

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 1879

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 18 September, 1879.

Question.—Western Railway Act and Railway Reserves Act Amendment Bill—third reading.—Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-mer Fishery Bill—third reading.—Motion for Adjournment.—Rockhampton to Gladstone Railway.—Railway—Cometville to Spring-sure.—Fortitude Valley Additional Member Bill.—Railway Survey—Miles to Westwood.—Point of Order.—Sale of Ruins in Settled Districts.—Compensation to A. M. Hutchinson.—Sunday Trains.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTION.

Mr. KATES asked the Premier—

1. How, and to what amount, are the Government Savings Bank Deposits secured?

2. Whether the Debentures lodged with the Government Bank, and held on account of Sinking Fund, are transferable by delivery, or whether they, for safer custody, bear an endorsement similar to those held by the Savings Bank?

The PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith) replied—

1. The Government Savings Bank deposits are secured in full on the Consolidated Revenue of the colony.

2. Debentures held on account of the Sinking Fund are transferable by delivery, and bear no endorsement.

WESTERN RAILWAY ACT AND RAILWAY RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

PEARL-SHELL AND BECHE-DE-MER FISHERY BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr Palmer), this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. DICKSON moved the adjournment of the House, and, in doing so, said that his attention had been directed to a paragraph in the *Courier* of that morning which, as they were approaching the end of the session, he was constrained to take notice of. It referred to the Supplementary Estimates they had voted the previous evening, and was as follows:—

“In a few words of introduction to the summary of Supplementary Estimates, published by us yesterday, we did the Ministry, we regret to say, some injustice, though unintentionally. The Premier, it appears, did not say that there would be no Supplementary Estimates this session, but that they would be small; and we are assured that the Government have sanctioned so little supplementary expenditure that they do not consider it necessary to bring in Supplementary Estimates for this year. It appears that the Estimates tabled on Tuesday evening were the Supplementary Estimates for 1878-9, the greater part of which was for amounts expended before the present Government took office. The expenditure belongs entirely to the financial year ending June last, and over a very small portion only of which the Ministry now in office had any control.”

That appeared to be an inspired paragraph, and in that light he took notice of it. As one member of the House who had had something to do with the expenditure of the late Government, he gave the two latter sentences an unqualified contradiction. The Supplementary Estimates they passed yesterday evening amounted, together with schedules, to £99,795; of this sum £14,503 was authorised by the late Government under Executive authority up to the time they retired from office; £9,790 belonged to schedules or payments authorised under various Acts of Parliament, and over which the Government had no control; and £75,502 had been authorised entirely by the present Government, and had been ex-

pendent since the conduct of business had been under their care. It might be alleged that this £75,000 was the outcome of deficiencies in the votes for the services of the preceding year. That was a matter entirely of opinion; but what he called particular attention to was, that the statement that nearly the whole of the expenditure was made by the late Government was not correct, the fact being that £75,000 out of £99,000 was expenditure which it fell to the province of the present Government to disburse. In a few days this House would be closed, and Government would be retiring with banners flying over what in their opinion was a successful campaign, but he (Mr. Dickson) was reluctant that they should display colours which they had not won, and he therefore wished to place on record—believing that the statement he alluded to in the *Courier* was inspired—his explanation, which explanation was supported by the preliminary report of the Auditor-General, to which any hon. member who doubted the accuracy of his figures could refer.

The PREMIER said he would read from the paragraph itself:—

“The Premier, it appears, did not say that there would be no Supplementary Estimates this session, but that they would be small, and we are assured that the Government have sanctioned so little supplementary expenditure that they do not consider it necessary to bring in Supplementary Estimates for this year.”

That was true—they were almost the words he used last night. Again:—

“It appears that the Estimates tabled on Tuesday evening were the Supplementary Estimates for 1878-9, the greater part of which was for amounts expended before the present Government took office.”

Mr. DICKSON: Is that true?

The PREMIER said it was perfectly true, and so was the remainder:—

“The expenditure belongs entirely to the financial year ending June last, and over a very small portion only of which the Ministry now in office had any control.”

If the hon. gentleman wished to have his suspicion confirmed, he (Mr. Mellwraith) told him that the paragraph was inspired, for he had written to the editor of the *Courier* a few words on the subject, and told him he could make use of them. By what subterfuge was the hon. member trying to claim that these Supplementary Estimates did not belong to him? At the beginning of the year a Supplementary Estimate was not required. If £500 was put down for a service requiring £1,000, it was not in the first six months while the money was being spent they saw the deficit, but in the next six months while the money was still being spent they saw whether they had too much or not enough, and, if the latter, then

it was put on the Supplementary Estimates. That was the position of the late Treasurer. He had put down too small an amount for a great number of services which he knew would require double. They spent all the money, and the first thing the Government did was to put money on the Supplementary Estimates to account for the deficiency caused by them. Yesterday he was prepared to give an explanation to prove that all he said was absolutely correct; he had marked through the last Supplementary Estimates—which he did not happen to have in the House to-day—giving the exact amount the present Government was actually responsible for, and it amounted to a very, very small sum indeed. It was an amount under £10,000—so small, indeed, that he might say that nine-tenths of the Estimates belonged to the late Government. Last night he was prepared to prove all he said was true, taking the items one by one, but he would only repeat, again, that for nearly the whole of that expenditure on the Supplementary Estimates the late Government were responsible.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH said the Auditor-General's report was the best arbiter between the statements of hon. members on both sides of the House as to figures and the amounts authorised by respective Governments. The total amount authorised by the late Government not previously voted by Parliament was £11,218, to which might be added £3,300 for the repairs to Watts' Bridge, discussed last night; the remainder of the sums on the Supplementary Estimates, to the extent of £76,000, being authorised by the present Government. There was no doubt about that.

The PREMIER: Even that is not true.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Then the Auditor-General is not to be trusted.

The PREMIER must correct the hon. member. He said that the report did not come down to the end of the minutes made by the last Government, because they held office until the 20th of January, and the report only went to the end of December.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government was wrong. He (Mr. Griffith) was including the expenditure up to January 29, so as to be perfectly sure of starting clear with the present Government. The Premier said that these amounts were intentionally made too small by the late Government. That was a charge scarcely worthy of the head of a Government. There were always errors in the Estimates; they knew they were never perfectly correct, and he had never seen them exact; but, because the Estimates happened to be exceeded, as they very often had to be, it was a sorry thing to say it had been done deliberately. A reference to the Auditor-General's report

would show what supplementary expenditure had been incurred, and it could not be made to bear out the statements of the Treasurer. The report was available to any hon. member who liked, and he (Mr. Griffith) challenged reference to it, and a comparison between the statement contained in it and the statement in the *Courier* of which the hon. member for Enoggera complained. He took advantage of the motion before the House to introduce another subject. He was unfortunately prevented from being in the House two days ago, when a motion was passed authorising the deviation of the railway at Townsville. He desired to have heard the Minister for Works on that occasion, because he thought he would have had the common fairness to compare the action he was taking in proposing that route with the statements he made at the beginning of the session. Then he had said that the route lay through two miles of low, swampy, land to Ross River, and which was unsuitable for railway construction. And he had also said, as clearly as he could say it, that the route was improperly selected, and that he (Mr. Griffith) had improperly taken advantage of his position as Minister for Works to decide on that route for his own advantage. The Minister for Works also said that a deviation was going to be made taking an entirely different route. He might, therefore, when he asked for the approval of the House to the new route, have had the fairness to tell the House that the deviation now authorised passed through the very same piece of land he had previously condemned, and in almost the same direction. It entered the land at the identical spot, it travelled through it for about a mile, as it did before, and passed out at the same boundary about a quarter of a mile away from where it left it before. The result of all the hon. gentleman's investigations of this route, and which had induced him to make a charge of misfeasance of office against him (Mr. Griffith), resulted in this, then—that the line passed through the same paddock, but in a slightly different direction. The hon. member ought to have said as much as that, and he (Mr. Griffith) had expected he would have pointed it out to the House. He was sorry nothing had been said about it, because the hon. gentleman, having intimated at the beginning of the session that he was going to prove a charge amounting to misfeasance, ought to have taken the opportunity, when he found he could not prove it, to withdraw it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said that the hon. gentleman had risen to take advantage of the adjournment of the House to bring forward a matter which he should have been in his place the other day to attend to; and, with his usual carelessness in keeping to the exact

truth, had said what was not accurate. As usual, his minimising efforts at truth had been apparent. He (Mr. Macrossan) distinctly stated that the deviation which was intended to be carried out at first was not the deviation to be carried out now—he said so distinctly; and would now add that, had it not been for the state of the law which to a certain degree prevented him from running the railway upon the road without the risk of litigation with the hon. gentleman himself, he should have carried every inch of the railway through Crown lands, from its starting point at the Townsville ironworks to the end of the line at Charters Towers. That was what prevented him, and that alone; and it was a very different reason from that given by the hon. gentleman. He (Mr. Macrossan) neither stated nor insinuated that the hon. gentleman selected the line, and he refrained from doing so because he knew better: what he did say then, and now, was that the hon. gentleman was the member of a Government which did select the line, and that he, above all men, through whose property that line would go, was the one who would benefit most by what he (Mr. Macrossan) would only call a blunder.

MR. GRIFFITH: You know very well that I had nothing to do with the property when the line was selected.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was aware of that. The property was purchased in October, 1877, by Mr. Sachs, and when the hon. gentleman became a partner he did know, although he informed the House that he was a partner last August; and that was a statement he (Mr. Macrossan) was bound to accept as a declaration made in the House. At the same time, he doubted it, because it was commonly spoken of in Townsville and elsewhere, six or eight months before the time mentioned, that the hon. gentleman was Mr. Sachs' partner. Of course, he might have become only a legal partner at the time mentioned—even if he was a legal partner now. It was hardly fair for the hon. gentleman to get up and raise this debate at the end of the session, when he knew full well, and from him privately, that the only reason which prevented him from carrying the line in the way he had described was that he would not run the risk of litigation. After examining the railway, inquiring of the Attorney-General, and consulting his colleagues, he found there was a possibility of being compelled to go to law with the hon. gentleman and others; therefore he abandoned the project, although there was no instance in the whole colony where the experiment of making a railway upon the road could be better carried out than upon the Bowen road on the way to Charters Towers. The road had an approved solid hard bed; it

was two chains wide, and there was public property immediately across Ross River, where some few thousands of acres could have been sold at from £2 to £10 an acre. A couple of suburban townships would have been established;—but his good intentions were frustrated by the state in which he found the law. As to the other matter to which he referred, and the statement made respecting the Supplementary Estimates and the responsibility of the present Government or the last, any hon. member who understood the business of Parliament must know that these sums upon the Supplementary Estimates were to complete works authorised by Parliament under hon. gentlemen now out of office, and the amounts of some of them, he had no hesitation in saying, were authorised with the knowledge that they would not be sufficient. He would instance especially, the railways: the Estimates of the engineer for the maintenance of the permanent-way, stores, and contingencies, were items which had been deliberately cut down. The engineers asked for a sufficient sum to carry on the work for the year, but the Treasurer, to make his balances appear nicer than they would have been, deliberately ran his pen through them and put down sums of his own. Would any member of the late Government stand up, therefore, and say that they were not responsible for the Supplementary Estimates? The same thing occurred with the buildings, with one or two exceptions. The Colonial Stores and the item of Police were deliberately cut down, knowing that further sums would be required at the end of the year. For example, there was an item before him now, which he would not say any member of the late Government knew was insufficient, but for which certainly a sum double of that which was authorised was now asked for—he referred to the Doughboy Creek bridge upon the old Cleveland road. Yet the Government were told they were responsible for the Supplementary Estimates. The fact was, they could not leave the works in a state of incompleteness, and, therefore, the sums were put upon the Supplementary Estimates. He was informed by his colleague that the items in the Lands Department were cut down in exactly the same way, with the knowledge that further sums would be required, and he (Mr. Macrossan) maintained that the late Government must have known that a large Supplementary Estimate would be required upon each item. So far from the present Government being responsible for the Supplementary Estimates, it was, as stated by the Premier, true that they were responsible for only as many hundreds as the Supplementary Estimates showed thousands.

Mr. HENDREN wished to refer to a paragraph which appeared in the *Brisbane Courier* of the 5th instant. He was not aware whether any action had been taken in the matter, but it was one well worthy of the attention of the Government. The paragraph to which he referred stated that the barque "Decapolis" had sailed from Cairns for London with a full cargo consisting of 300,000 feet of cedar, and it went on to say—

"This is the first venture on a large scale of this valuable wood for the home market. One or two small shipments were, we believe, sent some years ago, but the quantity was too trifling to attract any notice, and it is probable that very little indeed is known in Europe of the beauty and utility of this valuable timber. Now, however, we may fairly anticipate that the cargo of the "Decapolis," if fairly placed on the market, will be the pioneer of a large export trade—not only of our cedar, but of some other of our useful timbers, so many square miles of which are annually destroyed in the process of settling the lands of this colony."

Would the Government inform the House whether any action had been taken, or was intended to be taken, to impose an export duty upon the valuable timbers which were leaving our shores in such large quantities? The license issued to timber-getters was not sufficient to pay for police protection; and this wholesale exportation should not be permitted. As settlement progressed some provision should be made compelling persons taking up land to protect these timbers; and if something in this direction was not done, before many years it might be found necessary to import timber for public works and building purposes. Some provisional measures should be taken in this direction. The matter had been referred to at an earlier part of the session by another hon. member, and public attention was being called to it. Would the Government, therefore, state whether they had any intentions on the subject?

Mr. DICKSON said that when he introduced the subject of the paragraph in the *Courier* relating to the Supplementary Estimates he suggested that the paragraph was inspired, and was glad to find that the Colonial Treasurer had acknowledged the authorship. He (Mr. Dickson) had not charged the Government with responsibility in the way of extravagance in these Estimates, but he had charged the paragraph with being incorrect in stating that the expenditure in connection with the Supplementary Estimates had been altogether controlled by the late Government. This was where the paragraph was defective. The expenditure was not authorised until the present Government accepted office, and whatever they might say concerning the other provision made on the Estimates of last year, they must admit it was the duty of the Executive to try and check the demands for un-

foreseen expenditure which from time to time were made by the departments. He did not intend to analyse the expenditure or raise any debate on the items, but he could lay his finger upon several large amounts for which the present Government were solely responsible. His object had not been to accuse the present Government of extravagance, but to correct the mistake respecting their administration of the Supplementary Estimates, which, as the Auditor-General showed, were not framed by the last Government. Having attained this object, he begged, by permission of the House, to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

ROCKHAMPTON TO GLADSTONE RAILWAY.

Mr. NORTON said, with regard to the motion standing in his name, he had no idea that anything practically would be done in the matter at this late period of the session; but he brought forward the subject in order that it might be discussed. When on a previous occasion he introduced a motion with regard to the improvements in the Fitzroy River, he referred incidentally to the line of railway from Rockhampton to Gladstone, and he should now in same manner show that it would be much more advantageous to construct that line than to spend money in improving the river. The railway, although like others it might not pay largely at once, would return something from the first, which could not be said of the river improvements. Strong collateral arguments had arisen since he first introduced the subject in favour of his view. Within the last few days it had been decided to extend the Central Railway 130 miles inland, and therefore it would be more necessary than ever that a really good and accessible port should be available for the residents who sent goods backwards and forwards. The excellence of the harbour of Port Curtis was known to all, and the inferiority of the Fitzroy River as a harbour was equally well known. If any further arguments were required he might point to the recent grounding of the "Governor Blackall," steamer, on the rocks to which he referred when he brought the matter before the House on a previous occasion; rocks which were situated around a point of the river where there was a sharp turning, and where the passage was always dangerous. A great objection to the Fitzroy River as a harbour was the large amount of money which had already been expended and which it would be further necessary to expend. According to Mr. Nisbet's report, which he had previously quoted at some length, the total amount spent and required on the Fitzroy River improvements was £107,000, which hon. members would agree with him was a very serious item. The amount

actually expended was over £43,000 up to the 30th June. In connection with this expenditure he might refer to the Brisbane River as a parallel case. £100,000 had been spent to deepen the channel of that river twelve feet, yet it was now found necessary to further deepen it three feet, making a total of fifteen feet, and to carry out this an additional expenditure of £110,000 would be required. It further became apparent that, although the Fitzroy River might be deepened as proposed by Mr. Nisbet, it would be necessary to deepen it still further in course of time; and there was every reason to suppose that a very large amount would be required for that purpose. In fact, in a case of that kind, it was utterly impossible to ascertain what the cost would be; and, under the circumstances, they were warranted in coming to the conclusion that it would be more desirable to construct a railway the cost of which was known, than to go on with river improvements as to the ultimate cost of which there was not the slightest knowledge. There was every reason to believe that in the end a railway would be the cheaper. Without complaining of the Engineer's designs, he might mention as a mere matter of common-sense, that, in course of time, the channel must cut under the woodwork of the wall in the Fitzroy River, or that the incumbent weight would sink it until it got to a sound bottom. At the present time, as a matter of fact, the current was cutting under the wooden mattresses, and it had been found necessary to take the gravel dredged from the river and throw it over to form a bank against the wall inside the channel in order to protect it from the current. In some parts, according to Mr. Nisbet's report, the current was so strong that it had been necessary to place stones against the wall. Mr. Nisbet, with reference to this, said:—

"Where the bed has been scoured out below the level of the mattresses, large coarse gravel, dredged from the centre of the river, has been deposited along the base of the wall, giving the double advantage of deepening the channel and at the same time protecting the wall. Stone has also been required to some extent for this purpose, and will still be required in places where the current is very strong and the bed of the river composed of soft material."

It was necessary to place stone more carefully where the woodwork was most liable to be undermined. Under the circumstances, it was evident that the cost of maintenance of that wall would be very considerable, whereas the cost of maintaining a railway line would be comparatively trifling. It was also necessary to consider that the present supply of gravel would cease when the dredging was completed, and if the scour continued it would be necessary to raise a

supply specially for the protection of the wall. He pointed these matters out to show how large the cost of maintenance would be. A railway, according to the report, would be of easy construction, as the country was moderately level from Rockhampton or from Gracemere to Port Curtis. The engineering difficulties would be very small, and there was an abundant supply of timber along the proposed route. The country was mostly average coast country, but throughout there were portions of very rich land capable of producing sugar, maize, and any other product suitable to the Central or Northern districts. With reference to the engineering difficulties, Mr. Hannam, who surveyed the line, said—

"I append an extract from my report, January 10, 1878—Travelling from Rockhampton to Gladstone. * * the main engineering difficulties present themselves:—

- "1. The Fitzroy flooded flats.
- "2. The high broken range at 25 miles.
- "3. Raglan and Langmorn Creek.
- "4. Calliope Range.
- "5. Calliope River.

"1. The Flats are avoided by starting from near Gracemere.

"2. The Range is avoided by a nearly straight course from Archer's 15-mile station to the Raglan 12-mile stockyard, and effecting a saving in distance of 3½ miles.

"3. Langmorn Creek is crossed favourably at 37 miles, about 1½ miles above Raglan Head Station.

"4. By careful search in the dense scrub south-west of the road, a low place in the Range has been found, necessitating only one gradient of 1 in 50 for 20 chains only.

"5. A favourable site for a bridge over the Calliope exists at the limestone rocks below the ford, at about 63 miles.

"By the present survey the total distance from Gracemere to Barney's Point is 75½ miles. In setting out the permanent centres I believe that the distance may be reduced to 75 miles at most."

With the exception of the bridge over the Calliope River, therefore, there would be no very expensive work; and it was not to be expected that in a line seventy-five miles long there would be no engineering difficulties. It had been objected that the cost of carriage of wool and other goods would be increased; but he held that all public works should be of a reproductive character. Hon. members on the Opposition side of the House had expressed a very strong opinion that any deficiency between the returns and interest on cost of construction of the trunk lines lately approved by the House should be paid by those who were interested in the carrying out of the work. But every argument that applied to railways applied with equal force in the case of harbour and river works, and where a large expenditure was incurred for such works provision should

be made for paying interest on the borrowed money. Harbour and river trusts should be appointed and steps taken, so that the general public should not be called upon to pay interest on expenditure which benefited only a comparatively small number of people. If a harbour and river trust were appointed at Rockhampton a charge might be made, so that the cost of improvements would fall upon those who profited by them. Shipowners would have to pay heavier charges, but they would get a fair return in higher freights, and in that way everyone who derived any advantage from the expenditure would have to pay a fair proportion of the interest on the cost. Another thing to be considered was that since the Fitzroy improvements had been undertaken there had not been any great flood, and until such a flood occurred it could not be seen whether the works could stand the rush of water. The expenditure on the river would be as great as, or greater than, the cost of making a railway, and in addition there would be the cost of towage, which he had been informed amounted to £50 per vessel each way for a distance of fifty miles up the Fitzroy. Many hon. members considered that it would be preferable to make a railway to Central Island at a lower cost, but against that was the objection that the country to be traversed was very subject to floods, and in all probability fences would be taken away and timber left on the line itself. Some years ago a large quantity of timber was drifted against the Long Bridge, and the current was so strong that the bridge was lifted from its position and had to be rebuilt by the Government. That showed that there was a force of water which no railway works would be able to resist. Such floods might continue for days together, during which communication would be cut off between Central Island and Rockhampton. Mr. Hannam, showing how the other line would avoid that difficulty, said :—

“Starting, then, from about 7 miles on the railway from Rockhampton to Westwood (23 miles from the latter place), the surveyed route to Gladstone, after dropping easily down to Crocodile or Gavial Creek, is driven to the westward by high schist ridges, spurs from the mountains dividing the Dee River from the tributaries of the Lower Fitzroy; along the toes of these ridges the line keeps just clear of the high floods from the Fitzroy. At about 7 miles, the most north-easterly point of this route, a line would fall in from Rockhampton, distant about 17 miles, across flooded flats.”

The objections urged against the Central Island route should be very seriously considered before that route was accepted in preference to the other. If the line were carried to Central Island there would still remain the objection that a very large sum

would be required to dredge the river below that point. The return he had quoted from stated that the training wall at Humbug Point, exclusive of dredging required to open channel concurrently with construction of training walls, would cost £28,233. The silt cleared away from above would probably settle lower down the river, and have to be cleared away at great expense. It was impossible to tell what the ultimate cost would be, because Mr. Nisbet expressed a hope that a good deal of the remaining silt would be washed away by the increased scour when the channel was deepened. It was much better in such cases to carry out works the cost of which could be definitely ascertained. He had no desire that Rockhampton should be injured, or that Gladstone should derive any advantage at the cost of another place, but he considered that it would be unwise without very serious consideration to adopt a course which would cut off the fine harbour of Gladstone from communication with the interior. He believed that such a line would be carried out at some future time, and if that were admitted it was clearly unwise to carry out an extravagant work in another place which would be comparatively useless when the line was made. He did not expect any direct action now; but, seeing that several other hon. members had given notices with regard to other lines, he considered that this project was of sufficient importance to demand an expression of opinion from the House. When that opinion had been expressed he should withdraw the motion. He now begged to move—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Loan Estimates a sum of two hundred thousand pounds (£200,000), for the construction of a line of railway from Gladstone to Rockhampton.

Mr. REA said the hon. member had not brought forward any arguments beyond those which had been adduced on a former occasion and conclusively disproved. With reference to the accident in the Fitzroy, that was a question entirely for the insurance offices. The insurance offices, it would be found, were quite as well satisfied to accept risks in the Fitzroy River now as they would be if it were under the management of a trust. With reference to the probable cost of the works, he placed more reliance on the professional skill of Mr. Nisbet than on the opinion of the hon. member. One of the hon. member's objections to the line to Central Island was the probable great collection of drift-wood, because a large amount had collected at Long Bridge. That was the spot of all

others where, in high-flood time, there was the greatest accumulation of rubbish, because the country was very level and the rapidity of the current was correspondingly lessened. If a line were constructed to Central Island that would not be one of its drawbacks. In reality the test had already been made by many floods in the case of the present railway, and where the bridges were built on trestles no difficulty had been experienced by reason of dead timber. The construction of the proposed line would not help Gladstone one iota, because Rockhampton could find a good harbour fifteen miles on the northern side of the Fitzroy, below the obstructions referred to.

The PREMIER said the subject of the motion was worthy of much more consideration than it was likely to get now. There had been a discussion on a branch of the subject at a previous part of the session, in which he was bound, in order to maintain his position, to take up a view antagonistic to the member for Port Curtis. He would not refer to that part again. He wished merely to state why he should now avoid the most important part of the discussion. As he had already definitely intimated that no Supplementary Estimates would be brought forward this year, he had not given the matter the attention that he should otherwise have done had he expected to combat the arguments of the member for Port Curtis. He was not in a position to combat these arguments, because the hon. member had gone into the subject technically, arguing on the reports of the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers and the railway engineers. He (Mr. McIlwraith) was not able to do that now—at all events, not sufficiently to meet the contentions of the hon. member. He had no doubt that the matter would get further discussion when it was again brought forward. There was little chance of its getting the consideration now it deserved. It was a matter well worth discussing, and it had never been really discussed in the House yet.

Mr. NORTON was sorry that he made the mistake of saying that he intended to withdraw the motion, for he believed the Premier would otherwise have said more in connection with the subject. His chief object in moving the motion was to bring the matter before the country; and he hoped that at some future time the Premier would be prepared to say more upon it. He begged to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

RAILWAY—COMETVILLE TO SPRINGSURE.

Mr. SCOTT, in moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to

consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Loan Estimates the sum of £200,000 for the construction of a line of railway from Cometville to Springsure—

was understood to say that, after the statement of the Premier that there would be no Supplementary Estimates introduced this year, very little good could be gained by bringing forward the motion. At the same time, he might be allowed to state that of any expenditure of public money that upon railways was, perhaps, the most legitimate. The return from all other public works, except the most favoured, was in the main an indirect one, whereas railways gave not only a great indirect return in opening up country for settlement, but a good direct money return also. The line that he was arguing in favour of would pass through and lead to a large extent of very rich country—land as good as any in the colony. He had a letter from a constituent describing that wheat, barley, corn, and also turnips were growing remarkably well in the vicinity of Clermont. The country in and around Springsure was of the same character. It was about the same distance from the sea-coast, and the climate was pretty much the same; and similar results could fairly be expected to accrue. He was quite sure that when this country was thrown open for settlement it would support a large population. It was promised in the Opening Speech that it would be thrown open, but it did not appear to have been done yet; he trusted, however, it would not be long before facilities for settling upon it were afforded. There was a great and increasing demand for land in that quarter, and he was quite sure it would support a considerable population. There was no question that when the land was settled the people would require better means of getting to the coast, and that a railway would prove not only the best but the cheapest means of communication that could be provided. He had asked for £200,000, which was at the rate of £4,000 per mile, the distance from Comet to Springsure being about fifty miles. He had asked for this amount not because he thought so large a sum would be required, but because many members of the Opposition, and especially the member for Maryborough (Mr. Douglas), had expressed the opinion that no railway could be made for less than £4,000 per mile. He believed that in a country like that around Springsure, comparatively level and with no engineering obstacles, a line could be carried out for about £2,000 per mile including everything. It was only a branch line that was required; it need not be so strong as their main lines, and a high rate of speed would not be wanted.

They had seen, by recent papers, that lines in Victoria with a 5ft. 3in. gauge were being built for a little over £2,000 per mile. If this line with a narrow gauge could be made for £2,000 per mile, as he believed it could, the cost would only be £100,000, or a charge upon the country for interest of £5,000 per annum. Their railways were now paying 3 and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest;—this line would return 3 per cent. interest from the outset, or £3,000 per annum, so that the burden upon the country would be only £2,000 per annum; but if it were borne in mind that the Central Railway had cost from £6,000 to £8,000 per mile all through, and that it was now giving a return of nearly 3 per cent. upon that cost, it would be seen that, had the line cost only £2,000 per mile, the return would be 9 per cent., so that it might be fairly argued that the line he was advocating would pay its expenses from the outset. He begged to move the resolution.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said he had no desire to controvert any of the statements made by the hon. member as regarded the capabilities of his district. He believed they were all that had been stated, and he should be very happy, personally, if he could give the hon. member any encouragement so far as to lead him to believe that the Government were inclined to make the railway that he advocated, but at present that was impossible. They had got enough railways to make on hand, but when the time did come for the making of branch railways in the Central district there was not the slightest doubt that a line to Springsure would be among the first to be undertaken. As the hon. member had heard there was no intention of bringing in Supplementary Estimates, he must see that if the motion did pass it would lead to no result. He would advise the hon. member to withdraw it, after having ventilated the subject as he thought desirable.

Mr. PATERSON thought it would be improper for a matter of such coming importance to be dismissed without a word being heard from the members representing the mercantile interest in the Central district. He hoped the time was not far distant when a sum of money would be voted for the construction of a railway from some part of the Central Railway to Springsure. The hon. mover had hardly descanted at such great lengths as he might have done upon the country which such a line would develop, and he should like to point out that when it got to Springsure it only reached a fringe of a large territory of excellent country—a territory not to be excelled by the Darling Downs as to richness of soil and suitability for the production of cereals. He hoped the hon. mover would not allow the matter to lie dormant, but would bring it forward

next year. When railways to such places as Mount Esk and Fassifern were authorised, they must conclude that the time was not far distant when this line would be sanctioned.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the hon. member who had just spoken had inferred from certain railways already authorised that such a line as the one under discussion might be sanctioned. In that respect he was quite in accord with him, believing that better grounds could be found for undertaking this line than some that had already been passed; but when he looked at the large items which were asked for on the paper, and knew that a fruitful crop of railways would spring up ere long from the encouragement given this session by the Premier, and that the successful floating of the loan would probably stimulate him to ask for them, he (Mr. Douglas) must confess that he was somewhat alarmed at the prospects. He wished that he saw any probability of the initiation of a principle by which railways might be made by private enterprise. A good deal had been said by the hon. mover as to the possibility of railways being made for £2,000 per mile. He felt certain it could not be done, but he should experience a good deal of satisfaction if he thought that some similar amount were offered to private companies willing to construct lines upon a certain specification. They should then have some guarantee that the railways constructed upon such a principle were really backed up by the probabilities of future gain. If they could see their way to adopt some such principle, he would prefer to sink the money donated by the Government rather than take the chance of asking for unfruitful enterprises. Considering, also, the depressing effects which this system of railway legislation had upon general politics, for it really subordinated everything to the system by which these railways were authorised, and that it would grow if it was encouraged, he hoped they might ere long arrive at some system which would enable them to test the real solid backing of such enterprises. If they found that people were prepared to venture a proportion, say half, of the capital required for the formation of branch or other lines, they might readily give some security that railways only which were sound would be undertaken, and that enterprises which were faulty would not be started. He had felt inclined to make these remarks owing to what had been said by the hon. member (Mr. Paterson), and not from any hostile feeling towards the proposed line. He hoped that ere long a commencement might be made in the construction of the railways by private enterprise, in the shape of affording a substantial bonus to the constructing companies—on some principle similar to that on which the

French railways were originally constructed—with the condition that these railways, after a series of years, should absolutely revert to the State. By the adoption of some such system, not only would the foundation be laid for successful enterprise in that direction, but the politics of the country would not be suffered to drift in the direction of subordinating great questions to these matters.

Mr. REA said that the construction of branch lines, for which half-a-million had been voted this session, ought not to be limited to the southern end of the colony. Other districts had an equal right to branch lines, and the one proposed by the hon. member (Mr. Scott) would tap some of the best farming lands in the colony.

Mr. SCOTT said that after the statements of the Premier that there would be no Supplementary Estimates this year, and of the Minister for Works that this line would be one of the first to be considered in the next batch, he begged to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

FORTITUDE VALLEY ADDITIONAL MEMBER BILL.

Mr. BEATTIE moved, without comment—

That the Bill to provide for an additional Member to the Electoral District of Fortitude Valley be restored to the Paper, and that the second reading of the Bill stand an Order of the Day for Thursday, the 25th of September.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS appealed to the Speaker as to whether the question could be put or not.

The SPEAKER ruled that the question could be put, as it was quite in accordance with precedent.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS advised the hon. member (Mr. Beattie) to withdraw the motion, with the view of bringing it forward at an early period of next session. The matter was too important to be discussed at the present stage and with so thin a House.

Mr. BEATTIE said that in moving the motion formally he did not expect that it would go further this session, especially as he understood that business was likely to terminate next week. He had hoped that it would be allowed to go as a formal motion.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 12.

Messrs. Griffith, Douglas, Dickson, McLean, Paterson, Garrick, Hendren, Rutledge, Groom, Rea, Macfarlane (Ipswich), and Beattie.

NOES, 15.

Messrs. McIlwraith, Palmer, Perkins, Stevens, Macrossan, Cooper, Morehead, Hamilton, Hill, H. W. Palmer, Stevenson, O'Sullivan, Norton, Scott, and Low.

Question, therefore, resolved in the negative.

RAILWAY SURVEY—MILES TO WESTWOOD.

Mr. PATERSON, in moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause a sum not exceeding £4,500 to be placed on the Supplementary Loan Estimates for a Trial Survey of a Railway Line from Miles (lately called Dogwood), or thereabouts, on the Southern and Western Railway, to Westwood, on the Central Railway, a distance of nearly 200 miles—

said he should endeavour to compress what he had to say in support of this motion into as short a space as possible, and would merely touch upon the salient points that went to establish what the motion might fairly claim to be, viz., the beginning of a national undertaking. No railway survey had ever yet been undertaken in the colony which was of so high a character as this. In previous sessions hon. members had been driven out of all patience by hearing of surveys here, there, and everywhere. This particular survey was entirely devoid of localism. The cost of the proposed survey he had put down in his motion at a sum not exceeding £4,500; but he had since been informed by the Chief Engineer of the Southern and Western Railway, and also by the Chief Engineer of the Central and Northern Railway, that that sum was too large, and that the survey would not cost more than from £15 to £17 10s. per mile, or, in other words, an amount not exceeding £3,000. His attention was drawn to the feasibility of the scheme when he read in the parliamentary papers some years ago of the intention of the then Government to carry on the survey of the Southern and Western Railway from Dalby to the north of the Condamine. At Rockhampton, at that time, they were jealously watching the progress of the Southern and Western Railway, as they believed it was the intention of the Government—an idea which had since been dispelled—to tap their traffic. When that survey was proposed, he noticed that it trended northerly from Dalby and came to its most northerly point very near to the most southerly point of what was then called the Northern Railway. Apparently quite unwittingly the engineers of both systems had been making their lines trend towards each other. Since that time he had had an idea that some day it would be possible to make at least a survey which should join the two great railway systems of the colony. Some day, without any doubt, the two mercantile centres of the Central and Southern divisions of the colony would be connected by rail. To dream of a coastal route would be out of the question during the lifetime of the present generation; it

would cost too much money to bridge the many rivers that would have to be crossed between Brisbane and Gladstone. Another argument in favour of his motion was, that over half of the railway line between Brisbane and Rockhampton was already built and in working order, so that they would have only to make the remaining half in order to complete railway communication between them. He would now enumerate a few advantages that would accrue from the construction of such a line. First, it would enable the journey from Brisbane to Rockhampton to be accomplished in twenty hours instead of from forty-five to seventy-five hours by sea, as at present. That rate of speed was based on the speed of the mail train leaving Brisbane at 9 a.m., and as that speed was exceeded by that of passenger trains on the Central line, there could be no doubt that his estimate was under rather than over the mark. When the railway was completed to the Thompson River, as it would be long before this line could be built, the journey could be made from there to Brisbane, allowing a stay of eight hours in Rockhampton, in forty-eight hours. That was a point greatly in favour of the proposed survey, and there was no doubt that, with this branch, the Central line would prove one of the best paying lines in the colony. But it should as soon as possible be connected with the Southern Railway system, and then, when connection was finally established between our system and the railway system of the adjoining colonies, additional inducement would be afforded to the dwellers in the wealthy Southern colonies to invest their capital in Queensland. Such a railway system would add at least 33 per cent., if not 100 per cent., to the value of those great Western parts of the colony. The distance he had estimated from Miles to Westwood was 200 miles; but he had been informed by Mr. Stanley that the distance might possibly reach 210 miles, though it would not exceed it; and the total distance from Rockhampton to Brisbane would therefore be about 450 miles. If these 200 miles could be made at the rate of £3,000 per mile, which, he had been positively assured by one of the engineers they could be, provided that steel rails maintained their present price, it would amount in the whole to £600,000, which at 4½ per cent. covered the depreciation in the debentures, was £27,000 a year. He would add an additional £70,000 for contingencies, in case the railway extended over an additional eight or ten miles of which Mr. Stanley had spoken, and the annual charge to the country in the shape of interest would then be £30,000. Against that he would take the passenger traffic between the two ports at the dullest

period which had been known for the last eight years, and the result of his research amply corroborated the correctness of the estimate he had formed. He placed the passenger traffic between Brisbane and Rockhampton at 30 first-class passengers each way per week, at the rate charged by the steamers—namely, £5. That, taking 60 passengers at £5 each, would amount to £15,600 a-year, at single fares. Taking the second-class passengers at the very low number of 30 each way per week, at £2 10s. per passenger, there would be £7,800; those would also be single fares. He would next add 10 return first-class passengers per week each way, at £7 10s. each, which would amount to £7,800; and 20 second-class return fares each way per week at £3, which would represent £6,240. He had been told by several gentlemen to whom he had spoken on the subject that there would be a great many more second-class passengers, but he preferred to put the number down at what he had stated—namely, forty per week. The next item he took account of was the probable passenger traffic between the intermediate stations, and he had taken it at a very low rate, or at about what a couple of omnibuses would earn between Brisbane and Breakfast Creek, and estimated it at £50 a-week or £2,600 a-year. He then took the cash paid by the Government for the transit of prisoners, lunatics, and police between the ports of Rockhampton and Brisbane for one year, and that he put down at £500, although he had been informed that it was far below the average payments of the Government. He next put down an approximate value of a daily mail service between the Southern and Central sections of the colony, which implied a daily service between Rockhampton and Brisbane and every town and station on the Southern Railway system, and every station on the Central Railway system, including stations on the extensions which were authorised by the House a few evenings ago. He was informed that £3,000 per annum, at which he put down the mail service, was a very low estimate indeed, as at present they paid about £9,000 for the coastal service. It must be remembered that the mail service by the railway would go to the most populous centres, and therefore it was not unfair to estimate the cost at one-third of that of the whole service. He had put down that sum, and also all the others, at what would be derived were the railway opened on the 1st of October next. The last item in his list was one which would be admitted by those who understood the circumstances—namely, a saving of £2,000, which would be created by doing away with one District Court Judge, Crown Prosecutor, &c. That expense would be saved, as a judge,

on finishing his duties at Roma, &c., might, instead of coming down to Brisbane, turn off at Chinchilla and do all the court work in the Central district, and be in Brisbane within three weeks of the time he struck north from Chinchilla. There would not only be that saving, but those advertisements which so frequently appeared of the business of a court being delayed in consequence of a steamer being detained at the bar would no longer be necessary, and time of jurors and suitors would be saved. The items he had mentioned amounted to a total of £45,540, or an immediate money result supposing this line was opened next Monday. That would be against £30,000, or the interest charged annually on the sum required to complete the work, and leave an amount in favour of working expenses of £15,000. He had not taken into account the goods traffic, the increased value of land, or the revenue derived from Crown lands being alienated along the line of railway, which items would far more than cover the working expenses. It would be admitted that he had shown a truthful estimate of the matter and of the circumstances of the country, and he asked the House to assent to an expenditure of £4,500 for a survey of the line before the Crown alienated the country through which such a line would pass. It might be deemed by many persons too early to bring forward such a project, but he believed it was the first one which had been brought forward where it was clearly shown that the interest and part of working expenses would be paid, exclusive of revenue he had not estimated. He thought that the figures he had quoted justified him in asking the kind attention of the House to his proposition, especially when hon. members considered the great benefit which would accrue to the western part of the colony, and the facilities of communication that would be given to both of the populous sections of the colony. In his opinion it would be a good thing for Queensland if the work were carried out in their own time. The average of the country through which the line would pass could only be called second-class, as part of the Southern portion of it was scrubby country; but that was counterbalanced by a large proportion of most excellent country; and really the very best country happened to be about midway between one railway and the other. He had merely referred to the line hitherto from a Queensland point of view; but he would now mention it in connection with a system of railways between the two colonies. He was informed that the railway between Melbourne and Sydney would be completed within a few months; and hon. members were aware that the New South Wales Government contemplated a line from Singleton southerly to connect with Sydney and that they had author-

ised money to construct a northern line to the Queensland boundary at Tenterfield. He wished to show that starting from Melbourne to this territory they would very shortly have a continuous railway, as the line between Melbourne and Sydney would soon be completed, and the journey between those two places would be done in twenty-two hours. Between Sydney and Newcastle there was a break, which would ultimately be avoided by the railway contemplated between Sydney and Singleton; and, with the line authorised to Tenterfield, within the next ten years Brisbane would be in railway communication with New South Wales and Victoria, and he might even say Adelaide, judging from a map showing the railway system and the routes projected by the various Governments, which he should be happy to lay on the table for the information of hon. members. It would be a very great thing indeed for this colony if they could, by the initiation of a system to connect the railways of the various colonies, induce capitalists to come to this colony and to invest their capital in it, and it would give a great lift to the colony in the eyes of capitalists in the colonies, to say nothing of those in Britain, if a British capitalist could land at Melbourne, and in one hundred hours be able to visit the great Western country of Queensland. Those were thoughts which were quite correct, because that was really the time in which that very long journey could be performed. There were many persons who were of opinion that the railways should be connected with the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria; but if this line were constructed as he proposed, it would give Brisbane railway communication to within 450 miles of the Gulf waters. He might go on referring to figures in support of his statement, but he would merely observe, with regard to goods traffic on the route proposed, that none of the present sea traffic would pass over it, but there were at present in the districts of Banana, Rawbelle, Taroom, and Gayndah, about half-a-million of sheep; and he was assured by a gentleman who had been long resident in that part of the country that the old grasses that were so much valued from fifteen to twenty years ago were returning, and that the country, after the long spell it had from sheep, was assuming its pristine vigour; so that it was probable that the number of sheep would be trebled within the next ten years. Assuming his motion was carried that evening, it would take three or four years to complete the survey, two or three more years to consider the question whether the railway should be constructed and the money voted, and from four to six years to complete the work; so that it would be ten or twelve years before the line

could be in working order, by which time the population of both sections of the colony would have added to themselves 50 if not 100 per cent.; so that the figures and data he had given that evening would be greatly strengthened. To show that he had not taken too large an estimate of the passenger traffic by steamers, he might mention that the passenger traffic, of a chance week some time since, was just one-third greater than he had assumed it to be, and that at what might be considered the dullest period of the year. A paragraph which appeared in the *Capricornian* newspaper of the 30th ultimo was evidently not unfavourable to the scheme, and ran as follows, namely: "It may be worth while to incur the expense of a trial survey, with a view to determine the expediency of such a project and of reserving the lands from sale along the route." He believed that people residing in the tropical parts of the colony would avail themselves of the opportunity that would be afforded by such a line of railway as he proposed, to visit Toowoomba and Stanthorpe during the summer months, whilst the farmers of Warwick and Toowoomba could successfully compete with Tasmania in supplying the Central districts with hay, corn, potatoes, &c., instead of every sixpence paid for those things going out of the colony, as was the case at the present time. Lastly, instead of subsidising a coastal service between Brisbane and Rockhampton, this survey would be the initiatory step of the establishment of a vehicle of communication between the two largest and most important sections of the colony, and make them independent of any steam service. He hoped he had said sufficient to imbue the minds of hon. members with some slight feelings in favour of the motion, which, with permission of the House, he would amend by substituting the word "next" for "Supplementary," and "Chinchilla" for "Miles (lately called Dogwood.)"

Mr. GROOM said it was his intention to have seconded the motion of the hon. member, thinking that a motion of this kind would come with a good grace from a gentleman representing a northern constituency, seconded by an hon. member representing a southern constituency; but no preconcerted arrangement having been made, he took advantage of the present opportunity to say that the motion was deserving of more consideration than hon. members might, on the face of it, feel inclined to bestow. He had looked over the map which the hon. member had produced, and it seemed as if the course shadowed forth was the best line which the natural features of the country allowed, and which were favourable to the route to connect the Darling Downs with the northern parts of Queensland. There

could, therefore, be no harm in voting the money for the survey. He was persuaded, from what he knew of the resources of that district, and generally of the northern districts near Rockhampton, that the line, if carried out as the hon. member proposed, would be one of the greatest stimulants to industry on the Downs. The hon. member, in the course of his elaborate speech, had made out a very good case, and he (Mr. Groom) should support him. If afterwards, when the matter might take a more practical form, when it would be necessary to make a survey, prepare working plans, sections, and books of reference, it might be necessary to alter the route, that was a matter beside the question now. The hon. member was now only showing a scheme whereby Rockhampton should be connected by railway with a system which might some day extend to the furthest port in South Australia. Having read the speech of Sir Hercules Robinson at Albury, delivered two years ago—a speech which had since been republished in a more elaborate form—he (Mr. Groom) must say that the scheme before them seemed part of that indicated by His Excellency, and that the day was not far distant when the whole of the large towns of Australia to the eastward would be connected by a line of railway extending to Adelaide, and perhaps even to Western Australia. This £4,500 asked for would be well spent. He admitted at once that to a large extent his interests were identified with Darling Downs, and if he could assist to scatter its productions abroad, and introduce them into the districts round Rockhampton, and thence to Copperfield, where they could not obtain such productions as the Downs gave, particularly in the months of January and February, he would do his best to forward a scheme. In the one item of fruit alone, a £1,000 worth was annually wasted on the Downs or given to the pigs. If the line opened up a means of supplying the populations of the Northern towns with the surplus production of the Southern districts, by all means let them have that line. The projected line had also this advantage—it connected large centres of population, and in that respect entirely differed from the system of taking lines from small populations out almost into the desert, or, as it had been described, to places "where, there being one solitary store and two 'pubs,' they were anxiously expecting a telegraph office." The motion suggested nothing like that, but, instead, the connection of two large centres of population. He looked at this question in its natural aspect, and noticed that the route chosen on the plan seemed destined by nature to be penetrated by a line to connect the two systems of railways. If a practical route could be surveyed and defined for £4,500, the money would not be needlessly thrown

away. In whatever light he viewed the motion it seemed a good one. The route did not go along the heads of rivers where expensive works would be required, but, as he had just said, over a tract of country which seemed destined by nature for the purpose. As to the argument that the line would divert traffic from Brisbane to Rockhampton, he would say nothing, for the trade which went to Rockhampton would go there, and no artificial measures the House might take could prevent it; while the trade which found its natural outlet in Brisbane would go there in spite of any efforts that might be made to divert it. As the Government invited settlement on the Darling Downs, they were bound to open up markets where the produce raised by those settlers could be disposed of, and the making of this line would do a vast amount of good in that direction. Its construction would be of very essential service to the Darling Downs, and on that ground he should support the motion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said they had often heard that figures would prove anything; and if the figures given by the hon. member (Mr. Paterson) would bear the construction put upon them, the best thing they could do would be to take him at his word and make the line immediately. The hon. member had made the very strong assertion that the line would pay from the start if made to-morrow. He thought he should be able to disprove that assertion from the hon. member's own figures. The line seemed to be a transcontinental line on a small scale; and from another point of view it was neither transcontinental nor coastal. It ought to be either one or the other. If the former, it should start further west, and, taking a north-westerly course, cut the Northern Railway west of Charters Towers. Instead of that, it would run from Chinchilla to Westwood, and left out of consideration the large amount of coastal country included in the Wide Bay and Burnett district. If it was intended to connect the great centres of population on the coast, the Sandgate line ought to be taken to Cabulture, on to Gympie, and then by the Bundaberg and Mount Perry line to the Central, and finally the Northern lines. That would be a true coastal line, while this was neither one nor the other. The whole of the country through which this projected railway would pass was not exactly what the hon. member described it. There were very few thousand acres there which, even by a great stretch of imagination, could be called agricultural land. The greater portion of it was purely second-class pastoral land. They had heard a great deal lately about making railways for the exclusive use of squatters, but this would be a purely pastoral railway, without any alternate hope of settling an agricultural population upon the soil. He

was amused to hear the hon. member say that the line would enable the people of Rockhampton to get away during the summer months to the hills of Toowoomba. A smile passed over the face of the hon. member (Mr. Groom), and when the hon. member (Mr. Paterson) finished his speech he was quite ready to second the resolution. It might be a boon to the half-roasted people of Rockhampton to get away to the cool climate of Toowoomba and Warwick, but he did not think the people of Rockhampton would thank the hon. member for that particular argument. The hon. member's further argument, that with this line the cost of the coastal mail service would be saved to the colony, was quite fallacious. The line would communicate with no portion of the coast but Rockhampton, and the coastal mail service would have to be kept up for Maryborough, Bundaberg, and the ports north of Rockhampton. The assertion that the line would pay from the very start reminded him of what Mr. Fitzgibbon said in 1863, when he was advocating the making of the line over the Main Range from Ipswich. In the 54th paragraph of his report, Mr. Fitzgibbon said—

"The goods traffic will, as hereinbefore stated, produce a gross yearly income of £40,000, in addition to which there will be mails and parcels—say, £3,000 per annum; making a total gross revenue (exclusive of fat cattle, horses, &c., &c.), of £113,000, equivalent to, say, £18 per mile per week.

And in the 58th paragraph he said—

"We must therefore calculate on not less than £500 per mile per annum on account of working expenses, which will amount to £60,000 per annum; and this sum being deducted from the gross yearly income, estimated at £113,000, will leave a net yearly revenue of £53,000, being about 6 per cent. interest upon the assumed capital expenditure of £897,608. This percentage is capable of increase by charging higher rates for conveyance of goods and passengers than I have put down; and the saving of £80,000 per annum to producers and consumers upon the goods traffic alone, which I have already shown will result from the railway, will well admit of an increase in the rates of carriage which I have assumed."

It was well-known that no railway could compete with water-borne carriage. At the present moment steam vessels trading between Brisbane and Rockhampton were carrying goods at the rate of about £1 per ton, and sailing vessels at 12s. 6d. per ton. What sort of rate was that for a railway? As to the passenger traffic, the hon. member must remember that when once a competition began between steamers and railways, fares would be reduced, and in a competition of that kind the steam vessels would have the best of it. The hon. gentleman had put the interest on cost of the line at £30,000, and the earnings at £45,000. Taking those figures as the

basis, did the hon. member know how much 200 lines of railway would cost per mile for maintenance, and how much it would cost to run one train each way per day? That cost on the Southern and Western Railway was within a fraction of £180 per mile per annum. The cost on the Central line was £150, and taking that as the basis—though he believed it was too low—the cost of the projected line would be £30,000 per annum. The working expenses per train mile on the Central line were 4s. 4d., and at that rate the cost of one train per day each way would amount to £27,019 12s. per annum. The total cost of keeping the line going would therefore amount to £59,019 12s. as against £45,000 estimated receipts, leaving entirely out of question renewals and other expenses, which would amount to perhaps £12,000 or £13,000 more; so that instead of the line paying from the start, as the hon. member, from his imaginary figures, sought to show, there would be about £1,000 a month to the bad. If there existed any necessity for connecting the different lines, he held that it should be done by a line further west, starting from Roma or Mitchell and taking a north-westerly course, so as to cut the Central and Northern lines and connect the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria with Brisbane. That would be the line to make if the country were in a position to enter upon such an undertaking, but the present project was neither a coastal nor an interior line, and he believed it ought not to be surveyed. The only argument that could be advanced in favour of the survey was, that it would prevent the alienation of land that might otherwise be required; but there was not the slightest danger of land being alienated there at the present time as there was no settlement, and there was not likely to be any. Settlement took place in parts of the country where agriculture could be combined with pastoral pursuits, which was not the case there. The greater part of the land traversed was not fit for agriculture, nor was it even first-class pastoral land.

Mr. ARCHER said he did not understand whether the Minister for Works, in his estimate of cost, meant to include the whole distance from here to Rockhampton?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I only referred to the connecting line, 200 miles long.

Mr. ARCHER said from a careful consideration of the figures adduced, he came to the conclusion that such a railway would pay remarkably well. The figures brought forward were not supposititious ones, but were based on minute calculations, and, so far from being exaggerated, were hardly presented in their strongest light. The Minister for Works said that the line should be either along the coast or a great

connecting line through the interior. He (Mr. Archer) had no doubt that until both such lines were made, and the capital connected with the Gulf of Carpentaria, there would always be a want in the country. But did the hon. gentleman consider the relative costs of the line proposed, and of the coastal line he suggested? A line along the coast, crossing ranges and big rivers, would cost about ten times as much as the 200-mile line proposed. If, therefore, the trade likely to spring up when Brisbane and Rockhampton were connected would not be sufficient to make the proposed line pay, what chance would there be of a line costing ten times as much paying? A coastal line would have to be carried across many large and rapid rivers subject to floods, whereas the interior line would have to be carried over the heads of creeks only, and would probably be the cheapest line yet projected in the country. The whole country was suited to the construction of a low-cost railway, and there was already a trade between the two towns. By means of such a line the Torres Straits mails would be delivered in Brisbane a day or two sooner, and a longer time would be afforded to answer letters. He did not believe that it would be able to compete with the steamers for the carrying trade, but it would command a large amount of passenger traffic, and probably pay better than any line yet projected in this country. The Minister for Works said there was no need for a survey, because no land there was likely to be taken up; but a great deal of land of inferior quality had been taken up in other parts. There was no reason to suppose that settlement would not take place rapidly if a railway passed through that country. It was presumed that settlement would take place rapidly along the Central line on Peak Downs and Springsure, though it did not pass through as good country and though the people there would be farther from a market than would those on the proposed line. It had been stated that the proposed line would pass through remarkably good agricultural land, and very fair pastoral country too. The Minister for Works was the best judge as to the probable working cost of the line, but from the very moderate calculations of the hon. member (Mr. Paterson) as to the returns from probable passenger traffic, he (Mr. Archer) believed the line would yield a larger return than had been estimated. It was not to be supposed that the railway would jump into existence to-morrow; and all the years while it was building, the passenger traffic at Brisbane and Rockhampton would be increasing as the main lines were pushed out westward. He should have been glad if the Minister for Works could have seen his way to sanction the survey to prevent the land being occupied in any way; and

if the motion went to a division he should feel bound to vote for it.

Mr. STEVENSON said the hon. member who had just sat down, and the mover, appeared to be two very sanguine men; but he looked upon the matter in a very different light. If the line were carried out it would be simply a luxury, and nothing else. The hon. member for Toowoomba said with regard to the line to Toowoomba, that leaving out the squatting portion of the country that line would pay; but he (Mr. Stevenson) would like to know what line in this colony would pay without the squatting portion of the community contributing to the traffic? How could it pay? It was impossible that a few cabbages and a few bushels of maize and wheat coming from the Downs would make it pay. It was no use any hon. member telling the House that any line in the colony would pay unless wool, stock, and other squatting produce came down on it. The hon. member (Mr. Archer) had referred to a coast line. It would cost very much more, but it would be of some use; but supposing a line went to the heads of the creek it would be only a convenience to a few passengers coming from the West. It was simply a matter of a few hours' difference, for one could get from Rockhampton to Brisbane, by steamer, in thirty-five hours. It might be more convenient to people to get down by train than by steamer, but would that pay the colony? The hon. member for Toowoomba had talked of the produce that could be taken to Rockhampton; but nothing could be grown on the Downs that could not be produced at Rockhampton. He differed from the Minister for Works in the statement that in Rockhampton the people were half roasted. If he had to choose between Rockhampton and Brisbane as a place to live in, he should prefer Rockhampton. If this line was, according to the hon. member (Mr. Groom), to be constructed simply for the purpose of taking produce to Rockhampton, the sooner the idea was got rid of the better. It was all very well to talk about the small amount required for a survey; but if they considered what the interest and compound interest would be on £3,000 or £4,000, thirty or forty years hence, and he did not think the line was likely to be constructed before that time, the amount would be something nearer £15,000 or £20,000. The hon. mover, no doubt, meant well by the proposition. It would be a nice thing—a great luxury, indeed—for people to come down in the way he proposed; but it would not pay at the present time, nor was it likely to do for many years. It was simply a luxury. They were committed to far too many luxuries at the present moment without going in for any more. He objected to the proposed survey; the

sum asked for might be looked upon as small, but before the line could be constructed it would be a large amount, if interest and compound interest were considered.

Mr. HENDREN said he intended to vote for the motion if it went to a division. The hon. member who had just sat down had said that no line of railway would pay which had not wool, tallow, and live-stock to carry; but he (Mr. Hendren) would like to know how the Western extensions were to pay, if a railway connecting two large centres of population would not do so? The Minister for Works said that the line proposed would not be conducive to the coast districts, and that, therefore, he suggested that the line should be taken to Sandgate and thence extended to the Burnett. The hon. gentleman, however, must know very well that the expense of constructing such a line, and of forming a harbour at Sandgate, would be too great.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he should oppose the motion with all his might. He had heard no argument convincing him that a line of this character, if it was to be undertaken at all, should be started on the other side of the Range. They had already passed a line of forty-two miles to Mount Esk, which went in the exact direction and took in settlement as well as land which was equal to any in the whole colony. He had been over the line projected by the hon. mover and must endorse every word that the Minister for Works had said about the inferior quality of the land through which it ran. It was rough and gravelly country, and there was not the slightest danger of its being alienated. If the line did start from Charley's Creek it would not provide the Downs with the means of getting to another market. The Brisbane market was only 100 miles from the Downs by railway, but by the proposed line the Rockhampton market would be about 345 miles, and he wondered where the profit would be after carriage had been paid on agricultural produce for that distance. Again, nobody would be mad enough to settle along the projected route when good agricultural land could be got on either side of the Range. If there was any intention to make the Central Railway secure, and encourage traffic, the best way was to extend the railway from Ipswich to Mount Esk, towards Nanango, and thence to Gayndah and Rawbelle, and so on. He could vouch for it that there was good settling land along the whole way. He was, therefore, sorry that the hon. member for Ipswich should think for a single moment of supporting any line in this direction, except the Esk line. He did not catch any reason why the hon. member for Blackall should say that a line along the coast would cost ten times as much as any other line. It was an asser-

tion by the lump; it was always very convenient to make assertions of that sort, without giving reasons or figures to substantiate them; but he had as much right to deny such a statement as any hon. member had to make it. For the reasons he had stated, he thought he should be forgetting his position, and, perhaps, like the hon. member for Toowoomba, be neglecting his own interests, if he were to support any line of the kind.

Mr. REA said it had been argued that, in places where ships could go from one port to another, there should be no line of railway inland to connect those places. If that were the case there would be no line from Melbourne to Sydney; but as was shown on the map before the House, the whole five lines from Adelaide, and the projected lines, were about the same distance from the coast. The line suggested by the Minister for Works would be somewhat similar to a line from Richmond to the Clarence, in New South Wales; but care was taken to avoid such a line as that, and that was the reason why the hon. member for Blackall made the lump assertion that the hon. member for Stanley could not understand. But any schoolboy could understand that if they went near to the mouth of a deep river they would have to encounter much greater difficulties than if they went to the head of that river. The line indicated by the hon. member for Rockhampton avoided the broken country. The idea of people coming from Rockhampton to spend part of the summer months in Toowoomba had been laughed at, but he would point out that people even from Brisbane went there during the summer months. Did not His Excellency the Governor go there in summer; and he (Mr. Rea) was in a position to state that persons from the North who had visited Toowoomba in summer had had their health very much improved thereby. He contended that in reality such a line as this would be of as much advantage to the Southern portion as to the Northern portion of the country through which it passed. The line suggested by the Minister for Works would be somewhere about double the length of the one suggested by the hon. member for Rockhampton, because it would zig-zag about in all directions along the coast. The whole time that it would take a train to come from Rockhampton to Toowoomba would be about one day, starting at 6 o'clock in the morning and reaching Toowoomba about 9 o'clock at night. These were some considerations which he maintained justified the motion. The Minister for Works had referred to the enormous expense that would be involved by running one train each way; but what would that expense be compared with the expense of running one train a-day on the projected line from Gladstone to Rock-

hampton? The amount of traffic on that line would be ten to one worse than the traffic upon this; and they should consider that if there was to be a connecting link between the two principal towns of the colony, as was the case in the other colonies, it should certainly be in this direction. The wants of the inhabitants between two large towns themselves created traffic; but to take a line from Rockhampton to the miserable watering-place of Gladstone would be the height of absurdity—and yet that was the line the Premier was prepared to make.

Mr. SCOTT said he did not know what traffic there was likely to be upon this projected line, but he knew that it would go through country where he believed a line could very well be made. If it were attempted to make a line between that and the coast it would be almost impossible, owing to the mountainous character of the country, and if it were taken further west the same difficulty would arise; but this line would pass over comparatively level country where a line could be taken. He thought it would be just as well, if a line of railway was to be made there at all, that it should be surveyed with as little delay as possible, so that the land, at all events, might be secured. He had always been an advocate for surveying land where it was at all likely that a railway would go; because if it became known that there was a probability, or a possibility almost, of a railway being made in a district, the land was almost sure to be taken up by selectors, or purchased. The cost of the survey would not be much, and he thought it would be money very well expended.

Mr. KATES said in regard to this motion he should be principally guided by the character of the land through which the line was to be taken. If it were suitable for agricultural settlement, he should be inclined to support the motion. The Minister for Works had, however, told them that it was barren land, unsuitable for agriculture; and, unless he could hear from the mover of the motion that such was not the case, he should oppose the motion—because he thought that they would not be justified in constructing 208 miles of railway through a wilderness at the present time, especially when they had so many railways already in hand. With regard to the produce of the Darling Downs going in that direction, he would point out that Brisbane was much nearer; and, as it would take years to supply Brisbane with flour from the Darling Downs, he thought that this motion was premature.

Mr. DICKSON regretted that the hon. gentleman should have introduced this motion at such a late period of the session, and that it should not have the consideration of a fuller House, because he believed it was a phase of railway construc-

tion, so far as Queensland was concerned, which attempted something much more statesmanlike than any scheme that had hitherto come before the Legislature. He thought they should look ahead to the time which was approaching when railways must be constructed which would connect the colony within itself and also with the Southern colonies; and he looked upon the motion as a step in that direction. But before they committed themselves to the affirmation of such an important undertaking they should have more information than the hon. gentleman had been able at the present time to give them. He agreed with the last speaker, that one of the inducements to proceed with a line in this direction should be the amount of good land it would open for agricultural settlement; and he considered it would be a strong recommendation, if a large area of good land was likely to be opened up by the construction of such a line as that advocated, to proceed with such an undertaking. He took it that Ministers themselves recognised the desirability of connecting large centres of population in the colony by means of railways—in fact, he understood from the remarks of the Minister for Works that that hon. gentleman was of opinion that there must in time be a coastal line to connect the principal towns on the coast, and he (Mr. Dickson) was not prepared to say that his suggestion would not be a better mode of connecting such towns than that proposed by the hon. member for Rockhampton. Until they connected their different communities by means of railways they would not put an end to the interminable jealousies which existed in regard to expenditure in the respective districts. It was pitiable at the present time to observe the jealousy which existed in some quarters when it was proposed to construct a few miles of railway in the Southern district, and the same might be said of the Northern district when it was proposed to make a few miles of railway in the Central division. Until they assimilated their railway schemes and had the people to regard those works as of a national and not of a local character, they could not put an end to that wretched jealousy which at present interfered to such a large extent with wise and judicious administration in the colony. He was inclined to think that such a line as that proposed would have a desirable effect in that respect. There had been no greater advocates of railway surveys than some of the hon. members now on the Treasury benches, and he (Mr. Dickson) considered that the survey of a line which was likely in time to become part of the system should be approached now, so as to enable the Legislature to have before them, when the proper time arrived, the best information that could be given respecting it.

He hoped that if the Government could not consent to the motion in its present form, they would give an assurance to the hon. member moving it that they would take steps to have a survey made in the direction indicated. Without pledging himself to advocate the construction of the work he should support the motion for a preliminary survey.

Mr. PATERSON, in reply to the remarks of the Minister for Works, that railways could not compete successfully with water-carriage, explained that he had not even referred to the goods traffic now carried by water—it would be absurd to do so—but only to the inland traffic which already existed, and which would be supplemented by the settlement that would follow the construction of the railway. He believed that that traffic would compare most favourably with any that would pass over some of the lines which had lately been authorised. He believed, also, that the cost of maintenance would not exceed that of the Central Railway, and that the working expenses would be covered by the goods traffic. With regard to the opinions which had been expressed by Mr. Fitzgibbon in reference to the line to Toowoomba, he (Mr. Paterson) did not attach much importance to the opinions of that gentleman, whose report was discreditable to him, and whose knowledge of the colony was confined to a year or two, whilst that of many hon. members who had spoken on the question extended over many years, notably that of the hon. member for Leichhardt, who was one of the pioneers of the section of the colony to which his (Mr. Paterson's) motion referred. That hon. member was aware of rich agricultural land which would be passed by the proposed line; and Dr. Bancroft had described some of the land in the Dawson district as the finest he had ever seen for wheat culture. The hon. member read extracts from Leichhardt's works in support of his argument.) It had been said that Toowoomba could not send produce to Rockhampton; but to disprove this he instanced the cost of conveying one ton of hay from Toowoomba *via* Brisbane to Rockhampton, and the same quantity *via* this line. Under existing conditions, with 100 miles of railway carriage, cartage, and freight, and with the risk that the hay might be carried on deck and receive damage by saltwater, it could be landed in Rockhampton at a total freight of £5 per ton. But with 100 miles of railway carriage from Toowoomba, in a northern direction, it would only have 240 miles further to go to reach its destination by this line, and would be landed for about £3 a-ton—a difference which would be further increased if our rates of railway freight were reduced to the same scale as other colonies. The very reasons which the hon. member for

Leichhardt and the Minister for Works had given us against the line were those most in favour of it. In the one case, if it was a convenience it would induce people to settle on the adjoining land; and in reference to the transcontinental scheme, this route would permit the passenger to save between Rockhampton and Brisbane a great distance. By the transcontinental he would have 1,300 miles to travel over, instead of 450 miles. Besides that, three-fifths of the route were constructed already. A coastal line was quite impracticable from the engineering difficulties—the bridges alone over the large rivers being as expensive as the line included in the motion. He had brought up the subject purely from a public point of view; and, having been told it was a matter which affected his political relations with his constituency, he could only say that, while no one would deny that local wants should be considered, they were not to exclude from consideration altogether what might be to the advantage of Queensland. This line would utterly annihilate the asperities which were continually cropping up between one section of the colony and another, and it would be a good thing if they were discussing the vote for the construction of the line now, instead of the small amount for a survey.

Mr. DOUGLAS wished to correct an unguarded expression which the hon. member (Mr. Paterson) had made use of when he spoke of the "discreditable" way in which Mr. Fitzgibbon left the colony. He (Mr. Douglas) was tolerably familiar with the circumstances under which Mr. Fitzgibbon executed his work as engineer, and there was nothing to justify the hon. member in using the term "discreditable" as to any of his transactions with the Government.

Mr. PATERSON, in explanation, said that he had not referred to Mr. Fitzgibbon's relations with the Government at all; but to the discredit attaching to the unrealised predictions in his report.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 14.

Messrs. Archer, Paterson, Rea, Hendren, Dickson, Douglas, Grimes, Kates, Scott, Groom, Beattie, Macfarlane (Ipswich), Griffith, and Garrick.

NOES, 15.

Messrs. McIlwraith, Palmer, Macrossan, Perkins, Cooper, Low, Lalor, H. W. Palmer, Amhurst, Stevens, O'Sullivan, Hamilton, Hill, Stevenson, and Norton.

Question, therefore, resolved in the negative.

POINT OF ORDER.

The SPEAKER: Before calling the next motion I think it desirable to call the attention of the House to the motion itself. It is a motion which ought not to have been on the paper. I may mention that

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some time ago the hon. member for Rockhampton (Mr. Rea) gave notice of a similar motion. My attention was attracted to it before it appeared on the paper, and I suggested to the hon. member that a less offensive mode of expression should be adopted. The hon. member withdrew the motion for the time, and I did not see this motion until I saw it printed in the notice paper. According to the practice of the House of Commons, the Speaker has the power to refuse to receive notices that are improperly worded, and if it appears on the paper he has only authority to alter it if he thinks it necessary to do so. I did not care to take upon myself the responsibility of altering it. The House, I think, will agree with me that if, according to the 91st Standing Order—

"No member shall use offensive or unbecoming words in reference to any member of the House"—

it is even more necessary that offensive and unbecoming words should not appear on the notice paper. No doubt there are offensive expressions in this motion. According to the 40th Standing Order—

"Any notice containing unbecoming expressions may be expunged from the notice paper, by order of the House."

I have therefore thought it my duty to call the attention of the House to the fact that I think the motion objectionable, in order that the House may take any action in the matter it thinks necessary. In conclusion, I may say that if offensive matter is allowed to find a place on the notice paper, and in our "Votes and Proceedings," it will be extremely hard to prevent debates from becoming acrimonious. It would be a bad precedent to allow such a thing to be done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that the motion be expunged from the paper.

Mr. REA said he would produce the authorities upon which he based his resolution.

The SPEAKER said that that would not set the matter right, because the question was whether the motion was one which the House thought fit to have before it. It was not necessary for notice to be given of a motion under the 40th Standing Order, and he should put it.

Mr. GRIFFITH urged that it was necessary that notice of such a motion should be given, otherwise any member might suddenly move that any motion on the paper be expunged. This particular motion had not yet been called on, and was not, therefore, under the cognizance of the House. There were two cases reported in "May," when motions had been expunged by vote of the House of Commons, but in both those cases the original motion had been first called

on and debated. The interests of the freedom of debate were of far more importance than the opinion of any member as to the language of any particular notice of motion. If it was considered undesirable that this motion should appear on the paper, notice of a motion to expunge it might have been given yesterday. A sudden motion of the kind now made was unwarranted, both by precedent and by the principle of freedom of debate, which was the foundation of their existence as a Parliament. In these remarks he was simply referring to the impropriety of the motion made by the Colonial Secretary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had never before heard that it was necessary to give notice of motion on a point of order. As to the motion not being under the consideration of the House, how on earth could the hon. member (Mr. Griffith) presume to say anything of the sort, when it had been brought before the House in the most prominent manner by the Speaker? He could not understand the action taken by the hon. member. Here was a most impertinent and offensive motion placed on the notice paper by the only member who would have done such a thing, and the Speaker had called the attention of the House to the offensiveness in it. Was not that bringing the motion before the House? To say that it was necessary to give notice of motion on a point of order was to say what was absurd. The cases quoted by the hon. member were decidedly in favour of the offensive thing being wiped off the chronicles of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said notice of motion could not have been given yesterday, for the motion itself only bore yesterday's date.

Mr. SCOTT said that even if notice of motion had been given, it must be given subsequent to the motion being put on the paper.

The SPEAKER said it appeared to him that in accordance with the Standing Orders it was not necessary that notice of motion should be given. He should therefore put the motion moved by the Colonial Secretary to the House.

Mr. REA said that when he first gave notice of his motion he was informed by members of long experience that the Speaker had no power to take notice of any motion until it appeared on the printed notice paper. For a time he withdrew that motion, and when he again gave notice of it he modified it considerably. He could not have put it in language more acceptable to the House, in order to give the Premier an opportunity of explaining the discrepancy between his statement and the official documents. The Minister for Works had shown an example by making an imputation ten times worse than anything contained in his

motion. He (Mr. Rea) had merely called attention to a discrepancy made by the Premier.

Mr. SCOTT, as a point of order, said the hon. member was debating the motion.

The SPEAKER said the hon. member should speak to the question whether the notice should be expunged or not.

Mr. REA said the Colonial Secretary should have done his duty and called his colleague to order when he made an imputation, instead of raising an objection to the wording of the motion. When the leader of the Opposition wished to avoid using an expression the other day, the Premier asked him why he did not speak out like a man; and he (Mr. Rea) was now speaking out in a straightforward manly way. He wished to give the hon. gentleman an opportunity of making an explanation before the country, and he would be willing to alter the motion if the hon. gentleman would say what he objected to. What would be said in the House of Commons if a member had official documents in his possession and was not allowed to make it known that he had them?

Mr. GRIFFITH said it was the first time in the history of this colony, as far as he knew, that such a motion as that of the Colonial Secretary had been made. The hon. the Speaker had been good enough to call his attention, some days ago, to a somewhat similar motion, which had not appeared on the business paper; but he had seen this one for the first time, as any other hon. member might, on the business paper. He presumed the reason for wishing it expunged was that it should not appear upon the records of the House; but if this power of expunging were to be lightly exercised, it might lead to very bad results. The motion, which amounted to a vote of censure on the Premier, was a very serious one to make; but similar statements to that contained in it had been made over and over again by Ministers, and, he regretted to say, without being stopped by the House. This did not differ much from votes of condemnation such as were heard of in other places—not condemnations of the policy of the Government, but of official statements made by members of Parliament from their places in Parliament. He knew of no rule by which, if a Minister made a statement in his place in Parliament that could be proved to be inconsistent with clearly admitted facts, he should not be condemned for doing so. If a Minister were guilty of such conduct he was not only open to censure, but he would deserve that the censure should be put on record. He trusted such an occasion would not arise, but if it did he saw no reason why the House should be debarred from expressing their opinion on the matter. If the motion were made he could not see his

way to support it; but he saw no reason why it should not be made. It stated that the Premier had made a statement in the House, last month, which was inconsistent with official documents. If the matter was discussed, no doubt it would turn out that such was not the case. They were not now discussing the merits of the case, however, but simply whether it was open to Parliament to pass such a condemnation. He saw no reason why it should not be passed if the occasion justified it; but as to whether the occasion did justify it the hon. member who moved it was the judge in the first instance, and then the House. If he had sufficient material to prove his statement he would justify his action, and if he did not bring forward that evidence the motion would be negatived. If after having made the statement it was found that the material produced in support was entirely insufficient, it would be a very proper course to take steps to have the motion expunged; but to do so without hearing the motion, or allowing any opportunity to bring forward proof, was nothing less than a very serious abridgment of the privilege of freedom of speech in Parliament. No one regretted more than he did when freedom of speech degenerated into licence. Nothing was more necessary than the utmost freedom of speech, but licence tended not to preserve freedom, but to restrict it. Unnecessary licence only resulted in restrictions which would not otherwise be desirable. There was no proof at the present time that anything but the proper exercise of freedom of speech was intended; and, at all events, until there was proof it was not right to seek to condemn a member for asking an opportunity to be heard. It would be a most dangerous precedent, because at any time a Government that had a majority might prevent a discussion on any subject if they chose. He warned the Government—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Oh, we're sick of warnings.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the Colonial Secretary might be too old a sinner to take his advice, but the hon. gentleman was not the House. Fortunately, his example was not followed to a very great extent, and it would be still less, he trusted, by those who succeeded the present hon. members. He maintained that it was most important that the House should not be led by a sudden wind of fancy to do something that would afterwards lead to disastrous results. He regretted that the notice of motion had been given, but he regretted still more that the Government, instead of dealing with the matter as they should have done, had taken a method of dealing with the matter which was without precedent in this colony and very unusual in any country.

Mr. AMHURST said he much admired the special pleading of the leader of the Oppo-

sition, and he felt sympathy for him in his efforts to make the best of a bad case in defence of one of what he might term the tail of his followers. He (Mr. Amhurst) was not given to quoting Scripture, but on this occasion he would trouble the House. If an eye offend us we were told to pluck it out; and he would advise the hon. gentleman to cut off the last joint of his tail and throw it to the dogs, who would not eat it, or if they did would be poisoned.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the question was a very serious one, involving the rights and privileges of the House. He approached the matter under some disadvantages, not having had an opportunity of examining precedents in such cases. No doubt the Speaker had a right not only to call the attention of any hon. member to any unbecoming matter in a motion, but he had also the right to alter it. That was a right that had been exercised by Speakers as one appertaining to the office. He must be the judge as to what was an unbecoming expression just as he was a judge of what was an unparliamentary expression. It would be well, also, that the Speaker should exercise that right with some stringency. On the other hand, he felt that to restrict the right of expressing an opinion on any subject, whatever that opinion might be, so long as expressed in decorous and parliamentary language, was undoubtedly restricting the right of debate in Parliament; and that was a thing that should be very carefully considered. There used to be at one time the practice of impeachment, and all sorts of crimes had been imputed to Ministers—crimes far greater than anything imputed to a Minister in the motion in question—though a direct charge of untruthfulness was, no doubt, a very grave imputation. But was it to be inferred that a Minister could not be impeached because the impeachment could be set aside by such a motion as that of the Colonial Secretary? Therefore, it seemed that, whilst the Speaker should very jealously guard against the introduction of any but decorous language, there were no bounds to the limits within which accusations might be made, so long as the conditions he had described were observed. He would confine himself simply to this statement: he did not think that anyone ought to be precluded from discussing any subject, because the preservation of the liberty of discussion was the very foundation of the liberties of this House. If the right to discuss was to be overriden by such a motion as this, the freedom of debate was at an end; and, even though there might be no substantial ground for the statement that might be made, any representative of the people should have the liberty to make it if he saw fit.

Mr. SCOTT said the 40th Standing Order was very clear, and he took it that it was meant for a purpose, and was not to be

a dead letter simply. The motion was couched in unbecoming language, and it was only the House who could be the judge. He considered this a case in which the Standing Order should be stringently enforced.

Mr. DICKSON said, although he was of opinion that the motion should not be expunged, he did not wish to be understood as approving of it. If it went to a discussion he should disapprove of it in its present shape; but, at the same time, he took exception to the statement of the last speaker that it contained unbecoming expressions. He could not see that there were any expressions in it which were indecent, or of an improper character for publication, or anything unbecoming to be placed on the records of the House. If the Standing Order was to apply to motions of a character like this, a majority of the House could at any time affirm that a motion contained unbecoming expressions. He desired to uphold the authority of the Speaker in this matter, but he regarded with distrust any attempt to restrict the forms of motions or prevent a motion being discussed, simply because some member of the House might consider that it contained unbecoming expressions. The words of the Standing Order were exceedingly vague. He disclaimed any sympathy with the motion, but thought the wiser course would have been to have pointed out wherein the expressions were opposed to the forms of the House, and have allowed the hon. member an opportunity of altering the motion. He would rather see the motion come on for discussion, feeling sure the good sense of the House would give it a proper termination than see a system introduced which would enable a majority to make reprisals and prevent the discussion of motions.

Mr. Low was understood to say that if the hon. member who tabled the motion had any sense of propriety they should not have had such a motion that evening.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the leader of the Opposition had put it as if the freedom of debate was in danger of being stifled. He believed, on the other hand, that the freedom of debate was in no way endangered, and that hon. members opposite who argued that it was, really held the same belief. They were arguing to support an hon. member who was a member of their party. The three leaders of the other side who had spoken had disclaimed having any sympathy with the motion as it stood. How could the freedom of debate be endangered? The case stood thus: If an hon. member got up and made a statement, and another hon. member would not accept but denied it, the Speaker compelled him to accept it. In this instance, an hon. member put a motion on the paper declining to accept an hon. member's statement, which motion the House compelled that hon. member to

withdraw. Where was the difference? In the one case the Speaker made the hon. member withdraw; in this case the House said the hon. member must withdraw his statement, and that it should not remain on the records. This was called stifling the freedom of debate. If the freedom of debate was in no more danger than it was by the motion of the Colonial Secretary, it would never be endangered. He was astonished at members opposite treating the question in the manner that they had, and was of opinion that the fact of the Speaker calling attention to the matter was quite sufficient to have stopped all debate upon the subject.

Question—That notice of motion No. 7 be expunged from the paper—put and passed.

SALE OF RUNS IN SETTLED DISTRICTS.

Mr. REA moved—

1. That this House is of opinion that the time has arrived for the more thickly settling of Pastoral Tenants on the coast lands of this colony.

2. That this colony has now a very favourable opportunity of offering increased facilities for men of small means now residing in this and the other colonies becoming resident on the coast lands as Pastoral Tenants.

3. That this House is of opinion that the runs in the Settled Districts advertised to be offered by auction on 25th September instant should be withdrawn from sale, for the purposes of subdivision into sizes of as near that of 25 square miles as possible.

4. That after said subdivision said runs should be advertised to be open for tender at the highest tender over three (3) farthings per acre per annum, for five (5) years. Tenders to close in January next.

5. That this House is of opinion that such advertisements should be published in the Sydney and Melbourne newspapers, as well as in the local newspapers in Queensland.

He said that the occasion of bringing the motion before the House had arisen in consequence of his seeing by the *Government Gazette* that some fifty odd runs in the settled districts were to be sold on one day; and as the Minister for Lands had spoken of an empty exchequer, he (Mr. Rea) held that this was a legitimate opportunity of testing whether there was a chance of getting more rents for the colony's squatting country than they had hitherto. When objection was taken at the earlier part of the session to the cutting up the runs and postponing the sales by auction, the Premier said it would be inflicting a great hardship to turn off the then occupants, as they would have no opportunity of looking out new country; but these arguments could not apply now, for they had all the time since to look for new country, and had had for nothing the use of the coast country previously held by them. The occasion of the Sydney Exhibition, when people from all parts would

muster in Sydney, was an opportunity Queensland should not lose sight of in intimating that she offered an opportunity to graziers which no other colony offered, because neither in Victoria nor New South Wales could a man get twenty-five square miles of country at three-farthings per acre per annum. The Minister for Lands would be conferring a benefit upon the country by taking advantage of the opportunity he now possessed of utilising the coast country and settling inhabitants upon it much closer than had ever been done before. This was a legitimate opportunity of facilitating the close settlement mentioned in the Speech. It could be notified that these lands were not in the wilds, but near to the towns and free from blacks and such dangers. He knew what the result would be if the Government persevered with their intention to submit all the runs on the 25th instant. The runs would not be bid for; they would be forfeited and the present occupants, would get them afterwards at £1 per square mile if they chose. He begged to move the motion.

After a pause,

Mr. GRIFFITH said that a motion of this kind introduced in a temperate manner was deserving of notice from the Minister for Lands. He was afraid the hon. gentleman had taken the advice of the Colonial Secretary, who did not appear to consider that courtesy was an element in the conduct of business in the House. A matter of so much importance was worthy of being seriously discussed. He did not understand the rule of the Government. They were so high and mighty that they could sit silent and simply vote against a thing. They had carried on that line during the session. They kept their supporters quiet in the earlier part; they had always had a solid voting machine, and now they would not speak themselves. Certainly this thing would not last. The Government would gain nothing by conduct of that kind; it did not exalt them in the eyes of the country. They did not make themselves other than they were by putting on these airs of magnificence. All the airs they could put on would not make them magnificent; they were just the men they were known to be, and if they chose to be discourteous to hon. members it did not do them any good, and did not exalt the character of that Parliament. This was a very important question; but he was almost afraid that the advice of the Colonial Secretary pervaded the whole of the Ministerial side of the House. The hon. member had called the attention of the House, as he had a perfect right to do, to the fact that a sale of runs was going to take place on the 25th of this month. When an attempt was previously made to sell these runs it was made under circumstances which indicated, in the minds of many per-

sons, that the Government did not desire to sell them at all, and, as they anticipated, a great many were not sold. Now it appeared that the same process was to be gone through in precisely the same manner. The action of the Government in this matter did not look as if they really intended to allow these runs to be taken up by anybody but the present occupants. That was the complaint made; and the hon. member now suggested as against that that the runs should be put up in smaller areas, so as to afford an opportunity to men of smaller means to acquire them. When the matter was previously referred to, some hon. members expressed an opinion that it was the intention of the Government to prevent these runs being sold; but, at any rate, the late experiment having been unsuccessful, it was the proper course to suggest that a change should be made in the mode of dealing with them—that as the men of larger means had not bought them they should be put up in smaller lots, so as to enable men of smaller means to take them up. Had the Minister for Lands nothing to say about this? Was he ashamed of his conduct that he wished to pass the matter over without saying anything about it, or what was it? They heard a good deal about this at the beginning of the session, but the Minister for Lands then made a pitiful explanation of his conduct; and, as his attention was now again called to the matter, the least he could do was to give some justification for the action he proposed to take. So much for the first three resolutions. With regard to the fourth, effect could not be given to it because the Act of 1876 prescribed how the runs should be dealt with. But the fact of one resolution being impracticable was no reason why the suggestions in the others should not be carried out. If the last sales were unsuccessful, why in the name of all that was sensible should the Minister for Lands repeat the same experiment, unless he deliberately anticipated the same results? They had heard a great deal about the black-mail that was supposed to have been levied by imaginary persons who had never turned up, and now exactly the same thing was to take place. Previous results had shown that it was very necessary that some steps should be taken in the matter, and the suggestion of the hon. member for Rockhampton was a very rational and reasonable step to take.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said the hon. member for North Brisbane seemed to have got his preaching boots on. He had been officiating as high priest to that side of the House, and to his unfortunate self in particular, as to his want of courtesy. He had shown no discourtesy to the hon. member that he was aware of, and he thought he (Mr. Griffith) might allow the Government to manage their own business

their own way, because he might be perfectly certain that whether he liked it or not they would manage it their own way; and when a resolution of this sort, which could have no practical effect, and one of which the hon. member himself had shown went directly against the existing law, was brought forward, surely the Government could choose whether they would waste the time of hon. members, and fag themselves by piping wind-bags. They would not do it—not even to please the hon. gentleman and assist the fag-end of his tail. They would conduct their business their own way. As to the great point the hon. member made that they had heard no more about the levying of black-mail, if he looked at the *Gazette* he would see that the magistrate who levied black-mail had been superseded. That was the only case which was ever brought under his notice where black-mail was proved to have been levied, and that was the action taken. The Government did not want the motion to be carried if they could possibly help it, but they were not going to debate an impracticable resolution of no earthly use at the end of the session.

Mr. DOUGLAS said almost all motions brought forward at this period of the session were more or less impracticable. They could not result in very much, but still the Government might briefly state their views on the matters brought forward.

Mr. DICKSON thought that, after the action of the Government with regard to the previous sale of runs under the Settled District Pastoral Leases Act, the hon. gentleman who introduced the motion might very fairly draw attention to the carrying out of that Act in its present shape, because that Act, to his (Mr. Dickson's) mind, had two aspects. If the Minister for Lands had stated that the Government intended to consider primarily the interests of the present lessees of those runs, it would have settled the question.

Mr. REA, in reply, said the Colonial Secretary was quite correct in saying that the Ministers would have their own way, as they had had that ever since they had been in office, both as regarded the way in which they put up the runs for auction, the manner in which they had got the banking affairs of the colony into their own hands, and the way in which they had put the public lands into the hands of the outside squatters and had taxed the coast residents. With the permission of the House, he would withdraw the 4th clause of the resolutions.

Clause withdrawn accordingly.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—

AYES, 10.

Messrs. Dickson, Rea, Hendren, Kates, Grimes, Douglas, Beattie, Meston, Groom, and Macfarlane (Ipswich).

NOES, 18.

Messrs. McIlwraith, Perkins, Persse, Stevens, Cooper, Amhurst, Macrossan, Palmer, Norton, H. W. Palmer, O'Sullivan, Hamilton, Lalor, Stevenson, Hill, Scott, Low, and Swanwick.

Question resolved in the negative.

COMPENSATION TO A. M. HUTCHINSON.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN moved—

That the House will, at its next meeting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for 1879-80, the sum of Two hundred pounds, to be paid to A. M. Hutchinson, late Collector of Customs, Ipswich, in lieu of twelve months' leave of absence, which he was entitled to receive under the Civil Service Act of 1863.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there would be no objection on the part of the Government to allow the motion to go as a formal one, in order to get on to the next business on the paper, and to take the debate on it in committee. It must be understood, however, that the Government did not bind themselves in any way.

Question put and passed.

SUNDAY TRAINS.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN, pursuant to notice, moved—

1. That in the opinion of the House it will be advantageous to the residents of Brisbane and Ipswich, and to persons dwelling along the railway line, that morning and evening Trains be run between said places upon Sundays.

2. That an Address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause effect to be given to the above resolution.

A long debate took place on the same question two years ago, and he was only now asking to do in this colony what was done all over the world. In England, America, and other countries, Sunday trains were the most popular and the most profitable, and it was only right that persons who were locked up in their places of business all the week should on Sundays have facilities afforded them for enjoying the fresh air of the country. Sunday trains were also desirable to enable people living along the line of railway where there were no clergymen, to attend places of worship in the city. As a great many hon. members were anxious to give their opinions on the subject, he reserved his arguments for his reply.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was an experiment well worth trying, but in trying it it must be only as an experiment, because if this motion were carried, and it was found in six months' time that Sunday trains did not pay, it would not be advisable to go on running them. Per-

sonally he believed it would pay, and would extend many advantages to people along the line which they did not obtain at present. There were a good many people on the line who had no opportunity of going to church at all; but there were also those who had no intention of going to church, and who would like to take a trip into the country and enjoy the fresh air. He did not see why they should be deprived of the advantage of a Sunday outing. One of the principal objections raised was that so many people would be employed on the Sunday; but there would be no more employed than the driver, fireman, guard, and one other. The stationmasters would not be employed on Sunday at all. As regarded the employes of the railway they would be very glad to give one Sunday out of five or six for the purpose of running these trains, especially as they were paid overtime for it. If the motion were carried he would be happy to put it in operation, with the proviso that it was an experiment only.

Mr. MACFARLANE hoped it was the opinion of very few hon. members that Sunday trains were wanted. The hon. member who had introduced the motion had not shown what advantages were to be derived; but he trusted he relied on something more than that the trains would pay. The country did not demand railway communication between Brisbane and Ipswich on the Sabbath Day; there had been no agitation for it, or indication of public feeling in the matter, either in the towns or along the line, neither had the church-going people complained. He therefore hoped the House would pause before taking this step. Let them regard all the motions which the hon. member for Stanley had brought forward this session, and it would be observed they were all of an Ishmaelitic tendency, and this one most of all. It would only give people an opportunity of indulging their selfish gratifications, and would tend to the degradation and fall of the colony. Woe be to the country which disregarded the Sabbath!

Mr. RUTLEDGE said that he had as great an abhorrence as any man of cant, but he held certain views and was governed in his private and public life by certain principles, and from those principles he did not deem it his duty to beat a retreat either in private or public. He should hold himself untrue to those principles if he did not give his reasons for opposing the motion. A great deal had been said in favour of the motion, because it would give people who were occupied during the week an opportunity of getting a little fresh air. If an argument of that description were raised with reference to a large over-populated town, he could understand it, but it did not apply with the same force in Brisbane where the population was very small

and there was plenty of breathing space. On the ground of health, therefore—of giving people an opportunity of getting away from the town—Sunday trains were not required. Nor could there be a demand for trains for the convenience of church-goers, for there were churches in every direction and at frequent intervals. They were all familiar with the argument that Sunday trains would impose seven days' work a week upon the engine-drivers instead of six, but that was not an insuperable difficulty. When this question was debated last year on the motion of the then hon. member for Warrego, Mr. Walsh, he carefully read the speeches, and the argument which pleased him most was that advanced by the hon. member for the Balonne. True, if the motion were carried, the gate-women, like the one at Moggil, who worked night and day for the handsome remuneration of 12s. a-week, would have their lives turned into one ceaseless round of drudgery; but that was not so good a reason why Sunday trains should not be run as that set forth by the hon. member for the Balonne. There was a good old Book which none of them despised, which formed the basis of their liberties, and upon which the stability of England's Throne and Crown depended; and one great rule in that divine code was that the Sabbath Day should be kept holy. That was as binding upon them as the commandment that they were not to commit adultery. That day was to be kept particularly sacred, and it would not do to bring that teaching into contempt or disrepute. He had felt glad to think that the hon. member for the Balonne had given expression to similar opinions, which he informed them he had learned at his mother's knee, and he had a respect for him ever since for his manliness in saying so. Because he believed that the running of Sunday trains would tend to detract from the sacredness and solemnity of the seventh day, it would be his duty, as a representative of some of the people of the colony, to vote against the motion.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said if the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) intended to observe the seventh day of the week he would keep Saturday, for Sunday was the first day of the week. Sunday was not the Sabbath, and they had no instructions to keep it holy. Without going far into Scripture, they would see that the disciples not only went out on Sunday, but they stole corn, too, on that day; and that was far worse than travelling by railway. He did not believe in any of this high falutin' about the Sabbath Day. Sitting at home, twiddling thumbs, smoking tobacco, and drinking whisky, as they did in Scotland, was not keeping Sunday holy; but going out and enjoying the beauties of nature, and that could not be done in either Bris-

bane or Ipswich on the "Sawbath." To him the question presented itself only in one light—would it pay? If it would, and if he were Minister for Works, he should, after giving hon. members an opportunity of relieving their consciences by voting against the motion, commence the running of Sunday trains—as was done in New South Wales, Victoria, and all over England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Mr. HENDREN reminded the Colonial Secretary that under the Christian dispensation it was arranged that the first day of the week should be the Christian Sabbath, and that to run trains on that day would be to desecrate it. If the experiment were tried he did not believe it would pay after the first two months—after the novelty of the thing had worn off. If introduced, the system would deprive the hard-worked railway employes of their one day of rest—of their only opportunity of enjoying a quiet day with their families or attending a place of worship. The people had not asked for Sunday trains, and on their behalf he should vote against the motion.

Mr. AMHURST said the theology of the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) seemed to have got a little mixed, for he seemed to think it was as awful a crime to travel by railway on Sunday as to commit adultery.

Mr. GRIMES said he agreed thoroughly with the views of the hon. members for Ipswich and Enoggera. If the strongest argument in favour of the motion was that Sunday trains would enable people to attend places of worship, it was a very weak one, for there were churches at short intervals all along the line—at Brisbane, Petrie Terrace, Milton, Toowong, Indooroopilly, Sherwood, Oxley, Goodna, Redbank, and Bundamba. No doubt, a small portion of the community who had no regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath might desire to spend that day in accordance with what he might call the evil imaginings of their hearts: they were, he trusted, so small in number that Sunday trains, supported by them alone, would not pay. The running of Sunday trains would necessitate the employment, not only of the conductors of the train, but also of the very hard-worked officials at the stations. Some of them had to work sixteen hours out of the twenty-four on six days in the week, and they should not be required to work on the seventh day for the benefit of a few persons.

Mr. DICKSON said the time must come when Sunday travelling would be adopted, but he doubted whether it was desirable in the present state of the revenue to increase the expenditure by running extra trains. On the last occasion when this motion was before the House he had voted against it, because the head of the department, on inquiry being made, said he was convinced the trains would not pay. He

believed that, with the exception of the season ticket-holders, very few would avail themselves of Sunday trains; but if it were shown that the trains would pay he should have had no hesitation in supporting the motion. He had no sentimental objection to the experiment, but he considered that there should have been some expression of opinion from the residents along the line. On the understanding that the Minister for Works would keep the receipts from these trains apart from ordinary railway revenue, and, if after four or six months it was shown to be a losing game, would discontinue them, he should be disposed to support the resolution.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he regarded the question from a working-man's point of view. The working man considered he had a right to one day in seven as a day of complete rest, and he (Mr. Douglas) should look upon any invasion of that right with great jealousy and dislike. He held that what could lawfully be done on any other day might lawfully be done on Sunday; but the right to a day of complete rest was highly valued by labouring people, and he considered their employment on that day was undesirable if it could be avoided. He was in favour of offering every possible facility for a reasonable and rational amusement—he believed in museums, libraries, and other institutions of that kind, and he would go so far as to add theatres, under certain circumstances, being thrown open on Sundays. Everything should be done to relax the strain of life by intellectual and rational amusements, but they should sacredly guard the rights of labour in connection with the seventh day.

Mr. SCOTT said he also looked upon the question from a working-man's point of view, but he saw it in a different light from the last speaker's. He noticed that working people along the line crowded the trains on holidays for the sake of getting out of town, and he believed they would be glad to do the same thing on Sundays. Wealthy men had horses and buggies, and could take their recreation as they chose, but for working men who were occupied all the week, Sunday was the only day they had to get outside and see the country.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the arguments on both sides had been very fair, with the exception of those of the hon. member for Ipswich, who had attacked him very improperly. He said that he (Mr. O'Sullivan) had a hand in dismissing 103 men from the yards in Ipswich; that he had opposed the Civil Servants; and that his hand had been raised against every man. With regard to the first statement, he could not gather the meaning of the assertion without going beyond what the hon. member had said. He would do so, therefore, and take the opportunity of saying that he unhesitat-

ingly branded any man as a gross liar, who, outside the House or in any part of the colony, said such a thing.

Mr. MACFARLANE requested that the words used should be taken down.

The SPEAKER asked which were the words to which objection was taken.

Mr. MACFARLANE: The word "liar."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I did not refer to any member of the House.

The SPEAKER said the hon. member had stated that he did not refer to any member of the House; at the same time, his language was more strong than was desirable.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he apologised. He knew the expression was unparliamentary if applied to any member of the House, but he referred to those outside who had spread such statements. He would now leave the motion in the hands of the House, and in doing so would ask the Minister for Works to give the thing a fair trial. He was credibly informed that the average number of passengers between Sydney and Parramatta on Sundays was 5,000. His reason for asking for a fair trial was that, last time an attempt was made to run Sunday trains, several little attempts were made to stop them by making out that they were not used. In one case a kangaroo was put into the train, and a letter sent to the paper to say that a kangaroo was the only passenger that trip. He hoped the Minister for Works would not allow such little dodges to override his intention.

Mr. BEATTIE said he had no sentimental objection to the motion being carried; but he should like to know the cost of running a train to Ipswich?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A little over £5.

Mr. BEATTIE said when an application was made to the Railway Department for an excursion train to carry 200 people to Goodna and back, the people who applied were told the charge would be £40. If a train to Ipswich only cost £5, the department was surely trying to make a large profit. If the cost did not exceed £5, he did not see why the experiment should not be tried. He did not think, however, that it would pay. The time had not arrived, and the population was not here. The working classes would not take advantage of trains run on the Sunday for pleasure; it was too expensive for them in these dull times.

Question put.

The House divided:—

AYES, 17.

Messrs. A. H. Palmer, Macrossan, Perkins, Dickson, Meston, Scott, Norton, Hill, Hamilton, Lator, Persse, Stevens, H. W. Palmer, Amhurst, Cooper, O'Sullivan, and Groom.

NOES, 9.

Messrs. Griffith, Douglas, Rea, Rutledge, Beattie, Low, Grimes, Macfarlane (Ipswich), and Hendren.

Question, therefore, resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House, at seven minutes to 11 o'clock, adjourned until Monday.