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PART II.—FROM NATAL YEAR TO JUBILEE.

CHAPTER I.

THE LEGISLATURE.

The Governor.—His Functions: Political and Social.—His Emoluments.—Administrations that have held Office.—Number of Members of Council and Assembly.—Emoluments of Assembly Members.—Good Results of Responsible Government in Queensland.

In a self-governing dependency of the Empire the King’s representative, while competent to take official action only on constitutional advice, is not a mere figurehead in the Government. He is, so to speak, one of the three branches of the Legislature. No expenditure can be voted by Parliament except after receipt of a message of appropriation from the Governor; and no bill can become law without the Royal assent, which he, subject to certain reservations, is empowered to give. As President of the Executive Council, too, the Governor has a voice in administration, although the actual power vests in the Ministry so long as it commands the confidence of Parliament. But the Governor is in constant touch with his Premier, and therefore, apart from the official intercourse at meetings of the Executive Council, His Excellency exchanges ideas informally with the executive head of the Government. The Governor has social duties, too, and these are not unimportant as bringing the King’s representative into personal contact with his Majesty’s colonial subjects of both sexes and various classes. The Governor’s attendance at public and social functions also furnishes a touch of sprightly colour to the drab shade which would otherwise often characterise public gatherings. He carries with him a distinctive atmosphere of Imperial comprehensiveness which usefully neutralises a narrow parochialism that might tend to induce men and women to forget that they, while a politically independent community, yet form an integral part of the great Empire of the Mistress of the Seas. Thus it is that our most experienced public men have emphasised the importance of maintaining direct communication with the Imperial authority through a Governor appointed by and responsible to the King.
Pending the decision of Parliament, the Imperial Government provisionally fixed the salary of the first Governor at £2,500 a year. In the session of 1861, Parliament, representing a population of 34,000 persons not only voted an increase to £4,000, but also by statute made the payment retrospective as from 1st January, 1860. At this sum the salary remained until 1874, when Mr. Oscar de Satge, a member of the Opposition, carried a motion affirming the principle of an increase. This motion the Government accepted, and the salary was increased to £5,000 a year, at which figure it remained from that time until 1904, when it was reduced to £3,000. Three Governors successively filled the office for the fifteen years ending with November, 1874; and six for the thirty years between 1874 and October, 1904. In the latter year an amendment of the Constitution Act was made by a bill introduced by the Government, reducing the salary of future Governors to £3,000, for reasons exhaustively set forth by the Premier in moving the second reading. The chief grounds of reduction, it may be mentioned, were the altered situation created by the establishment of the Commonwealth, and the steps of a similar character already taken in the Southern States.

Twenty-five Ministries have held office during the fifty-year period. On that led by the late Sir Robert Herbert comment has already been made. It ended a useful Queensland career in 1866, after more than six years of office. The succeeding Macalister Ministry, with an interruption of eighteen days by a second Herbert Ministry of an ephemeral nature, and with reconstructions, lasted until August, 1867, when it was displaced by the Mackenzie-Palmer Administration. Mr. Macalister was a clever politician; a concise and trenchant speaker; and a capital parliamentary leader in so far as the House work was concerned. But he was lacking in force, and his Ministry was, moreover, much in the nature of coalition representing both squatting and anti-squatting interests at a time when bitter controversy prevailed. Mr. (afterwards Sir) R. R. Mackenzie, who was held in general respect for his personal qualities, likewise lacked strength as a politician, and the real force behind him was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Arthur Hunter Palmer. His Ministry was at the time termed "pure merino," every member of it, save Mr. Pring, the Attorney-General, being identified with the pastoral industry.

In November, 1868, the Lilley Ministry was formed. It lasted only till April, 1870, and was more than once reconstructed during its tenure of office. It included Mr. Macalister, between whom and the Premier there was inconvenient rivalry, but its members were all Liberals by reputation. The Premier, however, was Radical rather than Liberal in
his opinions, and his abolition of primary school fees without parliamentary authority, and the ordering of the steamer "Governor Blackall" in Sydney, with the object of fighting the A.S.N. Company, without the consent even of his colleagues, brought about the downfall of the Ministry as soon as Parliament met in 1870, only one supporter, the late Mr. Henry Jordan, voting with them in a division on a want of confidence motion. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Lilley was perhaps the most accomplished debater that ever spoke in the Queensland Parliament, and throughout most of his public career, as the member for Fortitude Valley, he was a popular hero. As an educationist he was undoubtedly both sincere and enthusiastic, but his colleagues found his imperious moods difficult to contend against.

The Palmer Ministry met Parliament in May, 1870, and held office for more than three and a-half years, although for a great part of the time the Government had no working majority. Indeed, for months it fought, with a majority of one in a full House of 32, a determined Opposition in the Assembly ably led by Mr. Lilley. All business was blocked for many weeks, and eventually 13 members of the Opposition, headed by Mr. Lilley, waited as a deputation upon the Governor (Colonel Blackall) requesting his intervention on the ground that Ministers did not possess their confidence or the confidence of the House. The Governor declined to interpose, and subtly remarked that he had known many Oppositions in Parliament, but never yet knew one that had confidence in the Government of the day. The interview did not assist the Opposition cause. A second session opened on 5th July, 1870, and, being defeated two days later by 17 to 11, Mr. Palmer was granted a dissolution. The Premier had proved himself an indomitable fighter, and his appeal to the constituencies was not wholly unsuccessful. Obstruction continuing in the new Parliament, Mr. Palmer was granted another dissolution in June, 1871, and from that time had a fairly effective majority at his back for two years, when being defeated he was granted another dissolution, from which his party came back unsuccessful. If the Opposition of those days did not obstruct by means of the "stonewall" to the same extent that has been the case of recent years, they attained their end in another way. In the session of 1871-2 for a period of five weeks the Government failed to obtain a

(a) An interesting incident occurred at the opening of the second session. The Speaker announced the receipt of a writ of election endorsing the return of the Right Honourable John Bright as member for Kennedy. As Mr. Bright had not been present during the preceding session—which had only lasted from 26th April till 4th May—the seat was declared vacant. This was not the first instance of an Australian constituency voluntarily disfranchising itself by electing a prominent British statesman by way of protest against some real or fancied injustice.
The Opposition were desirous of forcing the Government to pass a Redistribution of Seats Bill before Supply was granted, and by persisting in these tactics they compelled the Government to agree to a compromise. In January, 1874, after a succession of surpluses, and with railway construction being vigorously pushed on both in Southern and Central districts. In January, 1874, when the new Parliament met after the general election, Mr. Palmer and his colleagues found themselves in so hopeless a minority that they resigned without awaiting a debate on the Address in Reply. Amidst great hilarity in the Assembly, and despite the vehement protests of the candidate, Mr. William Henry Walsh was elected Speaker, although a member of the Palmer party; and on his refusal to accept the office was humorously threatened with the penalty of disobedience to the order of the House. But after consideration he assumed the Speakership, and while in the chair discharged his duties with credit.

The Macalister-Hemmant Ministry forthwith assumed office, Mr. Lilley, who made the announcement in the Assembly on their behalf, declining a portfolio. Shortly afterwards he was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court. The Ministry was initiated with Mr. MacDevitt as Attorney-General, but in August following he retired, and Mr. S. W. Griffith, who had proved an inconvenient supporter of the Government as the leader of a subsection, accepted the portfolio. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Thomas McLlwraith was Mr. Macalister's Minister for Works, but at the close of the first session he differed from the Premier on the question of a great private railway scheme, and therefore resigned office. On the House reassembling in 1875 Mr. McLlwraith took the front cross-bench seat next the gangway on the Opposition side, and, while not approving of all the tactics of the party led by Mr. Palmer, gave it his general support. The first session of the Parliament had been distinguished by the passing of a Customs tariff incidentally protective, Mr. Hemmant, the Treasurer, showing uncommon qualities as a financial speaker. He closed his first year at the Treasury with an apparent deficit of £200,762. His predecessor, when making his Financial Statement in 1872, had anticipated a deficit. To prevent this he proposed—and Parliament agreed to the proposition—to transfer £350,000 from the Loan Fund to the Consolidated Revenue Fund to meet the Treasury bills floated or authorised to cover the accumulated deficits of earlier years. Mr. Hemmant disapproved of this method of financing, and rectified matters as far as possible by transferring to a Surplus Revenue Fund £240,000, which left him with a deficit of £200,762. This was equivalent to recouping the Loan Fund to the extent of £240,000, as the money was to be used for public works which would, under ordinary circumstances, have been constructed out of loan moneys. In the next year, 1876, soon after the opening of Parliament, the appointment of the Premier as Agent-General was announced. Ministers consequently resigned, and the Governor (Mr. W. W. Cairns) sent for Mr. George Thorn, who to the surprise of political circles succeeded in forming a Ministry including Mr. Griffith and most of the late Cabinet. Mr. Thorn was personally a general favourite, but not conspicuously fit for the position which he had fortuitously attained. Mr. Griffith became the actual leader, however, and the session was completed without disaster. During the recess Mr. Thorn retired, to visit England, and was replaced in the Cabinet by Mr. John Douglas, whose scholarly speeches had given him a high reputation in the House. As Premier, however, Mr. Douglas was less successful than had been anticipated. Conspicuously fair in debate, he appeared invariably to feel the force of his opponents' arguments more than those on his own side of the House, and therefore his leadership wanted decision; but the sessions of 1877 and 1878 were passed through without any defeat compelling a premature dissolution.

The Liberal Ministries from 1874 to 1878 had been fertile in legislation, but after the retirement of Mr. Macalister they were badly led, Mr. Griffith, who attained the Attorney-Generalship at the age of twenty-nine, having been unwisely kept in the background on the plea of political immaturity. It was evident, however, that chiefly to him the passage of all important measures of legislation had been due. The colony suffered severely from drought during the years 1876-7-8; financial depression was the inevitable result, and, as usual under such circumstances, the Government lost popularity.

In November, 1878, the general election resulted in the return of a House determined to effect a change of Administration. On the new Parliament assembling in January, 1879, Ministers were at once defeated, and Mr. McLlwraith was sent for by the Governor. He met Parliament a few days afterwards with colleagues representing all parts of the colony, and obtained a four months' recess in which to mature his policy. On Parliament reassembling in mid-May, however, the position of the Government was less strong than had been anticipated. During the recess they had been retrenching sharply, and a number of dismissals...
from the Ipswich railway workshops were declared to be tainted with partizanship. At no time in the first session, in a test division, did the Government sit with a majority of more than six, and usually they commanded only two or three. The Opposition, led by Mr. Griffith, were always at their posts, and the Government were frequently on the verge of defeat. The passing of a Three-million Loan Act and of the Divisional Boards Act, however, strengthened the Government's position, and in the following session the Torres Strait mail contract, making Brisbane the Australian terminus, though opposed by stonewalling measures for six consecutive weeks, added to their popularity.

In the session of 1880 grave accusations were made against the Premier by Mr. Hemmant, who had taken up his residence in England. Mr. Hemmant presented a petition to Parliament charging the Premier with complicity in certain transactions connected with the purchase of a large quantity of steel rails for the Government which had involved Queensland in a heavy loss. The matter was referred to a select committee, on whose recommendation a Royal Commission was appointed to take evidence in England. Mr. Griffith visited London during the recess, and acted as honorary counsel for Mr. Hemmant. The Commission exonerated the Premier, but a great deal of party animosity was engendered, which did not die out for several years.

In 1883 Sir Thomas McIlwraith ordered the British flag to be hoisted at Port Moresby, in Eastern New Guinea, annexing to the Empire that portion of Papua not already claimed by the Dutch, an act which showed true statesmanship and prophetic vision. Unfortunately, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Derby, repudiated the annexation on the ground that it was a usurpation of the sovereign rights of the Imperial authorities. At the same time he acknowledged the patriotic motives which had inspired the Premier of Queensland, and declared that the British Government would regard any attempt at annexation by a foreign Power as an unfriendly act. Whatever may have been the views of political parties at the time, matured judgment formed in the light of subsequent events endorses the action of Sir Thomas. The hoisting of the German flag on the northern portion of the territory annexed by Sir Thomas has brought a foreign Power almost to our doors, and too late the home Government endeavoured as far as possible to retrieve their blunder by annexing the south-eastern portion of Papua, which was handed over to the Commonwealth after federation.

In the same year, the Premier, who had for many years been a strong advocate of railway construction by private enterprise on the land-grant
principle, brought forward a bill authorising the construction of what was commonly called the Transcontinental Railway, from Charleville to Point Parker, on the Gulf of Carpentaria. Against this proposal great popular clamour arose; the majority of the squatting members of the Assembly combined with the Opposition, and the second reading of the bill was negatived by 27 votes to 16. Sir Thomas McIlwraith, rightly regarding the rejection of the measure as equivalent to a vote of want of confidence, advised the Administrator of the Government, Sir J. P. Bell, to dissolve the Assembly. His Excellency accepted the advice, and the Premier asked for five months' Supply. Mr. Griffith, the greatest constitutional authority in Queensland, approved of the decision of the Administrator of the Government, only objecting to Supply being given for such a length of time. However, the House, by 24 to 19, agreed to pass the Supply asked for, and the dissolution took place in the middle of July.

The Opposition, led by Mr. Griffith, were returned with a large majority. Being defeated on the election of a Speaker and in two subsequent divisions, the Government resigned. Mr. Griffith was sent for, and formed a strong Administration. Parliament adjourned from November to January, when some pressing legislation was passed at once, including the repeal of the Railway Companies Preliminary Act, under which proposals were made by railway syndicates. On 6th March Parliament was prorogued until 8th July.

The Premier had chosen as his Lands Minister Mr. Charles Boydell Dutton, a Liberal Barcoo squatter, with no previous experience of parliamentary life, but a determined land reformer. With the Premier's aid Mr. Dutton got the Land Act of 1884 safely through, and the Government secured credit for passing a most important measure of reform, one important change being the introduction of grazing farm leases, and another the resumption of the halves of all runs included in a comprehensive schedule of the unsettled districts. But the historical measure of the session and the decade was the Ten-million Loan Bill, which embodied a grand scheme for providing the entire colony with railways. The Opposition protested against the loan as unconstitutional on the ground that it covered a programme of railway construction which could not be completed for several years, but they dared not oppose any specific railway, and the bill passed without amendment. Sir Thomas McIlwraith retired from the Assembly in 1886, and during the whole life of the Parliament the Opposition found themselves helpless to resist the domination of the Ministry. But as the Administration aged its political force waned, and in 1887 the Treasurer, Mr. (afterwards Sir) J. R.
Dickson, and Mr. Macdonald-Paterson retired from the Ministry because of their disagreement with a land tax proposed in Cabinet by the Premier. Despite the large loan expenditure, too, there was a portentous succession of deficits, due to unfavourable seasons, and Sir Samuel Griffith found in 1887 that his Government and party had outlived their popularity.

Like his great rival, Sir Samuel gave abundant proof during his tenure of office of broad statesmanlike conceptions. No public man in Australia has done more to foster the federal spirit and bring about the union of the Australian colonies. He played a foremost part in creating the Federal Council, and to him is due the credit of drafting in 1887 the measure which was passed by all the colonial Parliaments granting a subsidy to an auxiliary Australasian naval squadron, although parliamentary vicissitudes robbed him of the honour of passing the bill in his own State until 1891. He is also entitled to the credit of making provision for the administration of British New Guinea by Queensland.

In April, 1888, Parliament was dissolved, and when the new Parliament met in June the enfeebled Griffith Government were promptly ejected from office. Sir Thomas Mcllwraith came in with a strong following, and he at once formed a Ministry which seemed likely to endure for several years. But at the close of the first session Sir Thomas retired from the Premiership with a view to visiting England on business. Mr. Boyd Dunlop Morehead then succeeded to the leadership. In September, 1889, Sir Thomas Mcllwraith resigned his seat in the Ministry, and the following session he appeared in the Assembly as an open opponent of his late colleagues. To make provision for a revenue deficit, the Government brought down a proposal for a general property tax. This quickly brought Sir Thomas Mcllwraith into concerted action with Sir Samuel Griffith, then leading the Opposition, and caused the resignation of the Ministry in August, 1890. Almost immediately the Griffith-Mcllwraith Ministry was announced. A year or two earlier such a fusion of parties would have been deemed impossible, but the two leaders had fought away their mutual differences, and the financial outlook was so alarming that the coalition was generally admitted to be imperative. The new Government carried many important measures, and effected material improvement in the finances.

In March, 1893, just before the banking catastrophe occurred, Sir Samuel Griffith accepted the Chief Justiceship, and Sir Thomas Mcllwraith assumed the Premiership. A dissolution followed, the Government securing a commanding majority in the new Assembly. But the Premier's health failed, and in October following his Ministry was merged into that of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Hugh Nelson. Sir Thomas retained office without portfolio until March, 1895, when his connection with the Government ceased, though he retained his seat as a member of the House until the dissolution in 1896. After resigning office he left the colony, and died in England on 17th July, 1900.

The new Premier proved a most capable financier, and although the depression in financial, commercial, and industrial affairs continued with great intensity he turned successive deficits into annual surpluses, and was soon enabled to negotiate loans in the London money market on unprecedentedly favourable terms. In April, 1898, Sir Hugh Nelson resigned Ministerial office and accepted the President's chair in the Legislative Council, that post having just become vacant by the death of Sir Arthur Palmer. Mr. Thomas Joseph Byrnes succeeded to the Premiership, and with Mr. Robert Philp as Treasurer it appeared as though the reconstructed Government had before it a life of several years. Five months afterwards, however, the young, brilliant, and much-esteemed Premier was removed by death, and Mr. Dickson was called to the Premiership. Fifteen months later the Dickson Government suffered defeat, and resigned office.

Mr. Anderson Dawson, the Labour leader in the Assembly, being sent for, assumed the Premiership with six other Labour colleagues, but was defeated immediately he met Parliament a few days later, and resigned. He was succeeded by Mr. Philp, who assumed office on 7th December, 1899. There had been a drought in most parts of the West for a year or two previously, but wool prices were high, and better seasons were anticipated. The country had almost recovered from the blow sustained in 1893. Federation threatened some loss of revenue, but compensation was looked for in the enhanced prosperity resulting from interstate freetrade. But for the two first years of the twentieth century there was everywhere in the State a very deficient rainfall, and in most inland parts absolute droughts. The double loss to the Treasury through Federation and parsimonious Nature was very serious. Mr. Philp made reductions in public service expenditure, but kept loan expenditure at the normal level, sanguine that when the change came there would be a swift recovery, and hesitating to add to the depression by suspending the construction of railways and other public works. Though by the end of June, 1903, the accumulated deficit exceeded a million sterling, and the general election of 1902 had given the Government a rather diminished majority, there appeared to be no apprehension of a crisis even when Parliament met for its second session in July, 1903. But the weight of successive deficits and the protracted tenure of the "Continuous
Ministry” inspired a general desire for change; and, in September, Mr. Philp suddenly found himself without adequate support as the result of a number of influential Government supporters joining forces with the members of the Labour party.

A new Ministry was at once formed, the Speaker, Mr. Arthur Morgan, resigning the chair and assuming the Premiership, Mr. William Kidston joining him as Treasurer. With a policy of retrenchment and reform the new Administration entered upon its career sustained by a strong backing of public opinion. Retrenchment had already been initiated by the late Government, and it was continued by Mr. Morgan and his colleagues. The bottom of the depression having been touched with the break-up of the drought, the financial year 1903-4 closed with a merely nominal deficit. In the next session, which opened in May, 1904, the Government encountered so much opposition that a dissolution was granted in July. So strongly were the constituencies in favour of the retention of office by Ministers that their party numbered 55 in a House of 72 when the new Parliament met in September, and the Government in that and the three following sessions were accordingly able to carry many of their measures of reform.

In January, 1906, the death of Sir Hugh Nelson created a vacancy in the Presidency of the Legislative Council. The Premier, who had earned a reputation during his four years’ occupancy of the Speaker’s chair for an intimate and comprehensive knowledge of parliamentary procedure, was generally designated as peculiarly fitted to succeed to the position of President; and, having resigned both the Premiership and his seat as a member of the Assembly, he was translated to the Legislative Council.

Mr. Kidston then became Premier. On the 11th of April, 1907, the Assembly’s term having almost expired by effluxion of time, a dissolution took place, and a general election followed. The two chief objects for which the coalition between Liberals and Labour members had been brought about in 1903—sound financial administration and electoral reform—having been secured, disintegration had commenced to set in in the Government ranks. On the one hand some of the Liberals were desirous of reunion with their former associates led by Mr. Philp, and on the other the more extreme section of the Labour party adopted a socialistic platform, thereby causing their more moderate colleagues who followed Mr. Kidston to break with them before the election. The respective manifestoes of the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, issued some weeks before the dissolution, were found to embody practically the same policy in so far as vital measures of legislation were concerned. Both
emphasised the necessity of having in office a Ministry possessing the steadfast support of a united following if full effect were to be given to their programme. The result was disappointing, for when the new House met in July the Philp party numbered 29, the Government party 25, and the Labour party 18. After a fight over the choice of the Speaker and Chairman of Committees, the Labour members gave a general support to the Government, but comparatively little progress could be made in consequence of the uncertainty of that support. The Legislative Council rejected several measures which both the Government and the Labour party were very anxious to see placed on the Statute-book. With a view to taking concerted action to overcome the veto of the Council on democratic legislation, Mr. Kidston made overtures to the Labour party for an offensive and defensive alliance in Parliament and at the polls. The Labour party replied that they were unable to give any assurance on the subject. Mr. Kidston then advised His Excellency, Lord Chelmsford, to recognise the principle that there resided in the Crown the power to nominate to the Legislative Council such a number of new members as might be required to overcome obstruction, and that the power should be exercised if, in the opinion of His Excellency's responsible advisers, such a course became necessary. The Governor declined to accept this advice, and the Premier resigned on 12th November.

Mr. Philp, being sent for by His Excellency, formed a Ministry, which was at once met in the Assembly by successive votes of want of confidence, the members of the Labour party uniting with the late Ministerialists in the divisions. A dissolution was granted, even though the House refused to vote Supply to the Government, and early in the new year (1908) a general election took place, Mr. Philp losing four seats, the Labour party gaining that number, while the Kidston party were again returned with the same following. The effect was that the Philp and Kidston parties each numbered 25 and the Labour members 22. As the two latter parties had in most cases assisted one another at the elections, the Philp Government resigned, and Mr. Kidston being recalled found his position practically unchanged, so far as relative numbers were concerned, and yet greatly strengthened as regards the constitutional reform he desired to effect. A short session was at once held. A reform of the Constitution limiting the vetoing power of the Legislative Council by providing for a referendum on any measure which the Council rejected twice, and also a number of democratic measures rejected by the Council in the two preceding sessions, were passed with the aid of the Labour party. When, however, the Government turned to legislation affecting the
material progress of the State, and introduced two bills to authorise the construction of railways to mineral fields (to Mount Elliott in the Conn- 
urry copper area and to Lawn Hills in the Gulf district) on agreements made 
with two private companies who undertook to provide in one case one-half and in the other case three-fourths of the capital required, despite 
the fact that the railways were to be constructed, worked, and managed by 
the Railway Commissioner, that the companies were to receive no interest 
on the money they advanced until the railways earned it, and that when at 
the end of fifteen years the Government repaid the advance the companies 
were only to receive a sum equal to what their investment was then 
earning capitalised at 3½ per cent., the bills were obstructed by the Labour 
party, and were only passed with the assistance of the Philp party, under 
the closure, the Estimates being forced through by the same means 
at the close of the session. Before leaving on a mission to England, Mr. 
Kidston publicly intimated that he could no longer work with the Labour 
party. He returned in October, and the Philp party, recognising the 
mischievous futility of three-party government, agreed to accept the pro-
grame enunciated by Mr. Kidston at the election in 1907, and to join the 
Ministerial party, the Premier being granted a free hand, both by his 
colleagues and followers, in reconstructing the Government.

The fusion of the two parties led to the immediate resignation of two 
Ministers and the formation of an Independent Opposition by these gentle-
men and four more seceders from the Kidston party. A reconstruction of 
the Cabinet followed, three members of the Philp party taking office under 
Mr. Kidston. Mr. Philp declined to accept a portfolio, but undertook to 
give the new Government support as an unofficial member of the Assembly, 
an undertaking most loyally observed. Dissatisfaction was naturally felt 
by several members at the composition of the Cabinet, and when Parliament 
met on 17th November it was evident that the fusion had not had the 
desired effect of reducing the number of parties to two. On the Opposition 
side of the Chamber were the Labour party in direct opposition and the 
Independent Opposition of six sitting on the cross-benches, while on the 
Government back cross-benches were three or four members who joined 
forces with the Opposition in every division. The cohesive majority was 
still large enough to enable the Government to pass several railways, two or 
three bills, and the Estimates; but, unfortunately, it was found necessary to 
have recourse again to the closure to get the Estimates through the House 
before Christmas.

Further defections took place during the recess. The sudden death of 
the Speaker, Mr. John Leahy, and the election for Bulloo of a Labour 
member in his stead, reduced the Government majority to two. Such a 
condition of affairs rendered it impossible for any party in the House to 
carry on public business. A trial of strength took place over the election of 
the Speaker when the House met on 29th June, the Government having a 
majority of two. Two days later Mr. Bowman, the leader of the Labour 
party, moved a want of confidence amendment on the Address in Reply. 
A very protracted and acrimonious debate took place, and the motion 
was only defeated by a majority of one in a full House. Arrangements 
had been made earlier in the year for the holding of a conference of 
Commonwealth and State Premiers and Treasurers with a view to making 
a final effort to arrive at a mutual understanding regarding the financial 
relations of the Commonwealth and the States after the expiry of the ten-
year period provided for by section 87 of the Commonwealth Constitution. 
As it was considered highly important that Queensland should be repre-
sented at this Conference, which was to be held in mid-August, the 
Government secured an adjournment for a fortnight, but only by applying 
the closure.

The Conference came to a unanimous agreement with regard to the future division of the surplus Customs and Excise revenue, justifying the determination of the Government of this State to be represented. But the efforts of the Opposition to defeat the proposal of the Government to adjourn furnished additional evidence, if any were needed, that no business could be done in a House so evenly divided. When the Premier returned from the Conference, which had been held in Melbourne, after consultation with his party, he advised the Lieutenant-Governor to dissolve the Assembly, provided it agreed to grant temporary Supply. His Excellency 
accepted Mr. Kidston's advice, but stipulated that the Supply must be for 
the shortest time in which it was possible to hold an election and summon the new Parliament. After another fight, the Government closed through an Appropriation Bill covering Supply for ten weeks, and the House was 
dissolved on 31st August, the election being fixed for 2nd October.

The result of the appeal to the country has been to bring about a practical restoration of two-party government, an ideal for which the 
Ministerialists have been striving ever since the session of 1906. The Government have won 41 seats and the Labour party 27, while the Indepen-
dent Opposition, which went out 

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State through the temporary difficulties arising from the pending rearrangement of the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the component States.

It may be of interest to add that the last was the seventeenth Parliament of Queensland, which gives to each an average of about three years, the present maximum statutory term of the Legislative Assembly. The explanation is, of course, that in the earlier years of the colony the limit of the Assembly life-term was five years. As already stated, the Legislative Council when first constituted comprised 15 members. Since then the number has been periodically increased to correspond with the enlargement of the other Chamber. The present number of members of the Council is 44. Until 1865 the number of members of the Assembly was 26; thence till 1873 it was 32; thence till 1875 it was 42, increased in 1875 by the creation of the electorate of Cook to 43, at which number it remained until 1879, when there were 55 members. In 1886 the number was increased to 59, and in 1887 to 72, at which it still remains. Payment of members of the Assembly was first sanctioned in 1886 by an allowance of two guineas a day for attendance, and 1s. 6d. a mile for travelling expenses, the total in any one year for attendance not to exceed £200. In 1889 the payment was fixed at £300 a year, with a mileage allowance for one journey to and fro each session, unless where an adjournment exceeded thirty days, when mileage was again payable. In 1892 the salary was reduced to £150 a year. In 1896 it was again raised to £300, at which amount it still remains. The members of the Legislative Council receive no payment.

In the foregoing sketch of the Legislature of Queensland many omissions will probably be detected by the careful reader. But as a rule mention of the names of public men has had to be confined to Premiers and such other Ministers or members to whom for some usually apparent reason it is necessary to give prominence. Had space permitted, many interesting character sketches of prominent men of the past, as well as of the present, might have been written; and it must not be forgotten that some of the services most worth recording have been rendered by men whose names have not become household words, and whose reward has been found in the lifelong consciousness that they have unobtrusively done their duty to the State. Enough has probably been said to prove that responsible government in Queensland, initiated among a mere handful of people fifty years ago, and carried on amidst discouraging difficulties until to-day, has been attended by results of which no patriotic subject of the King need feel ashamed.