

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 1865**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Friday, 8 September, 1865.*

Ministerial Explanation.—The Parliament Buildings.—  
Selectors Relief Bill (passed).—Municipal Institutions  
Bill (passed).—Distillation Bill, 2°.

## MINISTERIAL EXPLANATION.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said: Before proceeding to the business of the day, I would take the liberty of stating, in a few words, the circumstances which have occurred in the course of the day. When, a few days since, I announced that I had been appointed to the Attorney-Generalship of the colony, I, at the same time, stated that it was possible some other arrangement would finally be made, either by the re-distribution of the law offices under the Government, or in some other way. At that time it was contemplated by the Government to separate what I may call the office work of the Attorney-General, including that of grand juror, from the Crown law officer's work, and to appoint one officer to perform the first-mentioned work, with the duties of Master of Titles in the Real Property Office. A very flattering offer was made to me of the appointment, to be permanent, and with a very high salary; but, after giving the subject full and careful consideration, I came to the conclusion that I could not, under all the circumstances—and it would not be to my own interest, which, of course, every man is bound to consider—accept it, and separate myself entirely from the practice of the profession to which I have the honor to belong. I felt that I could not accept the office, and I accordingly intimated that decision to my colleagues this morning; and, thereupon, they determined not to press the motion of which notice had been given in another place by the Government. At the same time, I felt that my position at the bar of this colony is not yet sufficiently assured to entitle me to assume the post of leader of the bar, without, at the same time, incurring very great risk of losing the practice which I now hold. Under these circumstances, I felt it necessary to intimate to my colleagues and to His Excellency the Governor my intention of resigning the commission I now hold as Attorney-General. Before taking this step, I have to state, further, that the office has been offered to Mr. Lilley, and he is willing to accept it. In a few days the necessary changes will be effected. In the meantime, and until Tuesday next, when I shall have to leave, in all proba-

bility, to prosecute for the Crown at the assizes, I shall hold the Attorney-Generalship of the colony. I beg to thank the House for so patiently listening to the few words I have had to say about myself.

#### THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS.

The PRESIDENT said: Honorable gentlemen—The first notice of motion on the paper for to-day stands in my name, and I will now ask you to consent—"That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, conveying the substance of the resolution agreed to by this House, in reference to the new Houses of Parliament, on Tuesday, the 5th instant." I merely propose that we shall carry to its legitimate issue what we did on the occasion named; for, of course, it would fall dead, so far as any effect it would have is concerned, unless it were intimated to the head of the Executive of the country. This resolution, also, was, upon my motion, forwarded for the concurrence of the other branch of the Legislature. It did not seem there to have met with favor; indeed, hardly to have met with consideration of any kind. It was not of sufficient interest, it appears, even to create a discussion upon the merits of the question raised; and I am told that it has been said, and I believe it has been said, that we travelled somewhat out of our sphere of duty in interfering in the matter at all. Now, I hold the very opposite opinion on this point, and, as my opinion will not be very valuable *per se*, I shall endeavor to strengthen it by quoting to you authorities, which, I suppose, not only this House but all the world will acknowledge ought to carry some weight. A similar case to that which is under our consideration—the construction of new Houses of Parliament—was before the Parliament of Great Britain several years back; and, in the year 1835, I find that an authority, whom I believe anybody here is unable to dispute, the late and great Duke of Wellington, when the head of the Government of the day, in the House of Lords, spoke with reference to a communication which he made to the House on the subject, as follows:—

"In the communication which His Majesty had made to both Houses, His Majesty stated, that as soon as the misfortune occurred"—

the misfortune was the burning down of the old Houses of Parliament—

"he had directed arrangements to be made for the temporary accommodation of the members of both Houses; and that it would be the care of the Lords and Commons themselves to consider what would be the best means of providing for their own permanent accommodation, as that question could be best settled by themselves. The mode in which this matter was to be taken into consideration was by the appointment of committees of the two Houses."

Therefore, it was the opinion of the Government of England of that day, and of that very high authority whom I have quoted,

that the provision of the accommodation necessary for Parliament was more peculiarly and distinctly the care of the Houses of Parliament themselves. I will go on to shew, also, that it was a question which was constantly discussed in the House of Commons; that for the several years during which the buildings were being carried on, the question was an open one, and there were debates over and over again as to the site, as to the buildings, and as to many details connected with them. Here, the other House seems to believe that the matter is one of indifference; but there both Houses endeavored to have their own views carried out as well as they could command their being so done. In February, 1836, Viscount Duncannon informed their Lordships that—

"designs for the new Houses of Parliament had been sent in by various architects; and that the commissioners appointed to examine those designs had made their report to His Majesty on Thursday last, who had been pleased to confirm it, and had ordered the commissioners to confer with the architects, in order to have the plans laid before Parliament. Ninety-seven plans had been submitted to the commissioners, embracing 1,400 drawings. On the 1st of February, the commissioners had finished their report, having selected four different plans. \* \* \* \* \* He trusted that, in the course of two or three weeks, Ministers would be enabled to submit a substantive proposition on this subject to both Houses of Parliament. In the meantime, he would move for the re-appointment of the committee to which this subject had been referred last year."

And that course was proposed each session. The committee was re-appointed, and the matter was always kept under the consideration of both Houses. In the House of Commons, also, the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward a similar motion for the renewal of the committee, and there was a very long discussion, indeed, upon the question of the site. Several members spoke, some taking one side of the question and other members a different one; but the great question before them was, where should be the site. And, in 1838, that is, two years afterwards, I find a private member of the House, Colonel Davies, moving

"for the appointment of a select committee to take into consideration the most eligible site for the two Houses of Parliament;"

and a long debate ensued, the question being apparently of much interest to the House of Commons of that day. I have brought forward these instances—and I might have selected many more, had time permitted—to shew that this House have merely followed a precedent set them by the Parliament in England, who thought it a matter of great interest and importance that a proper site should be selected, and that the building of the Parliament Houses should be in accordance with their opinions. Having said so much, in order to relieve the Council and

myself—because I am culpable if I mislead them in this matter—from the charge of having gone out of our way to interfere with the new Parliament Buildings, I have done all that I think is in the present case necessary. The Council have agreed to a resolution, and the natural result of agreeing to a resolution is to communicate it to the proper authority—that is, to His Excellency the Governor.

The Hon. ST. G. R. GORE confessed he was rather surprised that anybody should have thought the Council were travelling out of their province in discussing fully any question with reference either to the site or the details of the building of the new Parliament Houses; and he thought the honorable the President was perfectly right in asserting that they had not done more than they had a right to do. On that point he most cordially agreed with him; and that a right view of the question had been taken by him was so self-evident, that the production of authorities by him was like throwing perfume on the rose. He unfortunately differed from the honorable the President on the original resolution; but the right of the House to express an opinion on the subject of it, he never thought of disputing, and no one having the slightest idea of the dignity of Parliament would doubt that right. His opinion was unchanged on the resolution; but he should offer no factious opposition to the present motion. As the House had passed a resolution, it was the natural and legitimate consequence to send it to the Governor: as the Assembly had not concurred in it, the Council ought to send it to the Governor. He did not wish to say anything now, other than by way of recording his opinion; for he knew that honorable members were not to be influenced to change their opinions. He had recently passed by the new Parliament Buildings, which were in a very advanced state, so that he could in his mind's eye fill up the whole work by what was already done; and it struck him that the effect of a long narrow front, not filled up at the back, was objectionable. That would be the case if they had the Parliament Buildings merely on the site in the Queen's Park. A large block of buildings with a quadrangle in the centre would, as regarded sightliness and an appearance of grandeur, be far preferable to the original design, which would, as seen from the end, be decidedly meagre.

The Hon. D. F. ROBERTS said he would only reiterate what he had said before—that the faith of the Government was pledged to give the land for one specific purpose—as a site on which to erect new Parliament Houses; and on that ground alone, the Council would act rightly in sending the message to the Governor. He trusted that His Excellency would be enabled to carry out the wishes of the Council, and that the land would be used

for the building of the Parliament Houses only.

The question was then put and affirmed.

#### SELECTORS RELIEF BILL

On the motion of the Honorable W. WOOD, a Bill for the relief of selectors in agricultural reserves was brought in, and there being no opposition, and by virtue of the suspension of the Standing Orders, it was passed through all its stages forthwith.

#### MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill to amend the Municipal Institutions Act of 1864. He did so, he explained, at the request of his honorable friend, Mr. Browne, who had charge of the measure. The object of the Bill was to divide the city into six wards, and to apportion to each ward two aldermen; instead of, as at present, having four wards, returning three aldermen each. The Bill had been brought forward at the request and with the concurrence of a very large number of the ratepayers of the city, and simply in deference to their wishes the Bill ought to be passed into law. He held in his hand a document which had been prepared as a petition, but being informal, it could not be laid on the table of the House; it had several hundred signatures attached to it, by persons of all classes, residing in all parts of the city, and it expressed their approval of the Bill; and their prayer was that it might pass: therefore he moved the second reading without hesitation. Those most interested in the Bill believed that at present all parts of the city did not receive a due share of the expenditure of the public money to which they were entitled; and under the operation of the Bill he hoped to secure for each ward what it ought to have. There were only six clauses in the Bill. The first enacted that six wards should be created, and that at the end of the current municipal year a fresh election should take place of the whole body of aldermen. One alderman for each ward should retire annually, and a fresh election take place. The retiring aldermen could, of course, be re-elected. The point to which he wished to draw the attention of the House was, the new provision for assessors, who were to be elected by the ratepayers. He regarded that as a valuable provision, because the valuations of the property in the city had hitherto been made at haphazard, without any data whatever upon which to assess the property; and many persons were unfairly rated, and thereby put to great expense, while with others the reverse was the case.

The Hon. W. WOOD observed that if the persons who were in favor of the Bill imagined that it would remedy all the difficulties that had arisen in the municipality of Brisbane, they were mistaken. He referred to Kangaroo Point, which, under the Bill, was made a separate ward; but it would still be

perfectly easy for that portion of the city to become a separate municipality, which it claimed to be. Although it might get a larger share of the expenditure of the corporation revenue, under the Bill, than it had before received, it would have only two aldermen to represent it in the council. It ought to be naturally allied to South Brisbane, but it was not. The eight aldermen for North Brisbane would go against Kangaroo Point, while the two aldermen for South Brisbane would go in for their own ward, and Kangaroo Point would be out-voted. But there was no reason why the Bill should not pass. A petition for the separation of Kangaroo Point had run two months, and in one month more separation would be due. He agreed with the honorable the Attorney-General that the new system of assessing the property of the city would really be very useful, and a great relief to the unfortunate ratepayers.

The question was put and affirmed; and, by virtue of the suspension of the Standing Orders, the Bill was forthwith advanced through its remaining stages and passed.

#### DISTILLATION BILL.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of "a Bill to authorise distillation by the owners of sugar mills and manufactories and makers of wine." He said he would briefly inform the House of the history of this Bill, and what had taken place with regard to it. Some short time back the Government were invited by certain gentlemen who had invested capital in sugar growing, to consider the question of giving to them facilities for distilling rum from cane the produce of their own plantations. It seemed fair to the Government, the industry being new, to encourage it in every reasonable way, as far as it could be done without injuring the revenue and other interests of the colony; and, accordingly, a Bill was prepared, framed very much upon the existing Distillation Act, except in a few particulars; and it was from the fact of the slight difference that he ventured to ask the House to go into it to-night, so shortly after it had been received from the Assembly. Four-fifths of the Bill before the House were an exact reprint of clauses in the existing law, which it was considered necessary to place in the Bill, in order that there might be the same protection to the revenue by the new law that was afforded by the existing law for distilleries of ordinary dimensions. The sugar growers who first raised the question said the Distillation Act required such peculiar buildings, and such expensive machinery, and was altogether hampered with so many restrictions, that it was almost impossible for sugar growers to set up distilleries under its provisions. At the same time, they did not ask the Government for anything further than leave to set up stills of less capacity than were now authorised by law. That

seemed fair to the Government, and there being no proposal to charge less duty to those gentlemen than would be charged to other distillers under the existing law, the Government consented to introduce a measure giving to sugar growers the liberty to put up stills of less expensive character, and less power or capacity, than were required by the existing law. Accordingly, a Bill was introduced into the Assembly—a Bill by which any man who owned a sugar mill capable of expressing or manufacturing three tons of sugar in a working day of twelve hours, was allowed to set up such a still as he pleased, although not of the capacity of those now required by law. At the same time, there was a clause in the Bill stating that the same duty as was charged on spirits imported into the colony and on spirits distilled under the present law would be levied on spirits distilled under the provisions of the Bill. During its passage through the Assembly, another question was raised by another section of sugar growers, and they had induced the Assembly to reduce the duty to two-thirds of that now imposed. The passing of that clause was a decided mistake, in his opinion. An alteration had been made in the first clause, whereby the power of sugar mills was reduced from a capacity to make three tons in twelve hours to three tons in twenty-four hours. Of course that was a reduction of half the power, and it would allow a man with a much less powerful mill than was at first contemplated, and very much cheaper machinery, to get all the benefit of the Act, contrary to the original proposition that was brought forward by the Government. Both of those amendments he would most certainly oppose, if he (the Attorney-General) were an independent member; but the Government had accepted them, and the Bill came down to the Council with them: and, as it was, he asked the House to agree to the second reading. Its provisions were now such that anyone who owned a sugar-mill capable of manufacturing three tons of sugar in twenty-four hours might distil spirits, although he should not use the utensils and still now required by law. Then there were certain provisions which were not in the existing law; but he was not required to go into the minutiae of those. He would read the clause respecting the duty to be paid by colonial distillers under the Bill:—

"There shall be paid upon all spirits distilled by persons holding licenses under this Act two-thirds of such duties of customs as are or may be from time to time payable upon spirits of the like description imported into the colony."

The result of that would be a very considerable diminution of the revenue; but, as he brought the measure forward, he should support it in its integrity. He might state that there was one further provision which was incidental to the main object of the Bill, and which allowed to sugar growers the use

of a small still for the distillation of spirits for the purpose of crystallising their own sugar, and for methylation. The distillation would take place in the presence of an officer of the customs; so that it was no great concession, and no great harm could arise from it.

The Hon. L. HOPE said he rose to oppose the Bill, for several reasons. One was, that it was a measure of too great importance to be rushed through the House at the close of the session. It was a long Bill, involving very important matters, consisting of fifty-eight clauses; and the Council could not possibly deal with its merits in the short time they had to consider it; nor did he think that the Bill was a boon to the sugar growers. It was a very ill-advised and ill-considered measure. It had been passed by the Assembly; but he should like to know how many honorable members of that House were not quite ignorant—like, no doubt, many honorable members of the Council—of distillation, and of the difficulties that would arise in the operation of the Bill? He asked his honorable friend, the Attorney-General, if there was no Distillation Act at present in force by which any person complying with the restrictions of that Act could distil?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Oh, yes.

The Hon. L. HOPE: That seemed to be the impression of many of the members of the Lower House in passing the Bill. There were many clauses in it that appeared to him, in their present shape, to require attention. He thought the qualification of sugar growers to distil was put too low. The Assembly insisted upon giving it to persons who had a manufactory capable of making three tons of sugar only in twenty-four hours; and the result of that provision would be, that any sugar grower with a few acres of cane, might very easily say that he could get through his ton and a half in twelve hours, and he would, therefore, be entitled to distil rum. The result, in his (Mr. Hope's) opinion, would be, not to encourage the production of sugar, but the distillation of rum; an operation which would be extremely demoralising in its effect, in this country especially. He thought that all distillation should be controlled by very stringent restrictions, and that it would be wise to adapt the Bill in that respect as nearly as possible to other distillation Acts. His reason for saying the qualification was fixed too low was, that the steam power which was usually put in action for sugar grinding would be well able to get through three tons of sugar in twelve hours. That he had proved by experience. He was very glad to have heard his honorable friend the Attorney-General state that he disagreed with the reduction of the duty; for he, also, thought it was an objection. With regard to the small stills which the Bill would authorise, he thought it would be found in practice that they were no

boon to the sugar growers; because he was assured that no process of distillation on such a scale would answer. It was a very serious expense to discharge and recharge a still; and the smaller the still the oftener it must be charged, at the cost of great delay and much money. The lowest size of still that would be profitable was three hundred gallons. If the distillers had to pay the same duty as was charged on imported spirits, he thought there would be no harm in keeping the stills up to five hundred gallons, and that would be a great boon to sugar growers. He did not think there was any necessity for reducing the duty, because it was of such importance to persons who could not granulate their sugar to be able to distil, that that in itself would be a boon, without any reduction of duty. The license fee of twenty-five pounds was merely a nominal thing. The penalties ought, he thought, to be fixed as high as possible. He was in conversation the other day with a person who was conversant with distillation, and who maintained that he would be glad to pay the fine if he could only sell twelve hundred gallons of spirits. No doubt a clause involving imprisonment would be much more severe on capitalists than any which merely imposed the payment of a fine: it would be in the discretion of the court to award either. He thought it advisable to state his objections to the Bill, because he believed an understanding existed that some of his suggestions were embodied in it, and that he had assisted in bringing it forward. He would be very glad to see some assistance given by the Government to sugar growers here, consistent with the security of the revenue, which should not be injured for a special interest. He did not think, if it were passed, the Bill would do any harm, in consequence of the limited extent of the sugar growing interest in the colony; but if thrown out, it would not, he believed, delay the investment of capital. If the House and the Government made it plain that they wished to offer no obstruction to sugar growing, it might stand over till next session. Honorable members would then have an opportunity of reconsidering it, and of informing themselves on the subject of distillation, which was not understood here; and they would be better able to pass a Bill better fitted for advancing the prosperity of the country than they were at the present time. He did not wish to be understood as offering any obstruction to the enterprise of sugar growers; for, in fact, he would give a great deal more to them than the Bill did, but he would oppose it at every stage.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, as the honorable member, Mr. Hope, had referred to him touching the state of the law of distillation, he would inform him that the Act now in force provided that distillers should carry on their business in such places only as the Governor should appoint, or direct, by proclamation; and in any place so named,

any person who set up a still, must erect such premises as the Act required, before he would be allowed to distil spirits. He presumed that the fact of the Governor having to name the place where distillation should be carried on, led to the misunderstanding to which his honorable friend had alluded.

The Hon. W. LANDSBOROUGH observed that, as the Honorable Captain Hope said that no harm could arise from passing the measure, he could hardly see why that honorable gentleman should oppose it. The colonists were eager for sugar growing, and anxious that it should succeed; and he should be sorry to see the Bill thrown out. Great hopes were entertained that much capital would ultimately be invested in it, and it would be a disappointment to many, if the Bill should not become law. Many persons were on their way to the colony, and many here already, with capital to invest in the undertaking; and the Bill, doubtless, had for its object the facilitating of the progress of such men as much as possible. Besides, it gave power to put up small stills in wine growing districts, which had proved very successful in New South Wales. He had no apprehension of smuggling, because all distillation must be carried on contiguous to the seaboard, and it was very difficult, as a rule, to keep secrets in Australia; in fact, stills could not be kept in Queensland, without the knowledge of Government.

The Hon. W. WOOD said he did not mean to oppose the second reading of the Bill, but he must say that he felt justified in his view, that the Council should not hastily pass it. The Bill had only this day came down from the Assembly. Since they had the advantage of hearing the opinion of one of the largest sugar growers in the colony, it appeared doubtful whether the measure was one that would be of benefit to the colony; but he would not, therefore, oppose it, because, on the authority of the Honorable Mr. Hope, if passed, it would not do much harm. On a future day, they could go into committee upon it, and with deliberate consideration, find out what amendments the honorable member was disposed to make, and if they were such as the honorable the Attorney-General would accept; and they would endeavor to make it, not a harmless measure, but a truly useful one. If persons carried out the manufacture of sugar in the only way that could be satisfactory to themselves and the colony, the granulation process would be perfected, and they would not require to distil. He (Mr. Wood) thought that the honorable member who spoke last was in error: for although this was a large country, there were many secret places where illicit distillation might be carried on. He would point out to him that there were many countries where there was a very much larger population than in Queensland, where secret stills existed, and illicit distil-

lation was carried on to a great extent. With regard to the duty proposed on colonial spirits, he believed that there was a sort of compromise to accept eight shillings; and there was no doubt whatever that all the supporters of the Bill were prepared, at any future time, in case they found that the customs authorities could not deal with it, to accept any fair alteration of the measure that would, while giving them a slight modicum of protection against foreign spirits, at the same time prevent illicit distillation. He was opposed to protection, if it were gone in for on a large scale; but on a small scale it might be of some advantage. He trusted that his honorable friend, Captain Hope, would not view the Bill entirely with disfavor. There might be cases in which, owing to the want of proper machinery, the extract from the canes might be injured by exposure to the atmosphere whilst awaiting the process of granulation, and the sugar growers would be at a dead loss, if not allowed to distil. There were several clauses in the Bill which he could hardly understand; and he could not tell why those referring to the makers of wine should be taken out of the old Act and inserted in the Bill. He hoped the honorable the Attorney-General did not contemplate putting the Bill into committee this evening; for he should be obliged to oppose its going through more than one stage on the present occasion.

The Hon. ST. G. R. GORE said he possessed no information on the subject under consideration, never having seen the process of distillation or the manufacture of sugar; but he objected to the Bill on principle. He thought that the closer the House adhered to the well-received laws of political economy, and the less they inclined to favor any particular interest, the nearer they would be to according equal justice to all interests. It would be found that any attempt to give what was called protection to any particular industry, would result, not in the encouragement of that industry, but in very unpleasant consequences. He instanced the protection given to the production of cotton, as a very strong case in point. No doubt, with the best intentions in the world, considerable encouragement was given to the production of cotton; yet, as he understood, cotton would not pay after all. At the same time, as the Government had accepted this Bill, and as a very large and influential section of the community was in favor of it, he could hardly oppose it, more particularly as, on the testimony of his honorable friend Captain Hope, if it would not do much good it could do no harm. That honorable member was an authority on the subject.

The PRESIDENT said he desired to offer a few observations on the question, inasmuch as it seemed to him one likely to be of considerable importance to the colony generally. He took it that this Bill had been introduced to encourage what he hoped would be a new

industry in this colony—an industry promoted very largely, and he might almost say initiated, by the honorable member who had spoken early in the debate, his honorable friend Captain Hope. So far as he could understand the feeling out of doors, there were numbers of persons desirous of investing their capital in this colony in the cultivation of sugar, who had been led to that investment very much by the example which had been set them by the honorable member to whom he had previously alluded. There could be no doubt that if the experiment which his honorable friend had initiated should prove a successful one, it would be of very great importance to the country. The consumption of sugar was so large, and the cost of its importation so great, and the consequent export of capital was so injurious to the community, that it could not but be apparent to every one that it was most desirable to encourage the production of such a valuable commodity within the borders of this colony. It was probable, also, that Queensland was the only one of the Australian colonies, as now constituted, likely to be successful in this respect. We might not only command the home market, but also that of the neighboring colonies. From what little he knew about the question, he believed that the produce of a sugar plantation would not be remunerative unless distillation from the refuse were allowed;—by refuse he meant that produce which was not convertible into marketable sugar. He understood that in the West Indian colonies, and in other countries where the production of sugar had been many years carried on, the distillation of rum went very largely, if not entirely, towards the payment of the expenses of the plantation. It therefore would be an item of serious consideration in the calculations of persons about to invest their capital in this colony, that there should be no legal prohibition against their turning the produce of their lands to a profitable purpose; that was to say, they should not only be enabled to make sugar, but they should be at liberty to convert the molasses—the juice that was not capable of being granulated—into a valuable and marketable commodity in the shape of spirits. He did not see why rum also should not become an exportable product. It was one which had value in all the markets of the world, and it was one that might become comparatively as valuable a product to the country as sugar itself. So far as he understood the scope of the Bill, it was merely to legalise distillation. It might be that the details were faulty; and he quite agreed in the view which his honorable friend Captain Hope had taken, while he deprecated strongly the placing of such an important Bill before the House at this late and inconvenient period of the session. They could not possibly take all the details of the measure into careful consideration; they could but

accept its spirit. At least, if he were to give a vote on it, he should guard himself strictly by saying that he merely accepted the general principle of the measure. Of its details, it was quite impossible that he could at this juncture, and in the time allowed for their consideration, express much approbation. Nevertheless, he apprehended that, should the Council refuse to pass the Bill, it might be considered that they thought the protection of the revenue, so far as a duty on spirits was concerned, a sufficient reason for refusing to allow the distillation of spirits from sugar in all cases. From what had been said, he knew, and all honorable members who were present knew, that such was not the nature of the objections which honorable members had to the Bill; but it seemed to him, that it would go abroad that the House had refused to allow the distillation of rum from sugar, inasmuch as they believed that that action would be injurious to the colonial revenue. From what had been already said, he thought the House might be convinced that should the measure pass into law, no immediate bad effects would follow therefrom. The production of sugar was not sufficiently large, the breadth of land yet under canes was not extensive enough, to admit of any evil effects from the passing of such a measure. It was not possible, before another session of Parliament would be convened, that any such injury could accrue to the revenue as should lead the Council to pause in the adoption of what he thought, from the general spirit of the Bill before them, might be of use. He was sure that the House intended that, if the new industry of sugar growing could be established—if it could be proved that the colony was capable of growing sugar profitably—it should be encouraged; and that they would not oppose the economical turning of all the products of the sugar-cane to the utmost value. He was sure that the Legislature of this country would allow—under such terms as might eventually be approved of—not only the cultivation of sugar, but, also, to an extent that should not interfere with the revenue, the distillation of rum, upon terms which, after consideration, might eventually be approved of. He was personally desirous that this Bill should pass into law—merely as denoting that, on the broad view of the question, the Legislature was inclined to give every encouragement to this particular branch of industry, if it could be established. It had been said by his honorable friend, Mr. Gore, that they had been unsuccessful in encouraging the cultivation of cotton. He hoped that that industry would, in the future, be a successful one for Queensland, though at the present moment it did not seem to be so. And although the revenue had been to some extent taxed in the attempt to nurse it, he did not regret that the attempt had been made; because, had it been successful, it would have been a matter of very great



importance to the colony. The cultivation of sugar was undergoing a similar trial. The colony might be successful, or it might not, in establishing it as a permanent industry ; but he thought, at the present stage, that the House should give it all the assistance possible, and for that reason he was inclined to support the present measure : for its rejection would be throwing a damp on the desire which they were told now existed on the part of capitalists in other countries of the world to invest their wealth within the borders of Queensland.

The question was then put and agreed to, and the Bill was read a second time.

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