

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 13 JULY 1880

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 13 July, 1880.

Presentation of Address in Reply.—Answer to Address in Reply.—Questions.—Petitions.—Branch Lines.—Formal Motion.—Mail Contract.—Motion for Adjournment.—New Bills—first reading.—Joint Committees.—*Hansard*.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The SPEAKER invited the Members in attendance to proceed to Government House to present to His Excellency the Administrator of the Government the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech delivered by His Excellency.

The SPEAKER, accompanied by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and Honourable Members, accordingly proceeded to Government House.

ANSWER TO ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The SPEAKER, on returning, announced that the Assembly had been to Government House, and there presented their Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech, to which His Excellency was pleased to make the following answer :—

“MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN,—

“It gives me pleasure to thank you for your assurance of loyalty and affection to Her Gracious Majesty's throne and person, and for your congratulations on my having assumed the Administration of the Government of this Colony; and also for your intention to carefully and seriously consider the various important measures submitted to you; and I trust that your labours will result in the passing of such laws as will promote the advancement and prosperity of the Colony.

“JOSHUA P. BELL.

“Government House,
“Brisbane, 13 July, 1880.”

QUESTIONS.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH, pursuant to notice, asked the Secretary for Public Works,—

1. Does the ship “Warwick,” lately arrived in Moreton Bay, bring steel rails for the Government?

2. If so, are they carried under the contract lately made between the Government and Messrs. McIlwraith, McEacharn, and Co.?

3. Is she a “full-cargo” ship, or a “berth” ship?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) replied,—

No. 1. Yes; about 100 tons steel rails.

No. 2. Yes.

No. 3. No official advice; but she is believed to be a berth ship.

PETITIONS.

Mr. GRIFFITH presented a petition from certain Licensed Draymen against the action of the Minister for Works in granting a monopoly of the carrying trade from the Railway Station, Brisbane, to one Company, and praying for inquiry into the same.

On the motion of the hon. member, the petition was read and received.

Mr. RUTLEDGE presented a petition from A. H. Palmer and others, asking for leave to introduce a Bill to enable them to sell or lease certain Lands granted to the Agricultural and National Association of Queensland; and, on the motion of the hon. member, the petition was received.

BRANCH LINES.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS laid on the table the Plans, Sections, and Book of Reference of the Railway from Ipswich to Fassifern *via* the main road; also, the Plans, Sections, and Book of Reference of the Railway from Emerald to Clermont. In regard to the first-mentioned line, he stated that, with the permission of the House, he would wish to make some simple alterations.

FORMAL MOTION.

On the motion of Mr. McLEAN, it was ordered—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, copies of all Correspondence in connection with the removal of Mr. Benjamin H. Palmer from the Committee of the Primary School at Cooktown.

MAIL CONTRACT.

On the motion standing in the name of the PREMIER being called—That the contract made on the 6th May, 1880, between Thomas McIlwraith and William Mackinnon, Eli Lees, William Patrick Andrew, Peter Denny, Alexander Fraser, Archibald Gray, and Edwyn Sandys Dawes, for a through Steam Service between London and Brisbane, be ratified by this House,

The PREMIER asked permission of the House to move that it should at its next sitting go into Committee of the Whole to consider the matter.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that on the last occasion when a similar proposition was made, in 1872, a debate had taken place in the House before going into Committee, and hon. members were placed in possession of considerable information; and he considered it would have been better if such were the case on the present occasion. The information they had received was very scanty, and many members had never seen the contract—none of them before last Saturday. The time, therefore, had been very short. He would further point out that the proposal involved the expenditure of a large sum of money, £55,000 a year, for at least eight years—nearly half-a-million. So far as they knew of the financial condition of the colony, it was unsatisfactory; they could not say how

the revenue was supposed to be increased in the future, and it became a material element to know what the financial position of the colony was. He made this suggestion because the House would be very much assisted in coming to a conclusion on the merits of the matter, and he hoped it would not be made a party question. It was not necessary for the House to pronounce on the contract till the 6th August, so that there was plenty of time to hear the Premier's Financial Statement. Moreover, as it would be necessary for the Government to ask for a vote on account during the present month, he presumed that the Colonial Treasurer would be able to favour them with the Financial Statement before the end of the month. He asked this because he believed the discussion would be largely facilitated if they were in possession of the financial proposals of the Government. It was too much to ask them to vote £55,000 for eight years blindly, and without saying where the money was to come from. All they knew at present was that they had not got it. If they were at the last day of the month he could understand the shortness of the notice; but the members of the House, and the country at large, were deeply interested in the subject, and it was very desirable that it should be discussed, as far as possible, with a knowledge of the subject.

The PREMIER said he could not understand a complaint of the action he had taken. The matter was only postponed till to-morrow, thereby giving hon. members a day extra to consider the matter. It was his intention, if possible, when he made the motion, to bring on the debate and conclude it to-day; but finding that the matter must be introduced in committee, he had to postpone it till to-morrow. The hon. gentleman said he should have liked to hear the Financial Statement before giving his consent. He should have liked to have been in a position to give it, but he could only intimate that there was not the slightest chance of hearing the Statement before the debate. The contract had to be ratified before the 6th August, and he could not promise his Financial Statement before, nor was it necessary. He had taken the earliest opportunity of putting the contract on the table of the House. It was one of the first papers that had been in possession of the members. Notice had been given on Tuesday last and carried on Wednesday. He did not know what more the hon. gentleman wanted. If he wanted to hear a speech from him on the subject it would be unnecessarily taking up the time of the House, because when he did introduce the motion the Speaker would be in the chair, and he would be prepared in a committee of the whole House to state all his reasons for entering into the contract.

The Hon. J. DOUGLAS said they should not be surprised at the remarks made by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition benches, because whenever the motion came on, whether to-morrow or the day after, it was one involving large considerations; and he unhesitatingly expressed his opinion that, however good the contract might be in some respects, and justifiable under some circumstances, it was not justifiable under the present circumstances. He regretted to hear that they were not to have the Financial Statement so soon as they hoped they might. They were not in a position to deal with an important matter like this till they had heard the Financial Statement. This contract, if accepted by a resolution of the House, bound them for eight years to a subsidy of £55,000, and practically amounted to an expenditure of half-a-million. Until they knew how they stood, he should be sorry by any action of the House to commit the Parliament to any such responsi-

bility. They knew that there was a considerable deficit; but they did not know till the Statement from him what their obligations were for the past two years, nor how the deficit was to be made up; and until they had a detailed reconsideration of the policy of the last two years, they did not seem to him to be in a position to deal with such a large matter. Let the contract be as good as it might, let there be as many reasons to be urged in favour of the policy as possible, there was a time and season for everything, and this was not the time to enter into such a contract. He was therefore glad that the leader of the Opposition had had the opportunity of interrogating the Government. He extremely regretted to learn that it was the intention of the Premier to force on the consideration of this question before the financial debate came on. He had no doubt that, if it were necessary and application were made to the gentlemen with whom the provisional contract had been made, they would be willing to extend the time for five or six months. There would be no inconvenience to the public if there were a lapse of four or six months, or even a year, in the Torres Straits mail, when the present contract expired. Their letters would come even more rapidly than by the Torres Straits route, and the public would suffer no inconvenience. They would not suffer the least if there were an hiatus of six months between the cessation of the present contract and the acceptance of another. If any contract was entered into, it might just as well be then as now. The present financial state of the colony was very serious indeed, and there never was a time in the history of the colony when it was more so, and when their resources had been so seriously taxed as they would in all probability be during the next two or three years. If they were not to drift into the unbusiness-like transaction of really funding their accruing deficits as part of the public debt they must face this serious position, and endeavour to make both ends meet. The expenditure and revenue must be approximated to a greater extent than at present if they hoped to maintain their credit among the Australian colonies. Finances at this juncture should precede all other considerations. He regretted extremely the intention to force on a delivery of opinion on the contract before the statement of finance had been proceeded with. For his own part he would rather give a vote on account, and even adjourn for a month, if it was the intention of the Premier to delay the Financial Statement. If the hon. gentleman assured the House that he could not make it, well and good; but he (Mr. Douglas), for one, did not feel disposed to deal with anything—certainly with no important business—till it was made.

Question put and passed.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. G. M. SIMPSON moved the adjournment of the House to draw attention to a paragraph in that day's *Courier* in reference to the extension of the South Western Railway beyond Roma. It said—

“With reference to the extension of the Western line beyond Roma, for which tenders were opened on June 25, we learn that the Government have returned the tenderers the amount of their deposits, having decided that nothing farther shall be done in the matter pending the decision of Parliament with regard to the offer of the English syndicate to construct a line from Roma to the Gulf of Carpentaria, and which will be brought before the Legislature at an early date by the Premier.”

He supposed they might take that as an indication of the intention of the Government to stop the construction of the line beyond Roma. If so, he wished, for one, to object to any such action on their part. They had had placed in their hands an exhaustive report upon the working of the Railway Department during the year 1879, and one of the earliest lines of that report said, "An extension of the Western Railway from Roma to Mitchell, 53 miles, was authorised by Parliament." He did not know why that extension was not to be carried out. In the Appendix 31 of that report they found the money for the survey of the line had been voted. They knew that the line had been surveyed, all the plans were ready, and there was at once the means of employing a large number of men in that district. He heard that the Government proposed to carry out the branch lines and other lines, but he did not see where these men could be employed at once. He was informed by people in the district that a large number of these men would be thrown out of work, and they would either come down to swamp the labour market in Brisbane and the southern part of the colony, or go out of the colony altogether. He thought that what they would do would be to go to New South Wales. There they heard that the Government, within the last fortnight, had passed plans and specifications for considerable additions to the railway—one, especially, going up the Bourke with the express intention of tapping the commerce of Queensland. He could not understand what was the object of a number of members of that House, lately, in trying to stop this and the other lines; but especially the southern members trying to stop that extension. If they looked at the map of Queensland they would find that Rockhampton was west of Chinchilla, and that Townsville was west of Mitchell. At the same time, members of the southern districts were shortsighted enough to encourage the opposition to the extension beyond Roma. He, for one, wished to enter a protest against the tender for that line not being accepted. He was told an eligible tender had been put in for a cost of about £2,050 per mile. In Appendix 32 of the report they found that the cost of the line from "Brisbane to Ipswich was £18,813 per mile; Ipswich to deviation, £18,002; Ipswich to Toowoomba, £15,659; Gowrie Junction to Warwick, £6,739; Dalby to end of fifth section, £8,564." But there was a tender put in for £2,050 per mile for the construction of these fifty miles. He thought that the tender ought to be accepted, and that those men who were in that district ought to be kept employed, and not sent over the Border. He did not wish to say much, but he could not let that paragraph pass without entering his protest against the non-extension of the line, which would be a benefit to the southern districts.

Mr. MOREHEAD thought it would be very unwise to proceed with the construction of the railway from Roma to Mitchell; it would do no good whatever in the direction indicated. It would in no way tap the district that would be tapped by the New South Wales railway. The railway, to be of service, should go a good deal to the south of west from Roma; but, unfortunately, the action of the Government of which the hon. member for Maryborough was the head had caused large portions of land to be thrown into the hands of private proprietors, and block railway extension in that direction. But they had a proposal to be made by the Premier that a railway should be constructed on a system of land grants. If it was likely to be proposed by this syndicate to form the line in the way proposed, the House should consider whether farther extension should be paid for by a system of land

grants or from the revenue of the colony as before. He was certain there was not sufficient unalienated land in the district through which this railway passed to pay the £100,000 spoken of; and as the line would have to be paid for by the land through which it passed, and as that reserve at present did not extend beyond Mitchell, he would like to know how it was proposed to pay for the railway except by general taxation. Those, he took it, were good and sufficient reasons, until the question of the consideration of railways by land grants had been considered, why it would not be wise to extend the railway at present. The line to be effective, as he had intimated before, should come down towards Cunnamulla, and not run parallel with the Rockhampton line. There would not be a single bale of wool more brought down if it went towards Mitchell than was brought down at the present time; but if it went south of west there must be a great increase of traffic. In his opinion, therefore, the Government had acted wisely in the course they had taken in stopping the extension.

Mr. HENDREN called the attention of the Government to the want of accommodation at Moggill Ferry Railway Station. About eighteen months or two years ago application had been made by the farmers and inhabitants of the district for a shed and goods platform at that place. Application had subsequently been made repeatedly by himself, personally and by letter, stating the wants of the people there; but he had got no satisfaction on the matter whatever. Last month he had received a reply from the Works Office, to the effect that the amount of trade or freight from Moggill Ferry station would not warrant the Minister for Works in expending so much money as would be required to erect a shed and platform there. About eighteen months ago plan and estimates had been made of the cost of the work, and they came to something like £150. If the Minister for Works would only make inquiry he would find that the quantity of agricultural produce sent from the district—river and road—would be sufficient to pay not only 5 per cent. on an expenditure of £150, but 75 per cent., and it would be reproductive at once. He did not think the work would cost much. When the people did want a truck a requisition had to be sent for it, the Commissioner for Railways had to send tarpaulins to cover the goods, and the people were at a loss in this way by delays that would be prevented by the erection of a shed. That was not the way to treat farmers who had bought and cultivated their lands for so many years, and had contributed as much as any others to the revenues and welfare of the colony. He supposed that part of his electorate was left out in the cold because they had a member to support the Opposition. He thought it a shame that these people should be compelled to go on for two years making application over a small matter of that kind. He had not been in the House when the Minister for Works had made certain statements last week, but he understood he had said that the construction of the branch railways could not be gone on with because people were asking too much payment for the land; that the extension of the line from Ipswich to Fassifern would cost £16,000, and from Brisbane to Sandgate £63,000. The distance from Ipswich to Harrisville is twenty miles, and for a railway twenty miles long and one chain wide 160 acres would be required, and if the owners asked too much for it the Minister for Works had the machinery to get it valued by arbitration. At £4 an acre it would come to £640. How the Minister for Works arrived at the conclusion that it would cost £16,000 he could not tell. He knew that two out of every three owners on the route of the line had never sent in

any claim for compensation, and a great deal of the land along the route surveyed would not require to be paid for.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the question the hon. member for Dalby had brought forward was no doubt a very important one. He thought every member of the House would admit that the Government had acted with wisdom in not accepting any of the tenders for this extension, even though they were low. They had at present an offer, which they would be prepared to lay before the House on an early date, from a company to construct this same line without incurring any cost to the country at all, except in land, of which they had abundance. The reason they had taken action in the matter was simply that the tenderers were pressing for a return of their deposit money or for an acceptance of the lowest tender. The Government had made up their minds not to accept the lowest tender, which was not quite so low as stated by the hon. member for Dalby, and he thought the best thing to do was to return the tenderers their deposit. The reason given by the hon. member for Mitchell was just the one that influenced the Government—that they had an offer to construct this line without paying for it at all except in land; and he thought it much better to accept that offer than to pay for the construction of the line in money and have to pay interest on it afterwards.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked would not the objection of the Minister for Works apply equally well to the other two lines as well as the Western line? Why accept the two and reject the third? He thought the hon. gentleman should explain how he got over the difficulty.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it was very easy to get over the difficulty. The Northern line had nothing at all to do with the question. The Northern line was a thing decided upon long before the present Government came into office, and it had nothing to do with the extension of last year.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They were all voted together.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the hon. member for Stanley was mistaken. The tender for the Central line was accepted before the Government had any definite offer at all in regard to this land-grant system; and he maintained that, even with the offer of those gentlemen who were prepared to construct our Western line, it would be unwise to leave the Central line where it now stood, because the end of the present contract was just at the foot of the Drummond Range, and they might as well not construct a line there at all as leave it at that point, because it was impossible of access from the surrounding country, and they must either go over the range or go back to Wetherfield, about twenty miles, to get a terminus. He thought any person could easily be satisfied with the reasons of the Government for accepting the contract for the Central line. It was accepted before they knew definitely of the offer that had been made to the Premier. Of course, the hon. member for Stanley knew that the tenders were not sent in together—there was about a fortnight between, and the tender for the Central line was accepted before the arrival of the Premier in the colony.

The Hon. G. THORN said the plans of the three lines—Southern, Central, and Northern—were all approved by the House together, and the money was voted at the same time; and he had yet to learn why the Southern line should not be gone on with as well as the others.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It will go on.

Mr. THORN said he had no objection to the Northern line going on, but he wanted to know why the Western line from Roma to Mitchell was not to be proceeded with. In fact, there was something behind the scenes. He knew all about it, but he was not going to give all the information to the House now. It was because between Roma and Mitchell Downs was the very best land, and this syndicate wanted to get that land. He had before him a northern paper, in which there appeared a telegram to which he wished to refer. As soon as the Premier arrived he discovered that his Attorney-General was in jeopardy at the Bowen election; he saw it was necessary that the people of Bowen should be squared, and he accordingly squared them by this telegram. The present Government promised railways everywhere. They talked about the late Government being extravagant, but the late Government were not an infinitesimal part as extravagant as the present Government. They were promising railways everywhere—to the moon!—everywhere!—to square members; but if members believed they were to be squared and get their railways in that way, he could assure them that they were greatly mistaken. The Government were only hanging these railways out as a rag to smell at—to dangle before them—but did not intend to carry them out. There was not the least earthly use the hon. members for South Brisbane fancying they were going to get their railway. He would much rather see the Government come down boldly with the plans of that railway they had already, and ask the House at once to sanction them, and not put it off by making fresh surveys, which was staving it off indefinitely. They found, not long ago, that the Premier promised an additional member to the Valley; but it was only put out as a "smeller," and as soon as his Attorney-General was defeated there was not a word more about the additional member. It would be the same with these other railways. If members were gulls enough to suppose that if they supported the Government they would get their railways, they would be kept dangling before them for years. When the question of the South Brisbane railway was before the House in 1877, the present Colonial Secretary opposed it most strongly, and said he would never consent to it as long as he had a seat in that House. That hon. gentleman then favoured the Bulimba line. He would now read one speech made by the Colonial Secretary in 1877 with regard to the South Brisbane line, but there was another and stronger one which he might refer to on another occasion:—

"Mr. PALMER said he could not but admire the way in which the Premier dangled the two railway lines before the noses of the hon. members with which to tide over the present session. The hon. gentleman attempted to keep up the hopes of the South Brisbane men sitting behind him, and of the Bulimba men sitting on the cross-benches. It was a good piece of policy in its way; but it would not do to dangle them too long. It was one of the first duties of the Government to assist in the development of the coal trade of the colony; and so far from relieving that, it would take many years to develop that trade. He thought that if proper facilities were given for export it would perhaps in a few years rival that of Newcastle. The policy adopted by coal-owners at Newcastle, in deciding not to sell coal at less than 14s., was an exceedingly bad one. Coal could be placed on our wharf for a much less sum than that; and he fully believed that from the wealth of our coalfields an extensive trade in that mineral would speedily be developed. The Government of which he was a member had made the extension of the line to Bulimba part and parcel of their railway policy;

That extension was to be simply a question of time; and he was certain that the line must ultimately go thither. The only argument adduced by the Premier against that extension appeared to him to be an imaginary one—namely, the depreciation of property in the city of Brisbane. Did the extension of the railway from Melbourne to Sandridge or Williamstown depreciate the value of property in that city? On the contrary, he believed it had increased its value, and that Melbourne would never have been the place it is but for the extension of the suburban railways. He should like to know whether the Government had given instructions to reserve all the Crown lands along the proposed line to Bulimba, or whether they were now selling any of it? He had heard of a large land sale, the other day, at Bulimba; but it would be very absurd on the part of the Government to sell any land there until the proposed line was thoroughly surveyed. He agreed with the Premier, that it would be impossible to come to a decision on the subject this session, but he trusted that the Government would have proper surveys made before the House met again. As to the Oxley and South Brisbane line, that might be required in a quarter of a century, perhaps; but to bring down a line on the south side of the river to compete with the line on the north was a purely visionary scheme, cherished only by the inhabitants of South Brisbane, and would be a sheer waste of money."

That was the statement of the present Colonial Secretary with regard to the line to South Brisbane, and he was really the leader of the Government—at least, in many things he was the leader. Now, with regard to the Bowen election, what did the Premier tell the Bowen people upon his return from the old country? He was afraid that the election would be lost, and it would have been lost had it not been for the amount of "resurrection" at his (the Premier's) own place. There was no doubt a great many votes were manufactured there, and even with those manufactured votes the Premier must have thought he would lose the election, and he sent this telegram to square the Bowen people—and he (Mr. Thorn) had no hesitation in saying that he (the Premier) did square them. This was the telegram:—

"The trunk lines were to be carried out on land-grant system, and that the money thus set free would be devoted to the construction of branch lines, of which the Houghton Gap branch would be the first."

That was the reason the Attorney-General was returned. If the Government made promises like that they would carry the country with them, and there would be no earthly chance of the Opposition ever getting into office again. Why did they not adopt the tactics of the present Premier? He (Mr. Thorn) had checkmated the Premier, and would always checkmate him. He had kept that hon. gentleman for years from being Premier; and, unless the members of the Liberal party adopted some other tactics the present Government would keep in for years. They did not understand the present Premier as well as he (Mr. Thorn) understood him. He could state this much for the information of the country—that some people complained of his (Mr. Thorn's) railway policy as too grand—too great a policy; but who forced him into that policy? The hon. member went amongst his (Mr. Thorn's) supporters promising them railways everywhere. His (Mr. Thorn's) policy was small compared with that of the Premier. He (Mr. Thorn) had only three extensions, and the Bundaberg and Maryborough lines; and there was a chance, and more than a chance, at that time, of these railways paying handsomely—as they would do one day—far more so than some of those pro-

mised by the Premier. Was there a chance of the railway promised by the Premier to the people of Bowen paying, unless it took away the trade of Townsville? What would the Townsville people say to that? If it were carried out there would be no Townsville. He would like to know when the Premier intended to carry out his promise to the Bowen people—if he was going to lay the plans of that railway on the table this session, or was he going to keep it dangling the same as the other branch lines? He had told hon. members how to get their branch lines, and if they did not follow his advice they would have themselves alone to blame for not getting them this session. The Government would never give them unless they were compelled to do it. They would not do it so long as members blindly supported them, but if members showed a little more independence they would quickly get their branch lines. They had an instance of that in the branch line from Ipswich to Fassifern: that was got through one member showing his teeth—a gentleman who before gave the Government a comparatively blind support; and, if other members showed more independence, they would get their branch lines also. There was no fear about the present Government; they were very anxious to keep their position, and they would keep it. He hoped the Western line would go on to Mitchell Downs, and he also hoped to see a branch line to take the trade that New South Wales intended to take from Queensland by the line from Dubbo to Bourke. The line from Dubbo to Bourke would also take away the navvies from our Western line, and we should be prompt in checkmating them. If the Government would checkmate New South Wales in that matter as well as they checkmated members on that side of the House, he would give them credit for great ability. They had every chance of doing that now by a line from Yuleba to Cumnamulla. They would tap the splendid pastoral country to the west of Cumnamulla—as fine as any on the famous Barcoo or Central line, and it would be one of the best branches they could construct. With regard to the transcontinental railway, it would be the ruination of the central division of the colony, in which he had always taken a great interest; and what would become of Rockhampton? He would like to hear what the hon. member for Leichhardt (Mr. Feez), who had large interests in Rockhampton, and the hon. member for Blackall (Mr. Archer), had to say to this transcontinental scheme, which would simply snuff out Rockhampton. What did the hon. member for Leichhardt (Mr. Feez) mean by giving the Government blind support? He did hope that the Government would go on with the southern line as well as the others; otherwise they would be accused of favouritism in the southern part of the colony—in fact, it was brought against them at the present time that they did not care anything for the southern portion of the colony, but only for the central and northern portions.

Mr. FEEZ said he had been challenged by the hon. member for Northern Downs to give an expression of his opinion on the railway question, and he was quite willing to give it, and he trusted hon. members would consider it as clear and distinct a speech as that they had just listened to. At the close of last session that House voted, first, £100,000 for immigration, and next £1,070,000 for the extension of each of the three trunk lines—130 miles at £3,000 per mile. That was passed by a sweeping majority of the House. It was a fair scheme, and one which would run three large and important lines into the interior, to be at some future time connected most likely with that much-talked-of transcontinental railway. At that time not only were the Estimates

passed for the Central line, but plans and specifications for its extension as far as Beaufort were accepted by the House, and no action on the part of the hon. member would prevent the line being carried on to that point. The cry had been raised that the extension of the Southern Railway would be a waste of money—that it was being carried in a direction which would not benefit the country. That being so, it was with wisdom that the Government had not accepted tenders for its further extension, believing that in doing so they acted in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the southern population. Otherwise, he believed they would have accepted the tenders the same as they had done for the Central and Northern lines. With regard to cost, he could not understand why the cost of the Southern extension beyond Roma should be more than that involved in the extension of the other two lines, where climate and everything else tended to make the work more expensive. The cost on the Central Railway was less than £2,000 (exclusive of rails) a-mile, and on the Northern Railway, where the work was far more difficult, it was only a trifle over £2,000 (exclusive of rails) a-mile. He should be sorry to see an injustice exercised towards anyone, and the southern people were as much entitled to their railway extension as the central and northern people were to theirs. It would be impossible to stop the Central extension until some new system of railway construction were introduced and adopted. With regard to branch lines, he felt certain, from what the Minister for Works had said, that he meant to construct them. He did not doubt for a moment that the intention to make the line from Oxley to South Brisbane was serious and earnest on the part of the Government, and he, for one, should support it with all his might—as he would support every expenditure which would bring about substantial improvement, if it was within the limit of their means—he did not care even if it was a railway to Kamschatka. On the other hand, he would never support any work which he foresaw would never pay interest and working expenses. The Central line had a great claim on the consideration of hon. members, because it not only opened up one of the most important districts of the colony, but had already proved itself a paying undertaking. They had therefore a perfect right to see that line extended to the point which the House had already sanctioned. Having been challenged to express his opinion about the extension of the Central Railway, he had now much pleasure in laying those opinions before the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Palmer) said it would be ridiculous in him to attempt to follow the hon. member for Northern Downs, but that hon. member had made some assertions which he felt bound to contradict at once. He had asserted, from some article in a northern newspaper, that the Premier sent a telegram to Bowen promising to construct the line to Houghton. Why did he not assume, on exactly the same grounds, that the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Griffith) sent a telegram to the same effect?

Mr. GRIFFITH said he did not.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said there was precisely the same reason for one as for the other. He had seen it stated that the hon. member had sent a telegram to that effect to Mr. O'Kane.

Mr. GRIFFITH: No.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had seen it stated so in the papers, and that was the very same authority which the hon. member for Northern Downs appeared to take for gospel in

the case of the Premier. Surely, no hon. member was foolish enough to argue on what had appeared in a newspaper. Let the hon. member produce the telegram, or a certified copy of it, and then he would have something to argue upon; to take such a statement as the basis of argument was perfectly absurd. But it was in the usual style of the hon. member's speeches. Whenever his (Mr. Palmer's) speech was made about the line from Oxley to South Brisbane, he believed at the time what he said, and had always considered it a very excellent speech under the circumstances. His endeavour was to carry the railway on the north side of the river, where he always thought it should go. What was there wrong in his statement that the South Brisbane scheme might be needed in a quarter of a century?

Mr. GRIFFITH: But it is only three years ago. That speech was made in 1877.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY asked whether the hon. gentleman thought a man's opinion as to the direction a road should take might not be allowed to change in three years? How often, he would like to know, had that hon. gentleman's opinions varied in three years, not only in the direction a road should take, but on every possible subject that could be spoken or thought of. He hoped the hon. gentleman would not go in for consistency, for he was afraid he would not be able to carry it out in many subjects. Since that time circumstances had changed considerably. A railway on the south side of the river could now be made for £3,000 a mile, and that was very different from the state of things existing in 1877. Five miles of road could be made now for one that could be made then. He would say nothing further, at present, in reply to the hon. member for Northern Downs, because that hon. member was always so extravagant and wild in his speeches; but when the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Griffith) backed him up that, because three years ago he disapproved of a certain line which would cost £15,000 a mile, he therefore ought to disapprove of it now when it could be made for £3,000 a mile, he was arguing pretty much as he had been doing all the morning, from what he (Mr. Palmer) had heard.

Mr. KINGSFORD said the hon. member for Northern Downs had quoted from a speech of the Colonial Secretary in opposition to the railway from Oxley to South Brisbane; but if he would look at a page or two before, he would find it was not half so strongly worded in its opposition to the scheme as a speech made by the then Premier (Mr. Douglas). He was glad this debate had taken place, for it proved what he had said all through, that if ever a line was constructed it would be constructed, not by the party in Opposition but by the present Government. That was clearly shown, and if hon. members read the statements made respectively by the Colonial Secretary and the late Premier they would come to the conclusion that it was not the intention of the Government of 1877 to construct the South Brisbane line.

The PREMIER said his colleague, the Colonial Secretary, had omitted to point out the circumstance which showed the alteration in affairs between now and 1877. One of the first things brought under the notice of the present Government was the necessity that would shortly exist of doubling the line between Brisbane and Oxley, if not Ipswich. The line was so often blocked, and so many trains were running, that it would be a matter of necessity in two or three years to double the line. It would evidently be a far more profitable thing to do, and would be far less costly, to construct a branch line from Oxley to South Brisbane than to double the existing line—in fact, the former work could be done at about

one-third the cost of the latter. That was the reason why the Government had changed their policy in that respect. Surely, that was a good reason why the Colonial Secretary should change his mind on the subject. Besides that, the House had sanctioned the Sandgate line, and the coal trade must be provided for in some way or other.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he did not know to what the hon. member (Mr. Kingsford) referred when he said that during the debate of 1877, when he preceded the Colonial Secretary in office, he expressed a much stronger opinion against the South Brisbane railway than the Colonial Secretary. He thought the hon. member was wrong. As far as he could recollect he had never expressed a strong opinion against the railway; but he knew that of the three schemes originally proposed, he strongly inclined to that intended to start from the station and run along the river in the direction of the Botanic Gardens, and so into the centre of the town, to the A.S.N. Company's and other wharves, believing that it would best answer the demands of commerce; but he certainly never expressed himself strongly against the South Brisbane line. At any rate, whatever he had said—and he had not the opportunity of referring to the debate—he was safe in saying that the Government of which he was a member ultimately made up their minds distinctly and definitely—in a much more distinct and definite manner than the present Government had made up theirs now—upon that very subject, and they announced that opinion, as the hon. member would remember, in a Governor's Speech.

Mr. KINGSFORD: That was when the Government was about to expire, and not before.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that in the Governor's Speech of 1879 it was stated "The extension of the Southern and Western Railway to South Brisbane must be carried out at no distant date, and you will be invited to include in the loan for which your authority will be sought a sufficient sum of money for that purpose." That was distinct, and, as far as it went, conclusive. It was not qualified by the conditions which he understood had been attached to the construction of the railway by the Minister for Works. The promise was absolute, and so were the conditions—namely, that a Bill should be passed by Parliament enabling the Government to run a railway along the present highroad, and that the cost of construction should not exceed £3,000 per mile. Were hon. members to understand by that that in future no railways were to be made at a greater cost than £3,000 per mile? If so, the Government had arrived at a very doubtful decision, because a case might occur where it would be cheaper, better, and more in accordance with the condition of the colony to construct a railway costing £10,000 per mile than one costing only £3,000. Parliament had never yet come to any conclusion which would preclude it from making any railway it pleased. He called attention to these facts because the hon. member (Mr. Kingsford) assumed that he was going to get all he required simply because the Minister for Works had given this promise with these conditions. He (Mr. Douglas), with the light he had of the present condition of public affairs, confessed to a feeling of humiliation in view of the fact that such inducements were being held out to any hon. member. Unless hon. members opposite were prepared to complete and revise their legislation of last year as embodied on the Loan Bill—and it was desperately loose in all particulars, and needed revision—until they reconsidered the projects so crudely brought under the consideration of Parliament last year—he affirmed that they were not in a position to

undertake any new projects; and he should decline to support any set of men who would hold out inducements which were founded upon fallacious grounds.

Mr. ARCHER said the hon. member for Northern Downs had asked him what would become of Rockhampton if the transcontinental line were carried out; and he would reply that, although his interests were chiefly centered in Rockhampton, he was not going to oppose the transcontinental line. If Rockhampton had not advantages which would enable it to flourish except at the cost of the rest of the colony, it must just go to the wall. Rockhampton would be connected with the proposed line, and it would take its chance. They might just as well expect that the money of the colony should be spent in a place which was populous, but without commercial advantages, as that because a place had certain commercial advantages the progress of the colony should be delayed on its account. It was likely that the hon. gentleman would find that he had reckoned without his host when he supposed that Rockhampton would be snuffed out. Whether or not, he was prepared to see the transcontinental line carried out if it could be done in a cheap and effective manner by means of land grants. He also had been taken by surprise when he read the paragraph referred to; but he took it to mean that if a transcontinental line could be constructed as was proposed, a scheme would be laid before the House for diverting the previously intended route of the Southern line, so that it would effect a juncture with the transcontinental line at some point more to the south. Under those circumstances a change of the route might be desirable, but if no transcontinental line were constructed the present route was probably the best that could be taken. The hon. member for Northern Downs had spoken rather excitedly about the Bowen election, and his vanity appeared to be a little wounded at the idea of any one trenching upon his special province. When, however, he brought upon no better authority than a newspaper paragraph an accusation against the Premier of having sent a telegram, he might just as well have read the other newspaper to which the Colonial Secretary had alluded. With regard to the sum of £3,000 being fixed for the cost of the line, the hon. member for Maryborough, if he would take into consideration the enormous sums paid for land on the Ipswich and Brisbane line, would admit that the Government were taking a right course. The announcement by the Government that, whilst giving a fair sum for land they would not confer bonuses on the owners, would have a very beneficial effect in the settlement of claims for compensation. He was very glad the Government had proposed to introduce the system, because he believed that under that system two miles of railway could be built where only one had been built formerly. Of course, the House could not be bound to any limit, because it might be desirable at some time to carry a line through a city, and private property could not be taken without compensation being paid in proportion to losses. The course adopted by the Government was simply an announcement that people would not be allowed to rob the country.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the House had now heard some explanation of the way in which the Government had seen fit to change their views with respect to a railway from Oxley to South Brisbane. He could imagine the Minister for Works laughing in his sleeve at that interview with one of the members for South Brisbane, as described in this morning's paper.—He (the Minister for Works) had long been convinced of the importance of such a railway, and wondered how

it could have been so long delayed; he was going to bring in a Bill to authorise the construction of the line along the main road, and would consult his colleagues with a view to making the railway at once! He (Mr. Griffith) wondered whether the Minister for Works had ever been along the main road?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman must know, then, that no railway could be made along that road—the proposition was simply ridiculous. The nature of the promise of the Minister for Works, and the intention with which it was conceived, had been very well estimated by the people whom it was intended to influence. It appeared perfectly plain that until after the House rose last week the Government had never considered such a railway at all. He denounced such doings as the most shameful corruption. The Government that endeavoured to bribe a constituency in that way was just as disreputable and dishonourable as a Government that offered a sum of money to a member of the House. There was no difference in principle. Hon. members saw a good deal of that sort of thing last year, and it appeared as though they were going to see a good deal of it this year, from the beginning that had been made. He was glad that the latest instance had been a total failure—that the constituency had repudiated, with the scorn it deserved, the insult offered to them in attempting to bribe them by a paltry offer of this kind. There was only one other thing he desired to say. He was surprised to hear the voice of the hon. member for South Brisbane (Mr. Kingsford) on this (Opposition) side of the House. He should have looked for the hon. member right behind the Premier, and, for his part, he preferred to have an enemy before his face rather than behind his back. In the past he had faced many hon. members—among the number the Colonial Secretary, whom he had always been able to look in the face, and he was prepared to do so in the future; but he hoped that during the remainder of the session hon. members would sit on the side which they intended to support.

Mr. KINGSFORD said he did not know whether he was in order—

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. KINGSFORD said he desired to say a word in explanation. He did not know what the hon. member for North Brisbane meant when he talked about bribery and corruption—

THE SPEAKER: That is a reply, not an explanation.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was very glad to hear that the Premier had decided to construct the Sandgate railway. The hon. gentleman had also informed the House that the Government had under serious discussion the necessity, before long, of doubling the line from Oxley to Brisbane. He was sorry to say that the railway returns just published made it clear that the necessity for a double line did not arise from the increase of traffic. If the Premier was anxious, as he (Mr. Beattie) believed he was, to construct some line to deep water, he should not oppose it whether the line went to South Brisbane or any other place; but the present proposal was not in accordance with the original opinion given by the Colonial Secretary, or that of the Chief Engineer of Railways. If the South Brisbane line was to be constructed merely for coal purposes, he did not think it would be a success, because he was of opinion that the quality of the coal at present obtained was not sufficiently good for shipment. But if it was decided by the Minister for Works to construct a line for coal purposes, would it

not be better, seeing that the Sandgate line had been decided on, to construct one and three-quarter miles from the latter line to deep water? That brought him to a statement often made in the House, and made also by the hon. member (Mr. Kingsford) at a public meeting on the previous day—that the South Brisbane line had always been opposed by the Bulimba ring. He challenged anyone to say who the ring was, and to name any member of the House who was connected with it. He had heard the statement often, and knew that even the Colonial Secretary was mentioned as one of the proprietors of land in the vicinity of the one and three-quarter miles of line to which he had referred; but he had taken the trouble to ascertain that the report was incorrect, and had contradicted it. The land that would be required belonged to a resident of Maryborough, and one of the most honourable gentlemen in the colony—a man who had given the fee-simple of 90 feet from Breakfast Creek to the edge of the river for sewerage purposes. Did that act look as if there were a ring anxious to derive benefit? He was sorry that the Minister for Works had expressed the opinion that he had, but presumed that he had done so simply because it was desirable to get the votes of West Moreton men, who were interested in coal. He was sorry, because by the construction of a line one and three-quarter miles long instead of one of seven miles, the same object would be attained. He rose mainly to express his indignation at the report that a Bulimba ring existed to oppose the South Brisbane line. He believed the land south of the Bulimba road belonged to two gentlemen who would not be accused of having made overtures to the Government to secure the construction of the railway, and the land to the north belonged to the Maryborough gentleman. If the experiment was to be made, and a line was to be constructed to encourage the mineral industry of West Moreton, the route should be chosen which would cost the least to get to deep water, and there was no reach of water in the river better adapted for the coal trade than Humbug Reach. It was the safest in times of flood, and it had several other advantages over other places. If vessels came above the Upper Flats, it was the only place fit for the trade. If it was necessary to construct a line from Oxley to South Brisbane to encourage suburban traffic, he believed that such a line would be advantageous to South Brisbane; but if it was intended to take it to the point opposite Government House, it would be an injury instead of a benefit to South Brisbane. The property-holders of South Brisbane would derive no advantage if the line was taken through Woolloongabba Reserve to the river. He trusted that Government would see, if the experiment was to be made, that the best plan would be to get to the river by the cheapest route possible.

Mr. SIMPSON, in reply, said the member for Mitchell, speaking of the extension beyond Roma, had said that it should take a south-westerly course. He had always understood that in any case the line must go to Mitchell, whether the western line was extended by the syndicate or the Government: and he spoke with some little knowledge of the country. He was strongly in favour of the system of constructing railways by land grants, and Government should have his earnest support in carrying it out. If English capitalists could be got to build the western lines on that principle, it mattered little how much land was given. He had brought the matter forward because there were a number of men who would soon be thrown out of employment and leave the colony if fresh work was not found for them. He was not aware of the other lines where

the men could be employed; and he believed that the extension referred to had been stopped by the persistent animosity of members sitting on the Opposition benches. Newspaper correspondents, public speakers, and deputations had also all gone against the extension, and wrongly so. In the interest of the southern portion of the colony, a tender for the line from Roma to Mitchell should have been accepted.

Mr. FRASER said that, although the member for Fortitude Valley had told them that the Colonial Secretary was in favour of the extension of the Southern and Western Railway to Bulimba, he was happy to say that there was quite as high an authority who had always favoured an extension to South Brisbane—namely, the Premier. He might also add that it did not become members of the House, whatever opinions they might hold as to where the line should be carried to, to call in question the fitness or suitability of their coal for an export trade. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley would remember that the clearest evidence had been obtained that there was in the colony and in the West Moreton district coal in every way suited for export, and that the opportunity was only wanting to have the trade developed. But, apart from the coal trade, the district of South Brisbane, extending to Oxley, was amply entitled to a line. There was a large and settled population already, and it would be greatly increased by a railway, and in a short time a suburban traffic would be created which would amply pay; besides, it was never contemplated that the line should end at the rocks opposite Government House. It was true that locality had been selected as suitable for the coal trade, the evidence taken by the commission showing that any vessel could lie there; but it was also intended to extend the line to the vicinity of Victoria Bridge for the purposes of a passenger traffic. He was sorry that any attempt to raise a feeling of antagonism between north and south should be made. There was no reason why the line to Sandgate should not be constructed, for he did not see that it should in the slightest degree interfere with the construction of a line to South Brisbane. And when they remembered that at the initiation of their railway system it was the opinion of everyone that the terminus should be in South Brisbane, so far as the Southern Railway was concerned, the time had arrived when, in fairness and in justice, as well as in the interest of a trade which would in a short time attain considerable dimensions, the matter should be seriously entertained.

Question of the adjournment of the House put and negatived.

NEW BILLS—FIRST READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House, in Committee of the Whole, affirmed the desirableness of introducing the undermentioned Bills, which were then introduced, read a first time, ordered to be printed, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow:—

1. Railway and Tramway Extension Bill.
2. United Municipalities Bill.
3. State Forests Bill.
4. Gold Mining Appeals Bill.
5. Mines Regulation Bill.
6. Sale of Food and Drugs Bill.
7. Water Storage and Distribution Bill.
8. Goldfields Homestead Act Amendment Bill.
9. Local Government Bill.
10. Census Bill.
11. Stamp Duties Act of 1866 Amendment Bill.

12. Local Works Loan Bill.
13. Pacific Island Labourers Bill.
14. Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-mer Fishery Bill.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

The PREMIER moved that the following honourable Members be nominated members of the Joint Committees of the two Houses:—

For the Library Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Morehead.

Refreshment Rooms Management Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Amhurst, and Mr. Tyrel.

Parliamentary Buildings Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Stevens, and Mr. Griffith.

That such nominations be communicated to the Legislative Council by message in the usual way.

Mr. DOUGLAS said, in reference to the appointment of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, there was a matter to which he wished to draw attention. There was a room, called the Members' Dressing-room, which had never been used for that purpose, and which was now used as a lumber room. He occasionally had recourse to that room, but found it was very inadequately appointed. It was a matter, he thought, which might very well be attended to, as the room should have proper furniture put into it, and otherwise made suitable for the services for which it was intended.

Question put and passed.

HANSARD.

Mr. SCOTT moved—

That the publication of *Hansard* during the remainder of this session be carried out, so far as the debates of this House are concerned, as was done during last session.

In making the motion, he did not wish to speak disrespectfully of the Upper Chamber; at the same time, he did not see how they could go on very well in the way they had been doing during this session. With regard to the reports of the debates in the Upper House appearing in the same paper with the reports of that Chamber, they might judge from what had gone before what was likely to occur again. A still more serious matter might take place. Interesting debates sometimes took place in the Upper Chamber, and they might sit late. The whole of the pages of *Hansard* would be occupied with the debates in the Upper House, and any debate in that Chamber would be left unreported. That was a state of things that should not exist. No doubt the other Chamber being the Upper House were entitled to precedence in their reports in any paper, but the difficulty might very easily be met by their having a *Hansard* published on a separate sheet. It might be printed and issued in the same manner as the *Hansard* reports of last session. That would meet the case, and prevent anything like the debates in this House being made subservient to that of the other.

Mr. ARCHER said he should have liked to hear the opinion of someone of more experience than himself, but he did not think that all had been said on the subject that could be very well said. He was as anxious as anyone that the speeches delivered there should be well reported, but he could very well see that by dividing the responsibility of the staff into two they would not be as well reported as if they took advantage of the suggestion made by the hon. the Postmaster-General. He was satisfied that if any newspaper company reported the speeches of both Houses, for the sake of economy they would do it with one staff. If their debates were reported by a certain number of reporters, and the others were told off to the

Upper House, the time of the men would be wasted almost half the week. They knew that their debates in the Upper Chamber were not so voluminous as in their own House, nor did they occupy the same period of time. The proposal made in a letter from the Postmaster-General to the Colonial Secretary might exceedingly well be tried—that the debates of that House should take precedence, and that the staff should work under one head, and that, if necessary, the eight sheets should be exceeded. They were sometimes kept debating very late, when the previous staff was scarcely sufficient to give the whole report. If the whole of the staff was under the Principal Shorthand Writer, as at present, they could all be employed in this Chamber if necessary; but if they were divided they would have no right to call upon the shorthand writers of the other staff to relieve their own. It would be an improvement, as there was to be a *Hansard* of the Upper House, that it should be done under the one head. At all events, Mr. Senior should have the command of all the reporters, only it must be an instruction that this House should have the debates fully reported, and, if necessary, the Legislative Council should have an abbreviated report. He believed this would be more economical, and he could not see why they should have two staffs if they could have one. He would be inclined to give it a trial. Some members were a little captious on the first night of this session. There were, no doubt, some small errors made, but if no notice had been taken of them no doubt the reporting would have improved in time of its own accord. If the reporters had time to shake themselves down into their places, he was satisfied that there would be a *Hansard* that would satisfy both this House and the Legislative Council. He was not at all prepared to see the motion go through without hearing an expression of opinion on the matter. To test the opinion of the House, he begged to propose that all the words in the motion after the word “out,” in the second line, be struck out, to admit of the insertion of the words “as proposed in the letter of the hon. Postmaster-General to the Colonial Secretary under date the 8th July.”

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that hon. members would perceive that this letter was written since the debate in that House took place last week, and it put the matter on quite another footing. The suggestion that a month's trial should be given to the joint *Hansard*, and that, on the distinct understanding that the reports of the Assembly should be same as before, a summary only of the Council's proceedings be supplied, was made by one member of the Upper House; and he (Mr. Palmer) was doubtful whether that House would agree to a summary of their proceedings only being given. From all the debates in another place he was led to believe that they wanted to be fully reported, to be in the position of being first reported, and at length. In their own House he was satisfied this would not be agreed to. They would insist on their reports being taken pretty much as last year. As far as *verbatim* reports went they knew that was impossible. They would never be satisfied with a summary, and must be reported pretty much as they were before. They should absolutely gain nothing by accepting the amendment of the hon. member for Blackall. The second proposal might very well be received—that the Principal Shorthand Writer remain under the exclusive direction of the Speaker and Printing Committee, as heretofore. This principle had never been given up, and was distinctly asserted in a memorandum drawn up by the Speaker himself. How Mr. Senior was to carry on the reporting in the Upper House was best known to himself. For his own part, he would prefer having a

1880—G

Hansard to themselves. The question of a little expense more or less was a small one in comparison with having the proceedings fully reported. He was satisfied that the House would not be contented with a summary, and they would be only prolonging the agony in attempting to carry out the Postmaster's proposals. He had seen the Government Printer since the question arose in the House, and he said he would have no difficulty in printing the reports of the Council and Assembly on separate sheets, and he was sure it would be more satisfactory to both Houses to have the business carried out in that way. He had no doubt the Principal Shorthand Writer would be able to manage both reports; but the only satisfactory result, he was sure, would be to have the reports on separate sheets.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that, as far as he could understand, the principal difficulty in working the two staffs was the uncertainty as to the length of time the debates in the other House would take, and the amount of space required for them. As he understood the arrangement came to, a maximum of space amounting to eight pages had been agreed upon, but it was very uncertain how much the report of each House would require. If the report of the Council extended to two or more pages, and an important debate came on in the Assembly, the speeches in the Assembly would require to be very much condensed. All that gave rise to so much uncertainty that it would be practically impossible to publish the reports of the two Houses in the same sheet if the limit were observed. That seemed to him to be an insuperable difficulty, but if the limit of space was not to be adhered to he did not see that it made a bit of difference whether they were printed on one sheet or not. What that House was agreed upon was, that the proceedings ought to be reported in exactly the same way as had been done before, and that they should not be curtailed from any regard for the proceedings in the other House. He therefore was inclined to agree with the motion of the hon. member for Leichhardt, as it did not say whether the reports were to be on the same sheet or not, but it did insist that the report of the Assembly debates should be the same as before. That was why the motion was preferable to the amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY asked permission to explain that if the reports of both Houses were printed on the same sheet, and there were long debates in both Houses, and the Legislative Council report was printed first, it would be impossible for the Assembly report to be printed till the Legislative Council was got rid of, and it would be impossible to publish *Hansard* till a late hour of the morning. He was satisfied the motion of the hon. member for Leichhardt would answer perfectly well, and was preferable to the amendment.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the correspondence on the matter had only come into his hands in the afternoon, and he had not been able to go over it, and in that respect was not fully prepared to speak upon it; but from what he had heard and read it seemed to him what had been said by his hon. friend (Mr. Griffith) might very well be carried into effect. The main objection, when he first heard of the alteration, was that the whole proceedings of both Houses were to be printed on a sheet of eight pages. That seemed to be modified, however, and even the original arrangement did not seem to fix that. On one of the headings in the Postmaster-General's memorandum it was fixed that the ordinary maximum should be eight pages, but in the letter following he said that the ordinary maximum might be exceeded. On that under-

standing the House seemed to have a security that the debates would be properly reported and printed. It was quite manifest to his mind that, from the uncertainty of the extent of the debates in both Houses, they could not always be brought into one sheet. On ordinary occasions, however, he fancied there would be no difficulty in bringing the reports within eight pages. He did not like the type. The old type seemed to be a fair medium between the type of the Victorian and House of Commons *Hansards*. The type of the New Zealand *Hansard* was rather too small, and the type of our present Queensland *Hansard* was not so clear and readable as it used to be. Besides it was a pity that the uniformity of the earlier *Hansards* should now be broken by the adoption of new type. He understood that the difference of expense in the actual printing was not much more than heretofore ; but of course with larger type a larger amount of paper was consumed. There must be an increased expenditure, but the House would probably be prepared to submit to that in order to secure uniformity.

The amendment having been negatived, the original motion was put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes to 8 o'clock.