest on the debt. He thought the whole system of immigration was wisely and carefully guarded in the Bill, and no abuse could creep in. The money could only be expended from time to time by a vote of Parliament. The hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, had asked why the question was not with others remitted to the country at large. He would say, in reply, that this was action which could not possibly be taken too soon. They had hitherto been following a wrong course in mixing up the land fund with the general revenue, and they could not remedy the mistake too soon. As to the investment of the fund, Government securities would afford an opportunity for that until the money was wanted for its legitimate purpose. The hon. member had also alluded to Canada, but he should have gone further and stated the difference in the cost of the passage to Canada and to these colonies. The useful class of the population of England which we wanted here could not transport themselves at their own expense, and to say that by expending our money in public works we should attract such laborers here was an argument which really did not deserve an answer. If the colony was an El Dorado they could not come to us without assistance. He was always sorry to differ with his hon. friend, Mr. Magarey, but really he could not help referring to one statement made by that hon. member, when he coolly told the |House that in an adjoining colony £700,000 had been spent in shooting 20 diggers. He thought that we need fear nothing on that score, for if it ever should happen to be necessary to shoot 20 members of this community, the practice in rifle shooting which was going would enable us to have that work done very expeditiously and at much less expense.

Mr. GRUNDY said if immigration was to be resumed it must be out of the land fund. If they were to have a reserve fund for immigration it must come from land sales and not from taxation. That would be an answer to the assertion that we are paying lor immigration out of the pockets of the laborer. The case was this. A man would go into the Land Office and pay, say £84 tor a section, on the condition that £28 out of that was set apart as a fund for bringing out labor when it was wanted—set apart out of the hard cash paid down by the purchaser, and not out of the general revenue, and not to be expended until the labor was required. He did not see any unfairness in that, and he would be very inconsistent with the views he had always held if he opposed such a measure. He had told the people of Barossa from the first, that he had no dogmas on the subject of immigration, and that if it could be shown to him that immigration was necessary he would consider it. He was disposed to think that the time had now come when immigration was necessary, and surely when the hon. member, Mr. Magarey, spoke of the injustice of bringing miners here at the public expense he forgot the amount of money mining speculators had paid to the Government. They would have to introduce a lot of immigrants to do justice to those men for the money they have paid. If a man went to the hon. member, Mr. Magarey. for employment as a miller, no doubt the hon. member did not stop to enquire whether the man was brought out at the public expense, but there had been no fund for the introduction of millers. With respect to the argument that the object of the Bill was the reduction of wages he would meet that with a point blank admission. And so it ought to be-(hear, hear)—for as he had always maintained, it was impossible for a rent paying farmer to give more than a bushel of wheat per day to his laborers. (Hear, hear.) But he would not go for reducing wages to a minimum, for nothing worse could befall a new country than reducing its rate of wages to the verge of pauperism. There must be no ultraism on a question of this sort on either side. The great difficulty was in retaining their immigrants when they were brought here, but he should expect the Cabinet to devise some scheme for meeting that, and if they said it was impossible to do so, he would have to tell them there was no such word as impossible in his dictionary. A species of contract might be devised to retain persons here so as to make them a benefit to the colony in some degree adequate to the cost of bringing them here. He would feel it his duty when the Bill was in Committee to propose as an amendment in the fifth clause to add after “ Great Britain and Ireland,” the words “the Germanic outports,” on behalf of the 8,000 German colonists who had signed the petition recently presented to the House, and he would just mention in conclusion, that that petition was conclusive evidence that those 8,000 colonists were in favour of immigration.

Mr. FINNISS said on this occasion he was going to vote on the same side as the Government, and therefore he hoped the Treasurer would not on this occasion, as he generally did, accuse him of having no opinion of his own. He would support the Bill cordially, not because it was a Government measure, but because he held that the colony should be improved out of’ the land fund. He thought the colony, was greatly improved by the introduction of population, and if they were wise they would not expend the land fund which came to them as a gift from the mother country, in any other purpose than the improvement of their estate. But there were some details involving minor principles, which he would like to see altered in Committee. For instance, if they appropriated the land fund as was proposed, they would take away a portion of what was the security of their creditors, and if the interest of the debt was paid out of the public works fund, they would only have about £15,000 left for public works. They ought, in his opinion, to provide in this Act that, notwithstanding its provisions, the rights of the bondholders shall be saved. As to the arguments against immigration, he could not refrain from alluding to one which had been used by the hon. member, Mr. Magarey. That hon. member said scarcity of labour would create supply, but he thought the hon. member was confounding terms, for he must know that scarcity and demand were two widely different things. Many things might be scarce, and yet not in demand, and it must be a profit on labour to create supply. They might very safely import labour without incurring the risk of protecting any particular interest. They imported capital by loans to compete with private capital, and why not import labour in a just proportion ? He held that the importation of labour would not reduce wages, because it would give increased means of investment, and thereby a greater demand for labour would be created. The price of wages would not he believed be lowered by the introduction of immigrants. The increase of the population by immigration could not therefore be any detriment to the laboring classes. It was asked why should the agricultural classes be called on to pay for labor to work the mines ? They should not be called upon to pay for this, but it must be remembered that the mines contribute largely to the revenue, and were entitled to some benefit for that. This was a most excellent Bill, and rather than it should be thrown out, he would support it as it stood. He hoped, however, the 4th clause would be reconsidered, so that some part of the money should be spent on the roads. He would support the Bill.

Mr. DUNN had always protested against the principle of mixing the land fund with the general revenue. He had done so six years ago, and he, with the hon. member (Mr. Duffield) were the only two members who had stuck out on that point. He was glad to see that the House were now coming round to his view, and that the land fund would in future be kept separate. He had always understood when he bought land that half the money paid was to supply him with labor to enable him to work that land. He certainly thought the money had been hitherto misapplied. The hon. member for the City had referred to Canada, and said they had plenty of labor there without immigration. But he remembered when he was at home, he was living in a seaport town, and he found that plenty of emigrants were sent to Canada at from £1 10s. to £2 per head. (Hear.) Now the class of people who were wanted here were a class who would never to able to save enough out of their wages to pay their passages here. Many Union houses would no doubt pay £15 to send the inmates here, but they were not the people who were required for South Australia. This was the reason why so few came here—they could not pay their passages. As to wheat-growing, they knew that they could sell any quantity of grain in the British market if they could grow it low enough, but they would have to lower their current expenses very considerably. All the wheat they could send to England would not affect the market much. It appeared the mines were in the same way. There were riches enough in the bowels of the earth, but the wages were too high to enable them to forward it to its destination. He hoped the 4th clause would be very much altered. He thought that the farmers and others should not be called on to pay the debt into which the Government had run the country. He thought that should be paid out of the general revenue. He would support the Bill.

Mr. BOUCAUT would oppose the Bill, because the fifth section appropriated positively a certain portion of the revenue to immigration purposes. This was a very unwise policy. It might be that before long some popular agitation would be got up, as had been the case in 1860, and they would then have to; repeal this measure again. (Hear.) He thought the £22,000 which had been voted on the Estimates for immigration should be enough for present purposes, and he thought this House had no right to pledge future Governments to set aside a certain fixed sum from the land revenue as an immigration fund. Again, this House had certain fixed privileges of voting public money, and this Bill would to a certain extent make the other House the dominant power in this respect. Hitherto the sums required for public purposes had always been put on the Estimates, and this House has passed them, and the other House could not interfere, but if this Bill was passed it might be that that branch of the Legislature would be quite unanimous as to some vote for immigration, but the other House might put a veto upon it and prevent it from passing. The hon. member, Mr. Grundy, had referred to German immigration. This Bill was unfair to the Germans. There were no better colonists than the Germans, and they had a fair right to have a portion of the money set aside for their benefit, to bring out their friends and relatives. By and by perhaps the hon. member for the City, Mr. Reynolds, would bring that matter before the House, and he should support him in it. When the hon. member moved his amendment, it would not be unwise in him to go on his side of the House on this question. He thought as regarded the people of the country they should have a voice in this matter, and the Bill should not be hastily passed. It was known very many immigrants came to this colony for the simple purpose of going on to Victoria as soon as occasion offered, and thus the colony suffered severely. Similar circumstances might occur again, and there was no doubt that the excitement consequent on the goldfields would lead men to seek to do this, and they could not keep them here. He thought if labour was scarcer in Victoria than it was here, then the labourers could very easily come over here, but if labor was not scarce there then they could not keep their people from going to Victoria. This was a piece of class legislation. It was legislating for the masters. No doubt they had the interests of the laborers at heart, but though he did not say it was so, yet it looked very like a piece of hypocrisy to pretend that that actuated the masters in their desire for immigration. (Oh!) Until he was convinced that the country really did want immigration, he would oppose the Bill.

Mr. SANTO intended to support the second reading of this Bill, and he was surprised at the remarks of the hon. member who had just sat down. He said this was brought forward as for the benefit of the working classes, but it was not really for the benefit of the working classes at all. He was very much surprised at the fallacies mentioned by the hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, and by the bon. member, Mr. Magarey. He had said that they could not take the money of the agriculturists for the benefit of other interests, but it was not so, for this was not the money of the agriculturists at all. They were no more entitled to this money after having received value for it in land, than he would have to the money he might pay to the hon. member for a 100 tons of flour. (Hear.) The hon. member had said that the increased quantity of grain would not reduce the price, and would not be of any benefit. The increased quantity would effect the price, and though the markets in the adjoining colonies regulated the price, yet the quantity produced effected mainly the market around us. Therefore every class in the community would benefit in the increase. He would not further trouble the House. He was sure the Bill would be read a second time. The hon. member, Mr. Reynolds, had said that immigrants would go to the other colonies ; that would be because they would not be of the right class. He believed that a well-selected body of immigrants would be sent out at the public expense, and would greatly benefit the colony.

Mr. HART would support the second reading of the Bill, though he hoped there would be some modification in the 4th clause. He thought there were times when a system of immigration would be highly beneficial. He had not generally approved of immigration from the Continent; still there were large numbers here who were interested greatly in that description of immigration, and to vote a sum of money for the importation of immigrants from the Continent might be very beneficial. Neither would he confine the selection to the continent of Europe; for, suppose the New Zealand diggings failed, they might clearly and advantageously import labor from thence. With reference to what had been said about the House losing all control of this sum he could not see that that would be the case, for the House on the contrary would have the power of saying exactly in what proportion and at what time the fund should be expended. As to the suggestion of the hon. member, Mr. N. Blyth, he would be glad to see the interest of the debt paid out of the revenue, but if the revenue could not bear it he looked at it that the interest as well as the principal was secured on the Land Fund and should be paid out of it. Much had been said about the system which should be adopted. He believed a better one than had yet obtained might be devised, if instructions were given to the delegates to discuss the question with the representatives of the other colonies at the ensuing conference. He believed a scheme might be devised by that means by which each colony would contribute its fair proportion of expense for the immigrants it received. It was also undoubtedly an advantage to us that the other colonies should maintain a continuous stream of immigration, because that would tend to make a market for our produce. He hoped the Ministry would adopt his suggestion. He would support the Bill, with the intention of proposing some amendments in Committee.

Mr. BAGOT would support the Bill. He did not agree with the hon. member, Mr. Boucaut, that there was any fear of any agitation being got up against the Government on account of this fund, for whatever Government might be in power they would, if it were necessary to do so, consent to repeal that clause. It appeared to him the time had arrived when it was absolutely necessary to increase the population by immigration. Some years ago he could not foresee that the time for this would come round so rapidly, but he would ask those who opposed immigration now not to consider the question as one that should not meet the sanction of the House, because persons who ought not to have been brought here, and who were unsuited to the requirements of the colony, had been brought here in great numbers under the old system. He believed nothing of the kind would occur in future. They had now the experience of past years to guide them; and he was sure that in large centres of population—even in Adelaide—the feeling against immigration was dying away, and people were beginning to think that if they were ever to be more than mere hewers of wood and drawers of water, they must have a larger population to assist them. The time was come when the Government should declare a fixed policy on this question. He would say that they had found in past years that when crises had occurred many of those who had been the steadiest colonists, and who had clung most firmly to the soil, were those who had come from the Continent of Europe ; and he thought, with the hon. member for the Port, that they should not shut themselves out from assisting a limited number of immigrants from the Continent. He did not know that it would be well to adopt fully the views of a certain petition which had been presented to that House, but he thought they might say, when persons from the Continent had remained here 12 months, allow them to purchase land, and to allow them the cost of their passage on their purchase. He would support the Bill, endeavoring to make some alterations in Committee.

Mr. SUTHERLAND said he must congratulate the House and the country on the unanimity which prevailed on the principles of the Bill. He was glad to see that the House had come round to proper views on the subject, and he believed that that change represented the feeling of the country. As to the opinions of the hon. members (Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Magarey, and Mr. Boucaut) he expected nothing else from them, for whatever was proposed on the subject those members of course would say it was wrong. It was strange to hear some of the arguments used against immigration. Why, in this colony three times the produce was raised that would feed the population, and the more mouths they brought here the more the colony and the farmers would be benefitted. And why could they not go on with public works ? Why, because they could not get labor, and it was the same with every producing interest in the colony. It was very well for the hon. members (Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Boucaut) to pretend to be the farmer’s friend, but he would tell them they knew nothing about the real interests of the farmer . Double the wages now given would not bring as much labor here as was wanted for the industrial and productive interests of the colony, and as to such persons paying £13 or .£14 each for their passages here, that was answered, as the hon. member, Mr. Dunn, had said of the fact, that a passage to Quebec only cost 30s.

Mr. McELLISTER moved that the House do now divide.

A division was called for on the question and resulted as follows:—

Ayes, 5—Dunn, Hallett, Lindsay, Neales, and McEllister (teller.)

Noes, 19—The Treasurer, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, the Commissioner of Public Works, Messrs. Bagot N. Blyth, Boucaut, Cole, Finniss, Glyde, Grundy, Hart, Macfarlane, Mildred, Moorhouae, Parkin, Reynolds, Santo, Sutherland, and Rowe (teller.)

Mr. McELLISTER said as he could not carry that motion he would trouble the House with a few remarks. (Oh, and laughter.) It would be much better for the country if hon. members would work more and talk less. It was monstrous to see a whole day occupied in discussing a motion on which every member had made up his mind before he entered the House. Members really talked merely to kill time or to see their speeches in print the next morning. He would support the Bill.

Mr. ROWE said the hon. member for Yatala had endeavored to cast a reflection on him, and he was sure his constituents would have said he was a perfect fool if he had not divided the House on the motion for a division. He did not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, but he should be prepared to propose some modifications in Committee. The non. member, Mr. Sutherland, had said a good deal about his opinions. He (Mr. Rowe) remembered having been once in a certain Chapel and there was a preacher in the pulpit, and he kept them there an hour and a half, and he kept on saying, “ I say, I say, I »ay, I say” –

The SPEAKER-The hon. member is not speaking to the question.

Mr. ROWE—The preacher went on to say “I say, I say,” until in the course or his address he repeated “ I say” 136 times. The hon member, Mr. Sutherland, in the course of his address that day had repeated “ I say,” according to his (Mr. Rowe’s) notes, 46 times, and what he wanted to know was whether the House was bound to accept that hon. member’s “I say’s” as facts.

Mr. COLE would oppose the Bill, which he was convinced was one of the most useless measures which had ever been introduced. It did not even meet the object of the hon. member, Mr. Sutherland, who introduced the resolution. That hon. member wanted one-half of the land fund to be appropriated to immigration, and one-half to roads and bridges; and the amendment of the Government modified that plan very much, but nothing could be more unwise than to spend even one-third of the land fund on immigration. The object of the Bill was to squander away vast sums of money in a way that would do no good to the colony. He did not say there never would be a time when immigration ought to be resumed, but he was convinced the suspension of immigration had effected great good. The Government had refused to introduce a liberal Land Bill, but that would induce more laborers to come here than anything else would. It was well known that the colony of Victoria was holding out higher inducements to immigrants to go to that colony and to take up the land. They now proposed to introduce large numbers of agriculturists, and how were they to prevent them from going to Victoria if there was a more liberal land system there? It was said that there was a great want of labor, but he did not think that. He believed in every department there were abundance of workmen to accomplish the work which was required. The expense of the survey of waste lands in the department was quite £20,000. per annum, and he should like to see those charged to one-third of the Land Fund, and the balance taken for immigration purposes if required. He believed this would be accomplishing no good to this colony, and he should oppose the second reading of the Bill.

The motion was put and carried, and a division was called for, which resulted as follows

Ayes, 21—The Commissioner of Crown Lands, the Commissioner of Public Works, Messrs. Bagot, N. Blyth, Dunn, Duffield, Finniss, Glyde, Grundy, Hallett, Hart, Macfarlane, McEllister, Mildred, Moorhouse, Neales, Parkin, Rowe, Santo, Sutherland, and the Treasurer (teller).

Noes, 4—Messrs. Boucaut, Cole, Lindsay, and Reynold\* (teller).

The Bill was then read a second time.

Mr. REYNOLDS said he saw the Attorney-General was not in his place, and he would ask whether it would now be competent for another member of the Government to go on with the Bill.

The TREASURER did not mean to proceed with the Bill that day, or to propose any clause where there was opposition.

The COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WORKS believed something of this kind had occurred before. He thought under any circumstances that the Ministry were to be con­sidered as one individual, and they should be regarded as such in reference to this Bill. And the members of it should, therefore, be able to carry it on without being open to reflections.

In Committee.

The preamble and title were postponed, and the House resumed, the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on the following day.