

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 1876

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 21 September, 1876.

Privilege.—Labor at Maryborough.—Cattle Slaughtering
Act Amendment Bill.—New Member.—Privilege.—
Railway Survey.—Adjournment.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. WALSH said he rose on a question of privilege. The House had relegated to a Select Committee certain inquiries into the expenditure upon the Brisbane and Ipswich Railway, and, in accordance with their resolution, the committee met on Tuesday last, and took evidence. The inquiry was adjourned until to-day, and when the members of the committee assembled, they found they were

unable to proceed with the business, because the Government Printing Office had not furnished the Shorthand Writer, for the members of the committee, with reports of the evidence taken on the previous occasion. It was the first time within his experience that the Government Printing Office had been able to interrupt the working of a Select Committee in such a manner, and he thought it was his duty to call the attention of that member of the Government who presided over the department to the fact, so that such an occurrence might not happen again. He might add that the committee had interrogated the Shorthand Writer during the morning, thinking it might have been his fault, but that officer said he furnished his report on the evening of the day on which the evidence was taken, and sent it to the printing office, and the evidence was not of that voluminous character that justified any such delay as had taken place.

The SPEAKER: With reference to this question of privilege, I have only to remark that I have heard of the matter for the first time since I came into the House, and I can say no further now than that I will call upon the Government Printer for an explanation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had just made inquiries on the subject of the Government Printer, who at once denied that the delay had arisen from any wish, or knowledge of any intention, to obstruct the business of the committee. It seemed that there was, at the present time, a double staff at the Government Printing Office, working night and day, and all work was being got through as fast as possible. He was informed that the Government Printer had no intimation that this report was wanted so soon as it was, and he, consequently, went on with the work in the usual manner, taking it as it came in succession to the office. The honorable member for Warrego told him (the Colonial Secretary) a few minutes ago that he intended to bring the matter forward, and he had meanwhile had an opportunity of interrogating the Government Printer, who had informed him of the facts he had now given the House.

Mr. McILWRAITH said the Colonial Secretary seemed to shift the blame upon the shorthand writer, but as far as his (Mr. McIlwraith's) Financial Committee was concerned the shorthand writers were certainly not to blame. The delay in delivering the printed reports to the members of his committee had had a considerable effect in blocking their business, and he was satisfied that the explanation just given that the Shorthand Writers were to blame was not a proper one. As to the Government Printer not knowing that the evidence was wanted, the statement was absurd. It was the duty of the Shorthand Writer, and no doubt he had performed it, to intimate the time when the work was wanted; else the operations of every committee would be stopped. The Colonial Secretary, in his explanation, said that the Government

Printer, not knowing when the evidence would be required, went on with the work of the office in the ordinary course. The ordinary course was to have the evidence given before committees printed by the next sitting, and no doubt the Shorthand Writer duly communicated this to the printer. Further, he did not see why there should be such an immense pressure on the Government Printing Office. The evidence given before committees was the most important work the Government Printer had at the present time, as any honorable member might know when he saw the few pages of which the last number of "Hansard" consisted. Next in importance to "Hansard," came, of course, the committee work, and that should always be attended to as soon as "Hansard" was out of the way; the fact that the last number of "Hansard" was so small was an additional reason why the business of the committee should not be blocked through any delay.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY repeated that the Government Printer had informed him that no instructions were given upon this particular report as to when the committee would next meet, and that the work of the office was proceeded with in the usual way.

MR. McLEAN said it was very easy to exonerate the Shorthand Writer because there was one copy of the evidence sent to him, and the committee felt that if a copy was sent to him one should have been sent to every member of the committee. It was clearly, therefore, not the reporter's fault; the thing complained of was, that while a copy of the report was sent to the shorthand writer the members of the committee received none. Their time was very precious, and they had, he thought, just reason to complain when they spent five or six hours daily in the House, and then went into the committee room only to find the work obstructed, simply because the Government Printer had not furnished the evidence of the previous sitting. In his opinion this was a circumstance that called for the special attention of the House.

The SPEAKER: I may inform the House that last night, when the House was in committee, the Premier told me it was the wish of the committee that a report should be taken of the debate upon the Land Bill, and I gave instructions to the Parliamentary Reporters that the report should be prepared, not in full, but in epitome, of the proceedings in committee. I did this under the impression that this was the general wish of the House; but I must call the attention of the House to the fact that, if the report in committee is taken, it will very much absorb the time of the shorthand writers and Government Printer, and, as the report will be but an epitome, its accuracy may be called in question.

MR. PALMER said the Premier must have altogether misunderstood the opinions of the committee, last night, when he carried his information to the Premier. He (Mr. Palmer)

never heard a single wish expressed, except one by the honorable member for Toowoomba, that the debate should be reported in committee, and he considered it was utterly absurd to begin reporting a debate in the middle of it. All the important speeches were made in the early part of the proceedings, and, as to the recent speeches, legal or otherwise, it certainly did not matter whether they were reported at all or not. What business had the Premier to say that it was the wish of the House? It was nothing of the kind. There was not an expression of opinion from any party in the House that last night's debate should be reported. Such a thing was never heard of as a report beginning in the middle: it would be like a pig with one ear, and he did hope that the Speaker would give instructions that the report should not be taken. It would be perfectly absurd.

The PREMIER said he understood it was the wish of the House that the Land Bill should be reported in committee.

MR. PALMER: Nonsense.

The PREMIER said that, at any rate when the honorable member for Toowoomba addressed the committee on the subject, his remarks were cheered, and notably by the honorable member for Warrego.

MR. WALSH: Hear, hear.

The PREMIER said he would point out that it had been the practice in the past to have an epitome of all important debates like the Land Bill in committee. They had now only got through about one-third of the clauses, and it would be no loss to the country, even if an epitome were given. He certainly understood when he spoke to the Speaker, that it was the wish of the committee that the proceedings in connection with this important measure, one of the most important measures of the session, should be summarised in "Hansard," or that some kind of epitome should be given. Honorable members would notice that last week's debate occupied a very small space in "Hansard," and he thought it would be profitably occupying the Shorthand Writers to give them this work to do, and the country would, at the same time, receive some valuable information.

MR. BUTZCOTT said the Premier would be adopting a more correct course if he had made this proposition at the beginning, but it was absurd, when the most important provision of the Land Bill was disposed of, that he should ask the Speaker to give instructions to have the proceedings of the committee reported. He joined the honorable member for Port Curtis in hoping that the order given to the Shorthand Writers would be withdrawn.

MR. J. SCOTT said that what the honorable member for Toowoomba wished was, that a note had been taken of the legal opinions expressed during the debate in committee, and a record of which might have been of use hereafter.

Mr. THOMPSON : They were not paid for.

Mr. SCOTT said that no doubt, as the honorable member for Bremer said, these opinions were not paid for; but some weight should be attached to the utterances of the Attorney-General which carried weight at the time, and were quite valuable enough to be worth preserving.

The PREMIER wished to say that he called particular attention to the legal opinions expressed, and requested that they should be reported fully.

Mr. THOMPSON said it was to be hoped that the Premier would make no such request. What right had the Premier to single out the lawyers, or any particular class, for such a distinction? For himself, he (Mr. Thompson) did not wish to be reported more fully than anyone else.

Mr. BELL altogether objected to the Land Bill being reported now that it had gone so far through committee. The report would only have the effect of misleading those who thought proper to read it; and he hoped the Speaker would promise that it should not be done, since it was evidently not the wish of the House. If this was not promised, it would be necessary for some one to give notice in order that the report should not be printed.

Mr. GROOM said when he brought forward the subject on the previous evening, he had no idea that it would give rise to a discussion. What he said was, that the opinions of the legal members were of value. The honorable member for Springsure asked what was the opinion of the Attorney-General as to the construction of a certain clause, and that opinion was given. Honorable members who had seen the investigations under the Land Act of 1868 by commissioners, would know how necessary it was to have a clear interpretation of the law. When legal gentlemen drew the attention of those commissioners to what was the intention of the Legislature, they would say they did not care about intention; all they wished was, to act upon the bare instructions. It must be clear to honorable members that if the intention of the legislature in a complicated Act like this was not to be regarded, it was the duty of the Government to make the Act so plain that a child could understand it. If this was not done, the Act would be construed as it already had been, in half-a-dozen different ways, by half-a-dozen different people, while the Land Minister himself might put a construction of his own upon it. Whether the Attorney-General's opinion was or was not of value to honorable members opposite, it was valuable outside, and he had seen judges of the land pay attention to it. He did not see why, if honorable gentlemen were desirous the Attorney-General's opinion should be taken as to the meaning of the different clauses, particularly as to the administration of the Land Act in country districts, it should not be so taken for reference hereafter. He himself should like to have the Attorney-General's

opinion as he gave it in the committee, and he should like to know what was the use of having an increased parliamentary staff if "Hansard" was not to be a record of the proceedings of the House. The New Zealand "Hansard" was considered to be one of the best in the colonies, and in it the proceedings of committees were reported in a condensed form, making "Hansard" a most admirable volume of parliamentary intelligence. He did not say the speeches of honorable members should be reported *verbatim*; but there ought to be a condensed report, a record of all that took place, that might be taken as a guide for future reference.

Mr. PALMER said he did not object to the proceedings in committee being reported, for he quite agreed with the honorable member for Toowoomba that debates of any importance should be reported in committee; but he strongly objected to half a report, and he strongly objected to it being ordered on the representation that it was the wish of the House, when it was nothing of the kind. He again hoped the Speaker would not allow the proceedings, now that the committee had half disposed of the Bill, to be reported.

Mr. McILWRAITH said he did not know on what grounds the Premier intimated to the Speaker that the committee wished the debate to be reported henceforth. The proposal was condemned by the leader of the Opposition, it was spoken against by the honorable the Minister for Lands who also strongly condemned it, and no other Minister spoke upon the subject. The only honorable member who spoke on the question was the honorable member for Warrego, and it was, therefore, but fair to assume that if there was any expression of opinion at all, it was strongly in favor of not reporting. It was a most unbusiness-like thing to commence to report a debate in the middle, and it would help to form a block in the printing department. There was a very easy way of knowing the wishes of the committee, and that was by putting the question to the House, and so eliciting their opinion.

The SPEAKER : The practice, I am told, has been to report debates in committee when the subject was thought to be of sufficient importance. In this instance I acted according to what I considered to be the wish of the House; but since it appears that I was in error in arriving at that conclusion, I shall give instructions that these particular proceedings shall not be reported. Of course, if it is desired by the House that any alteration should be made in the practice hitherto followed, notice of motion should be given, and the question decided in the usual way.

Mr. WALSH hoped that, for the future, evidence given before Select Committees would be supplied to every member before the next meeting. He did not at all agree with the course taken by the Premier; neither the Premier nor any other individual in the House had a right to interfere with or

direct the Speaker as to the course he should pursue. It was quite unheard of. When the House wanted anything done it should be through the Speaker.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

LABOR AT MARYBOROUGH.

Mr. IVORY wished to ask the Colonial Secretary, without notice, whether the following telegram in the *Telegraph* newspaper was correct:—

“White labor, both male and female, is very scarce, and an application has been made to the Government to send up a number of the recent arrivals by the ship ‘Queen of the Nations.’”

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The only information I have received on the subject is a communication from the Immigration Agent at Maryborough, stating that he can take from twenty to thirty single women, but no men.

CATTLE SLAUGHTERING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. MACDONALD said that in rising to move the second reading of the Bill, he intended to be very brief in the remarks he had to make. The Bill had been printed for some time, and thus honorable members had had ample opportunities of making themselves acquainted with its provisions. He did not apprehend that there would be any serious objections to it, and if, as probably was the case, honorable members had some amendments to make in the Act, he should be very glad if they would do so when the present Bill was in committee. The Act which the Bill was intended to amend was passed by the New South Wales legislature in 1851, at which time there were no meat-preserving companies, but only boiling-down establishments in various parts of the colony; and it was with a view to give the latter greater facilities, that clauses 19 and 20 were introduced into it. Previous to the passing of that Act, any persons wishing to slaughter cattle for sale were compelled to give notice to the inspector of slaughter-houses, and the inspector, who was generally a member of the police force, was required to be present at the slaughtering establishments to take down and keep an account of the brands of the beasts slaughtered. That plan answered very well so long as there were only a small number of cattle to be slaughtered, but when they were to be killed by hundreds every day, for the purpose of boiling down, it was found that it was impracticable, as one man would be required to devote the whole of his time to visiting each of those establishments. Another thing was, that it was not considered to be sufficient protection to the public, because, if the inspector's duties were not strictly carried out, a large number of cattle might be slaughtered at those places without the knowledge of their owners. To meet the objections he had mentioned, clauses 19 and 20 were inserted

in the Act; the provisions were very strict, and gave much greater protection to the public than hurried visits of an inspector could do. If meat-preserving establishments had been in existence at that time, there was no doubt they would have been brought within the scope of the Act. Until recently, however, those establishments were worked under that Act; but about two months ago, a case was heard in the Police Court at Rockhampton, and after careful consideration, and after obtaining the opinion of the Crown Solicitor, the bench of magistrates decided that meat-preserving companies did not come within the meaning of the Act. It was at the request of several persons that he had been induced to bring forward the Bill now before the House, and he hoped there would be no objection to it. He moved—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that the Government had no objection to the principle of the Bill which was to bring meat-preserving establishments under the Slaughtering Act of 1851; he believed that many companies had, hitherto, been exempted, as no attempt had been made to bring them within the meaning of the Act. The Bill might be amended in committee in some matters of detail, but so far as the Government were concerned, no opposition would be shown to the second reading.

Mr. EDMONDSTONE thought that there should be a thorough revision of the Slaughtering Act of this colony. There was no doubt that the legislature of New South Wales, when passing the Act for the inspection of boiling-down establishments did not make any charge for slaughtering, because the squatters, at that time, slaughtered their own stock; but at the present time matters were altered, as the stock, instead of being boiled down by the squatter, were driven through the country to meat-preserving and salting-down establishments. It was only right, therefore, that the parties engaged in meat-preserving should pay the cost of inspection which was necessary for public protection; it was probable that the charge might be reduced, but he thought one uniform charge should be made. The necessity of protecting the public from illegal slaughtering was not so great as it was before the Brands Act was passed; but he knew that stock had been boiled down without the knowledge of the owners. He should not oppose the Bill, as he thought meat-preserving establishments should be inspected whatever the charge made might be, and he considered that all stock slaughtered in any establishment should be inspected, and a register of such stock kept.

Mr. PALMER said, that so far as he knew, there was no objection to the principle of the Bill, but he thought it would be necessary to make some slight amendments in it when it was in committee.

Mr. J. SCOTT thought there should be some alteration in the wording; the Bill said that—

“After the passing of this Act such exemption as aforesaid shall extend to and include the proprietors of all establishments for the preservation of meat for sale or for exportation by whatsoever process such meat may be preserved or prepared.”

Any man might say it was for sale, and any man in the bush might say that he was slaughtering meat for preservation or for sale if he was caught in the act of slaughtering.

Mr. WALSH thought that the passing of the Bill might be attended with some danger, as nearly every butcher could avail himself of the provisions of it, and claim exemption; in fact, every butcher in the town of Brisbane was an exporter of meat or tallow, and therefore could claim to be brought under the Bill; for that reason he thought the Bill did not sufficiently define what was really wanted.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that all that was intended was to give the same privileges to those establishments which did not salt meat as to those which did; at the same time there might be some doubt from the way in which the clause was worded, and, therefore, when the Bill was in committee it would be as well to see that a form of expression was used to prevent the Bill being availed of by persons for whom it was not intended.

Mr. STEVENSON said he felt very much inclined to support the Bill introduced by the honorable member for Blackall, but he thought that honorable member had been very unhappy in the wording of it. It seemed to him a very great hardship that meat-preservers should have to pay this charge, but still he thought he should support the Bill.

Mr. HALY said, unless the honorable the Attorney-General watched this Bill very closely, as it passed through committee, it would lead to a great deal of slaughtering by persons who were not at all particular, as long as they got cattle to kill, to whom they belonged. It would leave a wide door open for cattle-stealing, which could be carried on in such a way that there would be very little chance of detecting it.

Question put and passed.

NEW MEMBER.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that the writ for the electoral district of Burke has been returned to me this day, certifying that Patrick O'Sullivan, Esquire, has been chosen for that electorate to serve as a member in the Legislature of Queensland.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, having taken the oath and subscribed the roll, took his seat, as the representative of Burke.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. McILWRAITH (on the House re-assembling at 7 o'clock) said he wished to say a few words with reference to the question of

privilege raised by the honorable member for Warrego at a previous period of the sitting. In reply to some remarks from the honorable the Colonial Secretary, he (Mr. McILWRAITH) was led to reflect upon the Government Printer as being the cause of the delay in supplying the Financial Committee with reports of the evidence taken at the last meeting. From evidence since brought before him by the Shorthand Writer himself, he had to acknowledge that he was wrong, and that the Government Printer was not responsible. He, therefore, wished to withdraw what he said. He understood, from the Shorthand Writer, that the delay occurred with himself, and that the Government Printer got out the report in the most expeditious manner possible.

Mr. WALSH said that, in justice to the Shorthand Reporter of the Railway Committee, he felt bound to say that he distinctly stated that the mistake did not occur with him but with the printing office. He sent in the report of the day's evidence during Tuesday evening. What the honorable member for Maranoa said was no doubt correct respecting his own committee; but, so far as the Railway Committee was concerned, the delay rested with the Printing Department.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY could only say that he had spoken from information given to him by the Government Printer himself, but it was done on the moment, as there was no time to refer to the office. Since then further inquiries had been made, and he could give a more detailed reply to the honorable member for Warrego. The Government Printer informed him that the report of the committee to which he referred was brought up this morning to the room of Mr. Jones, the Shorthand Writer, and his door being closed the messenger left it in the room of Mr. Senior, the Principal Shorthand Writer. The fault therefore did not lie at all with the Government Printer, but if there was fault, it must lie with the Shorthand Writers. It had evidently been more a mistake than anything else, and no one seemed to be seriously to blame.

Mr. WALSH said he did not intend to fix the blame upon the Government Printer; at the same time he would not allow any unfair blame to rest with the Shorthand Writer. The Shorthand Writer might have got his report; indeed they knew that he did get it. What the committee complained of was, that they did not get their reports at the same time. He did not wish to fix any blame at all upon the Government Printer, but he wished, if he could do so, to induce the Speaker to get the Government Printer to understand that when he had work to perform for the Select Committee he should do so with all alacrity, and should, especially, prevent any hindrance to the business of the committee. Whatever explanations, or information, might be given by the Colonial Secretary, he could not alter the assertion, that the members of the Select Committee

ought to have received their reports yesterday. The fact that a single copy was sent to the Shorthand Writer was a proof that other copies might have been sent to the members of the committee.

Mr. BUZACOTT said, so far as he could see, there was no fair cause of complaint against either the Shorthand Writer or the Government Printer. One of the Shorthand staff he was perfectly aware had been indisposed for two or three days, and he had probably, in consequence, been unable to get his work done with the usual expedition. He believed, moreover, that had instructions been sent to the Government Printing Office, signifying that the evidence was required at any particular time, they would have been promptly attended to. There was a great deal of work at the Government Printing Office at the present time, and he knew the Government Printer found it very hard to meet all the demands made upon him.

The SPEAKER: I can only say, as I have said before, that I will ask the Government Printer for an explanation of the delay which has occurred, and I think it is premature to discuss the matter further.

HONORABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

RAILWAY SURVEY.

On the motion of Mr. PETTIGREW—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider an Address to the Governor, relative to surveying lines of railway from Walloon to the Burnett, also from Ipswich to Fassifern, as feeders to the Southern and Western Railway.

Mr. WALSH said he must strongly protest against money being squandered as it had been during the evening. The sham opposition of the Government to the numerous proposals that had been made could not be too much reprehended. The Treasurer ought to be allowed to see whether he could supply funds for all this extravagance; simply because a thing was proposed by a member on the other side of the House, he did not see why they should rush into committee and commit the House to further expenditure. He would have no objection if the honorable member for Stanley could make out a good case at the proper time; but after the manner in which the Government had, during the evening, allowed the money to be frittered away, the House could not be in a proper mood to go into committee on a question of this description. The finances of the colony were not in such a state that they should go further into matters involving the expenditure of the money of the people. They had better adjourn and have time for reflection, and allow the honorable the Treasurer time to prepare a statement of the finances, as they stood with the extravagant expenditure that was now taking place.

Mr. PALMER thought this motion required a great deal of argument. It would be

necessary to bring forward some very good reasons in favor of lines as feeders to the main line of railway, before the House should consent to the motion. This question of feeders had now come before the House for the first time; it would require a great deal of consideration, and he did not think that late hour was the proper time to bring it forward. They had sat late every night this week, beyond their usual hour, and he thought it was high time they now adjourned. He did not say he should oppose the motion, but he should require good reasons before he voted for it. He should recommend the honorable the Premier to move the adjournment of the House; it would be much more satisfactory to all parties, because, as he said before, this was a new question, not at all like that of the survey of main lines of railway.

Mr. THOMPSON said it must be remembered that this motion was only asking for money to make a railway survey with a view to future action. It did not pledge the House to make these railways or feeders to the main line, but simply asked the House to authorise a survey, which authority, according to the present law, was necessary before a survey could be made. He believed that a rough survey had been made along the Fassifern line, and was already in existence; and he did not see why this preliminary step should not be taken so as to prevent the land from being alienated along the course of this proposed line. That a railway would go in that direction, some day, he had no doubt; and the brother of the honorable member for Stanley had instituted a cheap system of tramways—a specimen of which could be seen only a few hundred yards from the House—which would cost very little, certainly less than macadamised roads, and he could not understand the House objecting to these surveys being made.

The PREMIER said, in reply to the honorable member for Port Curtis, he might say the usual practice had been to adjourn at ten o'clock, and he thought there was plenty of time, yet, to dispose of this question before that hour. He had no doubt, in committee, the honorable member for Stanley would give good reasons why feeders should be attached to the Southern and Western Railway, and he did not see why they should not at once go into committee and get those reasons. The other day, they passed the survey of a line from Oxley to Tullebudgera, in the southern part of the colony, which was, also, to be a feeder to that main line.

Mr. McLEAN: That is a main line.

Mr. GROOM: It will join the New South Wales line.

The PREMIER said the other line might join the New South Wales line too; but at all events the surveys might be effected at a very cheap price, and he did not see why there should be any objection to their being made. It did not pledge the Government to

make the railways, but merely surveys; and he thought the honorable member for Port Curtis did not object to surveys being made in places where it was likely there would be railways in the future.

Mr. PALMER: I object to going on with the question at this hour.

Mr. PETTIGREW said he had no wish to press the motion to-night, if it were the wish of the House that the discussion should not take place on this occasion; and if it was placed first on the paper for next Thursday, he was quite prepared to let it stand over. He might state that he had no reason, notwithstanding what the honorable member for Logan had said—

Mr. WALSH rose to a point of order. He thought the honorable member was not in a position to move the motion he now proposed to move, having already spoken. It was important that they should preserve the rules of the House. Any other honorable member could move that this matter be adjourned, but it was not competent for the honorable member for Stanley to do so, having already spoken on the question.

Mr. PETTIGREW said he should like to say a few words—

The SPEAKER: The honorable member for Stanley has already addressed the House, and therefore he has no right to reply on this motion, and he cannot, himself, move an amendment, but it is open to any other honorable member to move an amendment, that the consideration of this Order of the Day be postponed to a future day.

Mr. BELL said, rising to the question of privilege, he thought when an honorable member asked permission to make a short statement to facilitate the business of the House, it was usual to allow a short speech to be made, but not on the general merits of the question. If the honorable member was allowed to do that, he had no doubt it would tend very much to shorten the debate.

The SPEAKER: It may be done by the consent of the House—that is, the unanimous consent.

Mr. GROOM said, to give the honorable member for Stanley an opportunity of making an explanation, he moved—

That this Order of the Day stand an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

Mr. PETTIGREW said he had no objection to letting the motion stand over; in fact he believed it would be more satisfactory if the question came on for consideration earlier in the evening, because he should like to point out in connection with this matter that it was possible to make lines of railway at a very much cheaper rate than they were doing at the present time. There were large—

Mr. BELL rose to a point of order. He said the honorable member was speaking to the merits of the question, and he submitted he was not in order in doing so; he should

confine himself to the question of postponing the Order of the Day.

Mr. PETTIGREW said, under those circumstances it was better to adjourn the motion.

The motion was accordingly adjourned until Thursday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER moved—

That this House do now adjourn.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved—

That the question be amended by the addition, at the end thereof, of the words "until Monday next."

Mr. THOMPSON said he wished to ask the honorable the Minister for Lands whether he would take the Land Bill on Tuesday next? It was the opinion of several members on that side of the House that if he brought it forward on that day they would give him their assistance to get it through that night. Of course no pledge could be given as to a certain hour.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS said he was much obliged to the honorable member for the information, and he should be only too glad to fall in with whatever suited the convenience of the House. He hoped they should finish the Land Bill on Tuesday, and on Wednesday he proposed taking the Railway Reserves Bill.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added,—put and passed.

The question, as so amended, was then put and passed, and the House accordingly adjourned.