

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

...
Legislative Assembly
4th July 1862

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Extracted from the third party account as published in the
Courier 5th July 1862

The SPEAKER took the chair at a quarter past ten.

LANDS AND WORKS.

Mr. FERRETT, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Lands, how horses, drays, and implements belonging to the Government in the Department of Lands and Works were disposed of, when the works for which they have been purchased were completed?

The MINISTER for LANDS replied that the horses, drays, and implements in question were not purchased for any special work, and that they were transferred from one place to another as the requirements of the public service demanded.

GOLD-FIELD AT GLADSTONE.

In reply to Mr. Lilley, the COLONIAL SECRETARY stated that the Government was not in possession of any authentic or official information respecting the discovery of any gold-field in the neighbourhood of Gladstone.

PUBLICANS' ACT.

The MINISTER for LANDS moved that the order of the day for the second reading of this bill be postponed until the next business on the paper was disposed of, and the motion was put and passed.

MORETON BAY TRAMWAY COMPANY.

The MINISTER for LANDS moved that the Speaker leave the chair, and that the House resolve itself into committee to consider the following resolutions:—"That this House resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the following resolutions:—That this House being impressed with the importance of more speedy means of communication and transit than at present exists between the interior of the country and the metropolis,—Resolved, That the Government be empowered to enter into and complete negotiations with the Moreton Bay Tramway Company, for the transfer, from that Company to the Government, of the whole of the Company's interest, including all surveys, plans, and specifications, in the making of a tramway from Ipswich to Dalby under the act passed by this House last year. (2.) That the Government be empowered to pay to the said Company the fair value of such interest, such payment to be made in the scrip mentioned in the next resolution. (3.) That so soon as the arrangements mentioned in the first resolution have been made, the Government be empowered to proceed with the said tramway, and for that purpose to issue scrip bearing interest at five per cent. per annum, to purchasers, such scrip to be transferable, and to be taken and accepted as cash at all Government land sales throughout the colony. (4.) That this House pledges itself, when asked to do so by the Government, to repeal the Moreton Bay Tramway Company's Act of last year, and to confer, by the Repealing Act, such powers upon the Executive Government as may be deemed necessary for bringing such tramway to a successful completion. (5.) That the foregoing resolutions be transmitted to the Legislative Council for its concurrence.

Mr. BLAKENEY, as he would be debarred from making any observations in committee, would take the present opportunity of doing so. He was rather surprised that a motion of so great importance, which he considered a Government measure, should be brought on in this hurried manner on the last day of the session, and he was inclined to think that a good deal of pressure from without must have been brought to bear on the Government to make them bring forward the resolutions. ("No, no," from the COLONIAL SECRETARY.) How stood the case. The power of this Company would cease in three weeks hence unless they carried out their works before that time, and he would ask the House what progress the Company had made in carrying out these works. He had travelled from Ipswich to the Range, and a few sods had been turned to indicate the line. This was all the work done. No doubt it had been said that the Company had valuable plans; and he believed that the drawings were beautifully executed, and the question was what is the value of these plans, as they were the only things of value possessed by the Company. Had these plans been approved of by any competent authority, and were they of such value as to warrant the country in paying for them a large sum of money to these gentlemen. At any rate, he trusted that the resolutions if passed, would be amended so as to state the *maximum* sum to be paid. It was said that the Company were asking for eight or ten thousand pounds. What would be the result if the resolutions were not carried. The shareholders had been induced in an evil hour for their pockets to subscribe towards the Tram Road Company, and to pay up thirty or forty per cent. They now found that nothing had been done but a few plans and specifications and surveys, and they also found that the Company would be defunct in three weeks and their deposits and all interest in them lost to themselves, their heirs, and assigns forever. They now, by a side wind, wanted to save themselves, and being unable to carry out their contract, came to the House and asked to be refunded for the money they had laid out. He knew from the number of parties in that House who would vote on this question and who had interest in the matter that the resolutions would be carried by a sweeping majority. In the first place the gentlemen who lived beyond the range had, naturally, a great interest in the formation of a tramroad, and he did not blame them. At the same time a proper system should be adopted. They should look at the enormous estimates every year in connection with railways, and be very cautious how they proceeded. He believed that it was the intention to have made the Tramroad with wooden sleepers which he thought would never answer in this tropical climate. He trusted that the Government, if they took the matter up, would use iron, not wood, and it might then at a future time be converted into a railway. Another class of members of the House wished to get out of their position with the Company. He remembered that last year the hon. member for West Moreton objected to shareholders in the Company who also were members of that House voting in the Tramway Company's Act, and in the newspapers of that day was a prospectus, with the names of a great many Directors of the Company in it, and amongst this list was the names of several members of that House. Several of these members, on the objection being made, protested that they had no interest in the Company. The result was, that in the next issue of the prospectus, the list of Directors had dwindled down to two or three, and was very meagre, all the names of members of the House having been withdrawn. He did not now address any individual member, but he put it to the honour of any hon. member who was a shareholder, whether he ought to vote on this question, and thus violate one of the rules of the House. He contended that any hon. member who was a shareholder had a direct and personal pecuniary interest in these resolutions, as the fate of them would determine whether the shareholders were to get back their lost money or not. (The hon. member here quoted May, page 339, in which it stated that in 1797, when Mr. Pitt proposed that the Government should pay £5 to the shareholders in the original stock in the case of the Loyalty Loan, a most patriotic but unfortunate transaction, it was ruled that Mr. Manning, a shareholder, could not vote as the bill was one which, if carried, would have the effect of diminishing personal pecuniary loss to himself.) If any member were pecuniarily interested, he (Mr. B.) trusted that member would not vote. He hoped that an amendment would be proposed, limiting the sum to be paid to a certain amount, and that nothing would be paid unless the work done were carefully gone over and approved of by a skilled man. He had been informed that, amongst the men employed to take the levels and surveys was one who, a short time ago, was in the service of one hon. member of the House in the situation of a working plasterer. He trusted that the work would all be properly tested before anything was paid. He would be the last man to refuse to the Company the just value of what work would really be of service (hear, hear), but the

Government should confine themselves to this, and should be guided in their estimation of this value by men of undoubted ability and honesty.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

A message was received from his Excellency signifying that, on behalf of her Majesty, he had given the Royal Assent to the following bills:—Coolie Labor Bill, Marine Board Bill, Hospital Bill, Medical Bill, and Naval Service Bill.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. WATTS expressed his surprise that the hon. member (Mr. Blakeney) should try to prevent such an important enterprise as this from being carried out, and that he should say the company was defunct. He was surprised that that hon. member had not more regard for the interests of the country than to prevent an enterprise of such importance—which the House was now asked to place in proper hands—from being carried out. If the vast interior were but opened up by a good road, the benefit which would accrue to this metropolis would be incalculable. The completion of good means of communication would benefit this town and the whole of the colony:—it would give an impetus to trade, enhance the value of land, and increase the revenue of the colony sevenfold. The hon. member had stated that this Company had done nothing but make a few plans, and turn a few sods, between this and Liverpool. This statement was incorrect, for all the line of road had been turned down and pegged nearly up to Liverpool. The survey, also, has been completed as far as Dalby. Even assuming that the Company were defunct, which was not the case, would any hon. member desire, or would it be just on the part of the colony, to take the benefit of their labours without paying them a fair valuation. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member had alluded to the prospectus of the Company, and had hinted that some members of that House were shareholders. He (Mr. W.) would state for the information of that hon. gentleman that he had no shares in that Company, that he had never had the slightest pecuniary interest in it, and that he had never inserted his name on any paper of the Company. (Hear, hear.) Without having any share, then, in any benefit or loss which might accrue to the Company, he was in a position to fairly stand up in that House, and advocate what he considered its just claims. He was surprised at the deprecatory allusions to the fact, if fact it were, of one of the surveyors engaged on the line having been once a working plasterer in the employ of one hon. member of that House. The hon. member for North Brisbane should know that in this colony we ought not to judge of the ability or intellect of any man by the position in society which he might temporarily hold, or the occupation which he might be following for the time being. In these colonies men of the best intellect and of the best skill in their particular professions had been compelled by the force of circumstances to accept for a time situations as cooks and team-drivers. (Hear, hear.) Such men are often met with in low situations who were more competent to fill the highest situations than the persons who were in possession of them. (Hear, hear.) The resolutions would empower the Government to enter into a contract with the Company, and it was understood of course that only those works which were really of value to the colony would be purchased. The Government could not be so devoid of honesty and straightforwardness as to take any property without a *quid pro quo*. The hon. member had alluded to the matter as though eight or ten thousand pounds in cash were to be taken out of the revenue in purchase of the Company's stock. Such was not the case. If the Company were to enter upon the contract, by a certain period they would get a certain grant of land. Now the resolution only proposed to pay the Company for what they had done, in land scrip. It would not take any money out of the Treasury; it would only cause a certain amount of land scrip to be given to the company for their works, which would be of value to the Government in carrying out the undertaking.

Dr. CHALLINOR rose to speak, but was interrupted by

The MINISTER for LANDS, who asked the Speaker whether this discussion was not out of order. It has been distinctly understood yesterday, when he obtained leave to move the House into committee on these resolutions, that all discussion on them should be reserved until the House were in committee. He had not risen to order when the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Blakeney) rose to speak, as by that gentleman's position as chairman he would have been

precluded in committee from delivering his views on the question, and this was the only opportunity he had.

The SPEAKER said he thought that such an understanding as that mentioned by the Minister for Lands had been arrived at on the previous evening, but that he (the Speaker) could not prevent any hon. member who chose to speak on the present motion, "that he do leave the chair," from so doing.

Messrs. BLAKENEY, R. CRIBB, and CHALLINOR maintained that no such understanding as that mentioned by the Minister for Lands had been arrived at on the previous evening.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that his impression was that such an understanding had been arrived at.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN could well understand that the framers of the resolutions did not desire to debate on the present motion, as if the House divided on that motion before going into committee, those who opposed the resolutions would be stronger by one vote, viz, that of the Chairman of Committees, than they would be on a division in committee.

Mr. FERRETT was clearly of opinion that the understanding mentioned by the Minister for Lands had been come to on the previous evening. The hon. members opposite were endeavouring to waste the time of the House and obstruct the business. It was in the power of some hon. members to jump up and make speeches on every occasion. He thought that there ought to be reserved to all hon. members an equal right of monopolising the time of the House. (Laughter.) Hon. members were in the habit of wasting the time of the House by making speeches over and over again which had nothing to do with the matter under discussion. There were twenty-five members and no hon. member was entitled to more than one twenty-fifth of the time of that House. (Laughter.)

Mr. R. CRIBB denied that he wished to obstruct the business. The question before the House was not should this scheme of a tramroad be carried out, but should this Company who had entered into what they considered a profitable speculation be entitled to come down and ask the House to re-imburse them for their losses when they found that the speculation must fail. The Government had entered into a liberal but judicious compact with the Company; the latter found themselves unable to carry out that compact, else why did they now abandon the project? If they did not carry out the compact they ought to lose all their claims under it. If the Company honestly told the House that they could not carry out their compact he (Mr. C.) would willingly assent to fair allowance being made to the Company for all works of value to the colony in their possession. (Hear, hear.) It had been hinted that if the bargain were not made with the Company, they would defeat the future projects of the Government in carrying out a tramroad; but he (Mr. C.) denied that the Company would be in a position to do anything of the kind. The great advantage of good communication, of course no one disputed; but this had nothing to do with the principle now at issue. If the resolutions were assented to, every man who started a bubble company would be coming to the House and asking for assistance, if he found he could not carry out his scheme. The House ought not to go into committee on the resolutions this session, but should let the Company see what they could do, and if next session they had failed in their scheme, let them come to the House, and he (Mr. C.) would be willing to assent to the purchase, at a fair valuation, of everything which the Company possessed, which would be of service to the colony. It might be found that all the Company had done was useless.

The question was then put, and the motion carried without a division, after which the House resolved itself into committee on the resolutions.

The MINISTER for LANDS, in moving the adoption for the first regulation, said that the Government had no desire nor concern about the resolutions before the House, and although the Government was in favour of the principles of these resolutions it was for the House to determine if they should be carried out. Hon. members' minds must be impressed with the fact that in the present circumstances of the colony no time should be lost in forming more speedy and regular communication with the interior. Before six months had passed away more than 100,000 sheep would have crossed over the borders of this colony on their way to the Northern and North western parts, and the introduction of property and population into the colony might naturally be

expected to increase in a commensurate degree within the same period. Even since this Tramroad Company's Bill was passed the traffic with the interior had increased to a very great extent. Although he asked the committee to pass these resolutions, he considered that this question was one which should not be considered without a due regard to ulterior results. Previous to the passing of the bill to establish this Company, a select committee of that House had been appointed to enquire into it, and to take evidence upon the subject of internal communication. That evidence went to show that with the amount of traffic then existing a Company, with the means of transit proposed at their disposal, would have paid ten per cent. upon the capital employed. He would briefly refer to the evidence of one gentleman—viz, that of the present Auditor-General. That gentleman's evidence showed that even at that time the down traffic was annually 10,000 bales, the carriage of which would have produced £5000, and carriage of hides and tallow would have produced £1000. The up traffic would have produced £12,500, and finally there was the passenger traffic. These calculations to which he referred showed a return then of ten per cent. on the cost. The evidence of Mr. Buckley on this point was corroborated by that of other witnesses. If that would have been the profit at the time this evidence was given, some 18 months or two years since, how much greater would be the profit at the present time when the traffic had largely increased. These facts were sufficient to show that some speedy means of communication were urgently demanded. The Company, actuated by motives of benefiting the country, and also by a desire no doubt of personal profit, had got the bill passed. Whether the Company were able or not to carry out their undertaking was a question which he conceived did not arise for the consideration of the House on the present occasion. The question was should the Government enter into negotiations for the purchase of the Company's property or interest or not. He saw no ground for the imputation that this was a bubble company; no argument had been adduced to prove such an assertion, and the very fact that the company were in a position to come to that House to demand eight or ten thousand pounds for their property, estimated at a fair valuation, proved, that so far from the insinuation being true, a considerable amount of capital must already have been paid up in support of the Company's operations. (Hear.) He was not aware that there was any Company in existence which had the whole of its capital paid up when it commenced. These resolutions conveyed to the House all the information he could give as to the communications between the Government and the Company. What was the precise amount to which the Company might be entitled he was not prepared to state. The Company themselves had stated that their demand would not exceed £9,500, but the amount paid would of course depend upon the extent of the investment made by the Government in the work said to be done. To say that the Government intended to take over all the interest of the Company without a due investigation—that they would take all the plans and specifications without first ascertaining how far they would be of value in carrying out the tramway, was also a mistake. Had such been the conviction on the minds of the Government—has they thought that they would have been called upon to pay for work which would be of no use to the colony—such a proposition as the present one would never have been brought before the House. He had previously stated that the demand would not exceed £9,500, and he had been led to believe that the estimate to carry out this same work of the Government would have been £12,190. He thought that it had been established that the construction of a tramway was desirable, and such being the case he considered that the Company were entitled to a fair compensation for what they had actually expended, and for what would be of use and service to the colony. (Hear, hear). Had this been a matter involving a public debt—had the Government been asked to involve the country in a large debt—he would have reflected before acceding to any such proposition. On this question it was not now necessary for him to state his opinion, although he might state that he would not be in favour of such a debt except upon expenditure upon public works, which would make a fair return to the revenue. The proposition now before the House, however, was of a different nature. The Government would issue land scrip bearing interest at five per cent., and this would enable parties to invest their money in it as if it were real property. The scrip would be transferable and negotiable at land sales. The tramroad would also tend to create a large demand for land, to introduce a large amount of population, and to be beneficial to the colony generally without being a burden on the general revenue. Persons in all parts of the colony could participate in the benefits of the proposed scheme. He had placed all the necessary facts of the case before the committee, and he trusted that nothing like acrimony would be infused in this discussion. It was a mistake to

suppose that this question has purposely been delayed until the end of the session, and it was also a mistake to imagine that any pressure had been brought to bear on the Government. He could safely say that no pressure had been brought to bear on himself. It struck him also from the look the hon. member (Mr. Blakeney) had given him that he imagined that he was a shareholder. (Laughter.) He was not aware that he had ever been a shareholder, and he now thought he was too late to get any.

Mr. MOFFATT said that, although he gave every credit to the Government for the manner in which they had acted with regard to the Tramway Company, he was still of opinion that that Company was not entitled to so much as might at the first glance be supposed. Hon. members would remember the very indecent and hasty manner in which the bill for incorporating the society had been rushed through the House at the end of last session, and it appeared that similar haste was to be the means by which it was intended to legislate in the affairs of the company this session. Last session the Standing Orders had been suspended, and a bill was passed containing 300 clauses, in a style which would preclude most members from knowing what the provisions of the bill really were, and by that bill the company had been allowed twelve months to mature their operations. The 286th clause provided amongst other things that unless a section of fifteen miles were completed in August next, the act must lapse. The proposition he was about to make as an amendment in the resolutions, referred to might be called the preamble of those resolutions, and was to the following effect :—"That all the words after the word "the" in the preamble of the resolution be omitted, with the view of inserting the following:- "Belief that the Moreton Bay Tramway Company are unable to carry out the conditions of the act under which they are incorporated, which provide that at least £10,000 of the capital shall be paid up, and the construction of at least one section of fifteen miles be contracted for and commenced by the Company within twelve months of the passing of the act. And the necessity which exists for the immediate establishment," &c. Seeing that there was every probability that in the course of a month this act must fall through, he saw not the slightest necessity for the Government taking any action in the matter until that time had elapsed. He himself possessed some knowledge of surveys, and he must confess that all the surveys he had seen belonging to the Company had been properly made. Many of the surveys, however, that had been made were not for the line of road, but for blocks of land, which would of course be applied for other purposes by the company. He supposed that those surveys were reckoned as part of the services for which the Government would have to pay. He was not there to oppose the reception by the Company of the full value of what they had to dispose of, but before any money was paid it was highly necessary that the surveys should be tested by competent surveyors. There was another matter also to which he would refer, in which the people of Ipswich, and to a certain extent himself, were interested. By the act the Company were bound to build a bridge across the Bremer at Ipswich, which was to be completed in a certain time, and that fact had been adduced as an argument why the original sum of £8000 which had been voted should lapse. When the amount of money which was to be paid to the Company should be determined, it was necessary that the delay and impediments which that Company had occasioned in the carrying out of public works, which would otherwise have been undertaken by the Government, should be taken into consideration. He would conclude by moving the amendment.

Mr. RAFF said that the House would be acting in a most unjust manner if the amendment were to be adopted; besides it would have the effect of affirming that the Government actually required the works of the Company. If negotiations were to be delayed until the Company was defunct, that Company would be placed in a position by which they would be compelled to accept any terms; as it was, the Company was at present in a position to come to terms with other parties, and it would look very bad if the Government were to wait until the Company could not help themselves. All hon. members were agreed that if a tramway were formed a great impetus would be given to agriculture, the pastoral lands to the westward would be much benefited, and immense traffic would ensue; these were merely convincing proofs of the immediate necessity that existed for the formation of the tramway. Some hon. members had stated that the Government had been induced to introduce the resolutions, in consequence of the pressure from without. He, however, differed with those hon. members, as he did not believe that the Government were at all susceptible to such pressure—they are, in his opinion, immoveable. As to

the assertion of one hon. member, that a small direct pecuniary interest should prevent those hon. members who possessed that interest from voting, he (Mr. Raff) would ask whether that small direct pecuniary interest should be allowed to outweigh the large direct interest—in the general welfare of the country which those hon. members possessed. If that principle were carried out it would be impossible for the House to carry on the business of the country.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY could not altogether agree with the amendment. The Government could never have been accused with propriety of dealing too liberally with the Tramroad Company. Although better speeches had been made against the Company by certain hon. members, and especially by the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. O'S.) no real inquiry into the merits of the case had been made in that quarter—all the trouble of inquiring into the acts and propositions of the Company had been taken by the Government. If the hon. member to whom he had referred still intended to oppose the resolutions, under the belief that the formation of a tramroad would be injurious to Ipswich, he (the Colonial Secretary) could tell that hon. member that the time would come when he would be very much blamed by the citizens of Ipswich for having attempted to do a great injury to the town—as there could be no doubt but that Ipswich would derive as much benefit from the tramroad as Brisbane, or any other town in the colony. The hon. member for the Western Downs had referred to the survey of farms by the Company. The Government were of opinion that those surveys were very valuable, and should most decidedly purchase them with the remainder of the property of the company. Of course no purchase would be made until the surveys had been properly tested; no Government would think for a moment of effecting such a purchase unless the proper precautions had previously been taken. It was perhaps desirable that the resolutions should be worded in a somewhat more definite manner, and that a maximum sum should be set down as to the amount to be paid, &c. He must entirely deny the fact that the Government had acted under the influence of any pressure whatever from without—it was evident that works of the nature proposed could be carried out much better by the Government than by any Company, as the country was not yet sufficiently ripe for the successful working of companies whose transactions would involve so much as would the transactions of the Tramway Company.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that the remarks of the hon. member at the head of the Government as to the cause of his (Mr. O'S.'s) opposition to the tramroad were perfectly gratuitous. He had also given all the attention that he possibly could to the bill, and as he was of opinion that it was in the agonies of death when it came into the world, he thought there was every probability that it would go out of the world in the same manner. It had been said that the people of Ipswich were opposed to the measure, in the face of the fact that no place had a greater interest at stake with regard to communication with the interior than Ipswich. By the 286th clause of the Tramroad Act, there was no doubt that in a few weeks the Company would be defunct, and, as he thought it was very desirable that power should be given to the Government to open up public works, there was every necessity that, if the Company possessed anything worth buying, that the Government should buy it. He could not conceive what objection there could be to the amendment of the hon. member for the Western Downs. Had it not been for the Company, there would have been a bridge erected by this time in Ipswich—one of the first works of the Company would have been to erect that bridge. He had been very sorry to hear certain hon. members stand up and say they had no pecuniary interest in the Company when he knew for a fact that they did possess an interest.

Mr. LILLEY was very glad to hear from the temperate and able speech of the hon. member who had just sat down that his opinions on the matter were somewhat modified. The hon. member for the Western Downs had expressed a desire that the Company should receive a fair value for their surveys, and yet that hon. member had moved an amendment which would have the effect of placing the Company in such a position that its property, no matter what might be the intrinsic value of that property, might be purchased by the Government for whatever that Government might choose to give for it. Any huckster would laugh at such a style of doing business, and say that the Government were the coolest fellows who ever went into the market. Surely it would have been a relic of the ancient jealousy which existed between the two towns of Brisbane and Ipswich, that caused the hon. member who asserted that little benefit would accrue to Ipswich from the formation of a tramroad from that town to the Downs. The hon. member for

North Brisbane (Mr. Blakeney) had made use of some very strong language, and when he had applied the terms bubble Company to the Tramroad Company must have forgotten the substantial men who backed it. He (Mr. Lilley) must also correct the hon. member for North Brisbane with reference to another assertion he had made—viz., that no hon. member who had a pecuniary interest in the Company could vote, and he would quote also from books, and books of a more modern date, than those quoted by the hon. member. (Mr. Lilley here quoted from Cushing, citing two cases—one English and the other American—to prove that a man must have a direct separate interest—separate and not in connection with other persons, to be debarred from voting.) He hoped the hon. member for North Brisbane was satisfied that his law was wrong. The hon. member had also referred to an unfortunate plasterer, and he (Mr. Lilley) would like to know what difference it could possibly make if the plans were valuable who made them. The hon. gentleman must remember that the man who had made a network of railway around England—Stevenson—had, when he was young, attended to an engine in a pit, and looked after cows in a field. He hoped the House would not agree to the amendment, and he would like to know on what grounds the assertion had been made that the Company was defunct. The fact was that the colony was not yet ripe enough for the formation of large companies it was seen that even in a little insurance company two or three noisy people had got in and endeavoured to play the democrat. He ridiculed the idea of any indecent haste having been exhibited, and trusted that as hon. members had conceded the principle that a tramway was necessary, the amendment would be negatived.

Mr. JONES would vote for the amendment, as he considered that under the peculiar circumstances of the Company, it were better to be allowed to come to a natural termination, when the Government would interfere, and carry on the work.

Mr. R. CRIBB would oppose the original resolutions, for the same reasons as those advanced by the previous speaker.

Dr. CHALLINOR said that the prospectus of the Company had naturally called into operation the feelings of three hon. members who could not agree with it. The names of certain hon. members had appeared in that prospectus as directors, and the attention of the House had been called to that fact. Shortly afterwards those names had been withdrawn from the prospectus, which made it appear that those members had allowed their names to be placed in the prospectus as decoys—a proceeding which could hardly be called worthy of honourable men. If there was anything valuable belonging to the Company, and it was a good investment, why did not capitalists take it up? It must either have been that they had no faith in the persons who were managing the affair, or that the estimated cost had been too low, or that there was not sufficient traffic to make it pay. How could the surveys be properly tested unless they were made over again; if it was necessary that they should be surveyed over again to be tested, why could not the cost of that survey be deducted from the price to be paid. He could not himself see the necessity for the immediate construction of the tramway—there were very often drays waiting at Ipswich which were unable to obtain loading. He had himself seen some of the work of the plasterer who was supposed to be an embryo Stephenson—that talented individual had constructed a water-table, with the view of carrying water up a hill. Of what value would the surveys of the blocks be if those surveys were not tested—when all the expense would have to be gone over again. He should conclude by stating that it was his intention to support the amendment.

Mr. WARRY thought that the fair value of the property of the Company should be paid for it; he would, therefore, oppose the amendment.

Mr. FERRETT would flatly deny the assertion of the hon. member for West Moreton (Dr. Challinor) that there was no necessity for a tramroad, and that there was plenty of drays to be had. At certain seasons of the year it was impossible to obtain drays, and his (Mr. Ferrett's) last year's clip had not come down in consequence. He might state that he possessed not the slightest interest in the Tramway Company. He certainly knew very little about surveying, but he knew enough to be aware that it was only necessary to make a few triangular lines, in order to test the work of any surveyor. In conclusion, he would state that he possessed full confidence that the Government would take every precaution not to pay the Company any more for the surveys than those surveys were worth.

Mr. COXEN would state, in answer to the hon. member for West Moreton (Dr. Challinor) that contracts had been received for the first fifty miles of the tramroad, which amounted to a less sum than the cost of these fifty miles had been estimated at.

The question was then put, that the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question, and the House divided with the following result:—

Ayes, 12.		Noes. 8.	
Mr. Herbert		Mr. McLean	
Mackenzie		Royds	
Watts		Moffat	
Fleming		Challinor	
Ferrett		B. Cribb	
Lilley		R. Cribb	
Coxen		Jones	} Tellers
Richards		O'Sullivan	}
Warry			
Edmondstone			
Macalister	} Tellers		
Raff	}		

The three first resolutions were put and passed.

On the fourth being read, the MINISTER for LANDS said that the fourth resolution had been inserted in case the Government should have cause to interfere with lands belonging to other persons that the Government did not particularly wish to press.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he thought it was necessary that the fourth resolution should be withdrawn.

The MINISTER for LANDS, having stated that there was no objection to withdraw it, it was accordingly withdrawn.

The remaining resolution was then passed, the House resumed, and the resolutions were reported.

MESSAGES FROM THE COUNCIL.

Messages were received from the Legislative Council signifying that the Council had assented to the Assembly's amendments in the resolutions to obtain an additional Judge, and to the Appropriation Act.

COMMITTEE OF ELECTIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS.

Mr. LILLEY brought up a progress report from the Committee of Elections and Qualifications.

SEVENTEEN MILE ROCKS.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, in moving the following resolutions, said that he was not wedded to the scheme shadowed forth in them if the Government could show him a better one. His object in making the motion was to elicit from the Government some definite expression of opinion with regard to this important work. He begged to move therefore—(1.) That in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that as many of the engineers now in the employment of Government, and others of the same profession as are deemed necessary, may be constituted a Board in Queensland, to take evidence and obtain information relative to the extent and nature of the obstructions in the Rivers Brisbane and Bremer, with a view of considering and reporting on the best method of removing the present impediments to the navigation between Brisbane and Ipswich. (2.) That such Board be specially required to take evidence as to the desirability of either removing the Seventeen-mile Rocks, or of building a lock across the river at that place. (3.) That

such Board be directed to report the information and result of their inquiries, together with any opinions or suggestions of their own, as to the best and most economical means of removing such obstructions, and otherwise improving the navigation, to the Government, by whom the same shall be laid upon the table of this House with as little delay as possible. (4.) That an address be presented to the Governor embodying the above resolutions, and praying that his Excellency will appoint such persons to the said Board, by the advice of the Executive Council, as he shall think fit.

Dr. CHALLINOR seconded the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Government intended to adopt a course which would, practically, amount to much the same as that recommended in the resolutions. The Government had now in their employment one or two engineers of skill, and other professional assistance, which some time ago they did not possess. Further investigations with reference to the removal of these obstructions should be pursued; and by next session, a further sum should be placed on the estimates for this work. The Government would then have more correct information than was at present at their command.

Dr. CHALLINOR hoped that the money already voted would be made available as soon as possible.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that as he only desired to get some definite promise from the head of the Government, he would, having effected that object, withdraw his resolutions.

The House adjourned, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, at twenty minutes past one until three o'clock on Tuesday.