

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 26 AUGUST 1880

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 26 August, 1880.

Motion for Adjournment.—Petition.—Formal Business.
—Proposed Railway to Nerang.—Steamer Passes to
Members.—Adjournment.

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

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. KELLETT said he desired to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of making a personal explanation—to call attention to the misreport of his speech yesterday evening, which appeared in the *Hansard* of this morning. In that report he was made to say words he never uttered, and exactly opposite to what he did say. He was made to say—

“There had been several meetings in his district in favour of it”—

meaning the mail contract. He never said anything of the kind, and could not have done so, because it would have been an utter falsehood. What he did say was that there had been several meetings in the Stanley electorate, but that both the proposers and seconder at those meetings were opponents of his at the last election. He never said there was a meeting in favour of the mail contract, as there was not one. He was

sorry to have to call attention to this fact, for since he had been in the House he had been remarkably faithfully reported; and he had wondered how the speeches were so well reported. But he had noticed a great difference during the present session. Some speeches were very well reported—nothing could be better, and with others nothing could be worse. After listening carefully in the House to those speeches he found, on reading them next day in *Hansard*, that they were nothing like what the speakers really said. He did not know where the fault lay—whether in the new men, or what—but there was something wrong that required amendment. While on the subject, he would call attention to another fact. After he left the House last evening the hon. member for Northern Downs (Mr. Thorn)—as was usual with him when he (Mr. Kellett) was not present—made a good many allusions to him. He was very fond of making allusions to the members for Stanley, who were both able to take care of themselves without any assistance from him. The hon. member (Mr. Thorn) was pretty well known to the hon. members for Stanley, especially to the senior member, who was the man who first introduced him to the House and fathered him for a long time, and was acquainted with some of the dirty little transactions of his life. For that reason the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) did not like him. His colleague could tell of all the pieces of villainy transacted by him for many years over elections, and all his misdoings of every description. The great objection the hon. member had to himself (Mr. Kellett) was that at the last election for Fassifern, the hon. member who now represented it—Mr. Pesse—was absent for a few days before the election took place, and, being a friend of his, he did what, he was sure, the hon. member would have done for him if their positions had been reversed—he assisted him while absent; and he was not ashamed to say that in consequence of his efforts on that occasion the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) was defeated. That hon. member was very bitter on the subject—so much so that he told him the other day that the next electorate he intended to contest was Fassifern; he had now said that if the hon. members for Stanley would resign, he would resign his seat for Northern Downs and fight the election with them. He did not believe any member of the House would for choice contest an election with the hon. member. If there was any little thing the hon. member ever learned or strove in, it was the villainy carried on at elections, at which he was an adept. It was well known to old members of the House—though, perhaps, not to some new members—that there was a house in Ipswich, not very far from the polling-place, where the hon. member kept an old Jew-shop. He had as many old clothes and false beards as any Jew-shop in town, and the hon. member was himself the head dresser. It was well known, further, that at one notable election the hon. member was the means of sending one man in to vote sixteen times. Other things of the same kind were so notorious that no man would from choice fight an election against him, because he would not stoop to the same means of gaining it. It was well known that the late Mr. Coxen lost his seat for Western Downs by a forged telegram sent from Ipswich. The hon. member (Mr. Thorn) had acknowledged over and over again that he was instrumental in sending that forged telegram.

THE HON. G. THORN: No; the senior member for Stanley knew who sent it.

MR. KELLETT said he had heard the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) say that he sent it; he took the honour of it, at all events, and it was well known how the election turned out. At the

next election the hon. member travelled to Dalby with a great load of old sacks full of clothes, wigs, and beards to manipulate the election; but the people were up to him by that time, and were too many for him, and Mr. Joshua Peter Bell was returned. Such was the hon. member who wanted everybody to resign his seat and contest an election with him—a man who would stoop to anything mean and disreputable to gain his ends. That was the man who came here to obstruct business by making such speeches as he delivered last night. The hon. member talked about running down the squatters. Why did he run them down? Because the first and only venture he made in his life in squatting was as great a failure as ever a man made in the world. He could tell him about Gowrie Plains, the only station the hon. member ever held, and over which he lost considerably. It was lucky for the hon. member that he had a father before him who had made money; if he had not he would have been a beggar on the streets to-day: the hon. member never earned an honest penny in his life—that was well known both inside and outside the House. Many years ago, when Mr. Macalister was at the head of affairs, the hon. member went crying to him to be put into office, saying that his father and mother threatened to turn him out of the house; they would not allow him to stop with them, and he had nowhere to go to bite or sip. The hon. member's parents told him they would not have a man in the house who was a loafer and never did a day's work for a living, while the other members of the family were working for theirs. That was how the hon. member became a Minister of the Crown and a Premier who was the disgrace of Queensland; and that was the member who presumed to get up and talk to hon. members who had done nothing that they were ashamed of. The hon. member had better leave the members for Stanley alone in the future, for they were both able to protect themselves either in the House or out of it. While he was absent last night the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan), in answering the hon. member for Northern Downs, pointed out much better than he could the disgraceful transactions of which the hon. member had been guilty; but not a word of it was reported in *Hansard* to-day. He should like to know by whose authority reports of speeches were eliminated from *Hansard*. There ought to be a fair and impartial report of the speeches made in the House. If a speaker said anything wrong his words would come back upon him. The hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) told of transactions which were even worse than he (Mr. Kellett) could tell, and he hoped the hon. member would now repeat them so that they might be reported in *Hansard*.

MR. STEVENSON said that as the question of reporting in *Hansard* had cropped up, he should like to say a word or two in connection with it. He had noticed lately that many speeches had been entirely omitted, particularly those made by hon. members on the Ministerial side, while those made by hon. members of the Opposition had been very fully reported. He did not object to reports being abridged to a certain extent, but he thought some fairplay should be shown. He did not see, especially, why such rot as the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) talked last night should be reported, and the speech of the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) left out altogether. The other night the leader of the Opposition got up and lectured this side of the House, and talked about their having brought the proceedings of the House into contempt. That was all carefully reported, and so was the remark that certain members on the Ministerial side were larrikins; but not a word of reply was put into *Hansard*. He, himself (Mr. Stevenson), made a speech

on that occasion which was not reported, and he would repeat it now in the hope that it would find its way into *Hansard*. He pointed out, and he believed conclusively, that the leader of the Opposition—or, as the Colonial Secretary said, the nominal leader of the Opposition—had done more, both as a member and as a Minister of the Crown, to bring the proceedings of the House into contempt;—that as a leading member of the House he had used every influence he could, both his own and that of secret societies, to turn out some of the most respectable and honoured members of the House, and put in members who had lowered the tone of the Assembly and disgraced it—men who had disgraced themselves before setting foot here. He also pointed out that as a Minister of the Crown the hon. gentleman had prostituted his position for his own ends. The hon. member instituted suits with regard to the “dummy” question by which he filled his own pockets with fees to which he had no more right than he (Mr. Stevenson) had. He likewise pointed out that the hon. member had brought disgrace upon himself and the House by bringing forward base accusations against the present Ministry, which he (Mr. Stevenson) believed were entirely unfounded—accusations which could only have been prompted by a base and cowardly mind whose aim was not directed towards truth. The hon. member had on every possible occasion put the House into a bad temper, which it was not likely to get out of for some time. The hon. member might be supported by a few agitators in Brisbane, but he was perfectly satisfied that he had not public opinion with him. Touching the question of *Hansard* reporting, he would not insinuate for a moment that the reporters in the gallery could be tampered with; at the same time, he thought it unfair that drivelling speeches like that of the hon. member for Northern Downs, last night, should be very fully reported because he had once been Premier of the colony, while the speech of the hon. member for Stanley, which was really relevant to the question, should be quite omitted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Palmer) said he liked to be responsible for his own sins, and he found that a speech made by him last night was put down to the Premier. The senior reporter's soul must be grieved at those mistakes, but he felt bound to point out that that was a serious mistake. The speech was his, and it was put down to the Premier.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan) said that when, the other evening, it was proposed by some members of the House that the Speaker should exercise a censorship over *Hansard*, hon. members on the other side, more especially the hon. member for Maryborough (Mr. Douglas), objected to it strongly. If any censorship at all was desirable it should be exercised by the Speaker, who occupied the highest position in the House, who was the mouthpiece of it, and who was, to a certain extent, responsible for its privileges. But, if the Speaker was not allowed to exercise that censorship, was it to be permitted that the reporters in the *Hansard* gallery should exercise it? He (Mr. Macrossan) distinctly protested against any censorship whatever being exercised by any of the reporters, whether by the Principal Shorthand Writer or any others in the gallery. If a man spoke in the House he was entitled to be reported, whether he had been a Minister of the Crown or not. It was for the people outside who read *Hansard* to judge whether their representatives were fit to be in the House. If a censorship was to be exercised it should be exercised by the Speaker, and not by any person in the gallery. He had never been in the habit of

finding fault with the reports in *Hansard*, although he was at first opposed to its being established. He had always given the reporters full credit for trying to do their best; but this session he had observed a very remarkable difference in the way in which speeches were reported in *Hansard* to what they had been during previous sessions. His own speeches had been mixed up with those of other members in such a way that he could not understand them. The other evening the speech of the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Thompson), and his own, were so mixed up that each was made to say what the other said. Of course, that could not have been done intentionally. But what happened last night was a pure exercise of censorship. The hon. member for Northern Downs occupied the floor for an hour and a-half, and during that time he was employed principally in reading speeches from *Hansard* and leading articles from an Ipswich newspaper. In the *Hansard* report those speeches and leading articles were left out, with a notification that they were read; but nearly the whole of his speech, with the exception of the repetitions, which were numerous, was fully reported. The hon. member for Stanley answered him well, and his speech was carefully excised from *Hansard*. He wished to know upon what authority such a speech had been omitted from *Hansard*? He took exception in this particular instance for a reason he was about to state. In the early part of last session some allusion was made by himself to certain action taken by the hon. member for Northern Downs with regard to the letting of the tenders for the third and fourth sections of the Western Railway, and the question was followed up severely by hon. members on the other side of the House. The leader of the Opposition moved for all the papers in connection with it, and when they were published he (Mr. Macrossan) drew attention to the fact that the tenders sent in by Bashford and Co. differed only in one pound and some shillings and pence from the Engineer's estimate of the cost of those two sections, with the exception of the 5 per cent. for contingencies which was usually added. The words which he used during one of the debates that took place bore very remarkably upon the words which fell from the hon. member for Stanley last night. His contention was, that the hon. member (Mr. Thorn), when Premier and Minister for Works, had asked Mr. Stanley, the Chief Engineer of the Southern and Western Railway, for detailed estimates of the cost of the third and fourth sections of that railway—a thing unprecedented in the colony. On the occasion referred to, he (Mr. Macrossan) used these words:—

“The detailed estimate was sent in with that memorandum. He was not in a position to prove whether the Minister for Works had actually these things in his pocket; but this memorandum proved distinctly that they were asked for, and given to him one week before the tenders were deposited. That was one statement he made, and here was the proof.”

The missing link was supplied last night by the hon. member for Stanley, and it was very carefully left out by the *Hansard* reporters; and that was why he objected to allow the reporters in the gallery to exercise a censorship over *Hansard*. The missing link supplied by the hon. member was so strongly corroborative of what he had stated that it would be taken in a court of justice. The hon. member for Stanley said that the hon. member for Northern Downs drew out of his pocket the estimates of the Engineer-in-Chief upon which the tenders sent in by his brother were based.

Mr. THORN: I deny it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was one thing which the hon. member could not

deny, and that was that while he was Minister for Works his brother, a successful tenderer, was a member of the House when his tender was before him as Minister for Works. That was not a very creditable thing. It was a positive fact that when the tender was sent in his brother was a member of the House. It was a remarkable thing that he should have said that that was the only point missing, and twelve months afterwards to find it supplied by the hon. member for Stanley. He hoped that in future the members of the *Hansard* staff would do what they were paid for doing—report the speeches faithfully, and as nearly *verbatim*, leaving out the verbiage and repetitions, as they possibly could.

THE HON. J. DOUGLAS said he would say a word or two in reference to what had just fallen from the Minister for Works. With regard to the censorship of *Hansard*, it was apparent that the proposition made the other day, that it should be exercised by the Speaker, was perfectly impossible and impracticable. Of course, if the House wished to exclude any debate from its proceedings it could give an instruction to that effect, and it might be desirable to devise a Standing Order by which such a thing could be done. But he was sure that no Speaker would take upon himself the responsibility of exercising a censorship over *Hansard*. The difficulties in the way were insuperable. He supposed the proofs of *Hansard* did not come in until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and it was impossible to ask any Speaker to stay up and revise them and say what should be inserted and what omitted. With regard to the discretion exercised by the reporters, they all desired that *Hansard* should be as correct a report of what was said as could be possibly produced, and on the whole a very admirable report was produced. But, as all would admit, there were occasions when debates must unavoidably be epitomised and the censorship must be applied. During the stonewalling, which unfortunately commenced last night, it would be impossible to report everything that was said. A staff three or four times as large as the present staff would be required to produce a *verbatim* report; and, under those circumstances, the reporters simply produced a summary. With regard to the speech of the hon. member for Northern Downs, he found the hon. member spoke for an hour and a-half, during which he read a great deal—

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: It was two hours.

MR. DOUGLAS said that nevertheless his speech had been cut down to a single column. Had the hon. member been reported *verbatim* the report would have occupied at least five or six columns, or perhaps two pages of *Hansard*. The statement that unfair prominence had been given to Mr. Thorn could therefore hardly be correct. Then with regard to the speech of the hon. member for Stanley (Mr. O'Sullivan), it was really a very witty and amusing speech, but there were some parts of it which he regretted to observe on account of the strong personal feeling evidenced. If speeches were to be cut down when the season of stonewalling began, hon. members on both sides must be prepared to accept a certain amount of abridgment. The speech of the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan), as reported in this morning's *Hansard*, was evidently epitomised, but the report was a very good abstract of what the hon. member did say, and probably contained all that it was essential for the public to know. He considered that a wise discretion had been used in the abridgment of Mr. Thorn's speech and of the subsequent one. So far as time was concerned, he suspected that the hon. member for Stanley occupied a larger proportion of space than the hon. member for

Northern Downs. With regard to the statement made by the Minister for Works, that hon. gentleman could hardly expect the House to rediscuss a question which had been discussed on more than one occasion last session. It was rather amusing to hear the hon. member refer to the missing link as having been supplied by the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) last night, and the statement required some further explanation. His recollection of the whole transaction of last session was this: A charge was made last session by the Minister for Works, and was emphatically disposed of at the time. As far as he could remember, the recommendation of the Minister for Works (Mr. Thorn) was that a tender of Messrs. Bashford and Company, which came up for consideration, should not be accepted; and it was not accepted accordingly.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: One tender was accepted.

MR. GRIFFITH: Not that one.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Both tenders were added together; the question does not apply to one of the tenders, but to both together.

MR. DOUGLAS said he must really decline to rediscuss that question at the present moment; but he was rather amused at the way in which the Minister for Works discovered the missing link which enabled him to convict the hon. member for Northern Downs. The statement of the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) was made at a time when the hon. member was rather excited on account of something which had been said about his absent colleague, and the hon. member took the case up very warmly, and perhaps said some things which he afterwards regretted. The hon. member and the hon. member for Northern Downs had been good friends of old, and he was extremely sorry that those very spicy personalities were indulged in in the way they were. Knowing that the hon. members respected one another, he was sorry to hear things said which would be afterwards regretted.

MR. GRIFFITH said it was a great pity that the Minister for Works had referred to that matter which took place last session.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why?

MR. GRIFFITH said it was a pity, for reasons which he was about to give. On the 15th May, last year, the Minister for Works made serious charges against the hon. member for Northern Downs—he accused him, in fact, of collusion with tenderers to enable them to get an advantage while occupying the position of Minister for Public Works. At that time there was no sufficient material before the House to enable hon. members to ascertain the facts upon which the charges were based. He therefore immediately gave notice of motion for the production of papers; the papers were subsequently produced; and on the 4th August the matter was discussed on the motion for the House to go into committee of supply. It was then pointed out that this imaginary coincidence did not exist, even on paper—the tenders did not agree with the Engineer-in-Chief's estimates. It appeared from the papers that the Engineer-in-Chief's estimate for the two sections was £135,442, or, with 5 per cent. added, £142,214. Bashford and Company sent in, for the two sections, two tenders, which together, including everything, amounted to £135,443. To leave out from the Engineer-in-Chief's estimates the 5 per cent. for contingencies would be just about as reasonable as to leave out his estimate for earthworks. The item for contingencies was put in by the Engineer-in-Chief in making his estimate, just as it was by the contractor when framing his tender.

That was all pointed out in the course of the debate. It also appeared that the estimates of the Engineer-in-Chief for the two sections included in the contract were:—For No. 3, £78,966; for No. 4, £63,247; and that Bashford and Company's tenders were—No. 3, £72,959; No. 4, £62,483. It was also shown that Bashford and Company's prices for the various items of the work required to be done differed in nearly every instance from those given in the Engineer's estimates; so that any approximation of the totals could be merely accidental. It was shown as clearly as anything could be that the charge against the hon. member for Northern Downs had entirely broken down. That being the case, why had the hon. member chosen this opportunity of reviving the question? The affair had taken place so long before that the particulars had quite dropped out of his (Mr. Griffith's) memory, and he had found it necessary to look through *Hansard* for the debate, when he found that the whole thing had been thoroughly exposed. All that took place in the Cabinet on the subject was also in the debate for those who wished to see it. The whole thing was thoroughly explained, and it was shown that the accusation of the Minister for Works had no substantial foundation. It was a pity that a thing of that kind should be revived. The one serious thing in the transaction, according to the Minister for Works, was that a member of the firm of Bashford and Co. was a brother to the then Minister for Works; but he should be sorry to think that the mere fact of a member of a tendering firm being the brother of a Minister should be considered sufficient ground to accuse that Minister of corruption. He said that deliberately, and was sorry to hear that the Minister for Works apparently considered that it was a sufficient ground.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the leader of the Opposition had, as was usual with him, never touched the real point. As the hon. member for Maryborough had said, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) might be sorry for some things he had said, but there was a little bit of method in his sorrow. The Speaker had noticed, and the House had noticed, that the hon. member for Northern Downs had neglected no opportunity during the last three months of exhibiting the two members for Stanley before the House. The hon. member had taken a splendid opportunity last night of exhibiting the junior member for Stanley—though in many things the junior member for Stanley was his (Mr. O'Sullivan's) senior—but it was not necessary to repeat the things which the hon. member said. If he (Mr. O'Sullivan) had any fault at all—and he had a great many—it was that he always took the part of those that were absent, even if they were his enemies. There was a method in the hon. member's (Mr. Thorn's) ramblings, and he took care to tell hon. members what that method was. The hon. member said that his arrows were poisoned; and, when he (Mr. O'Sullivan) heard that, he made up his mind that two could play at that game. He, however, made no personal attacks—he tried to keep away from that. The hon. member said that the hon. member for Stanley would lose his deposit money if he ever stood for Stanley again. All that was very cheap. The leader of the Opposition, however, forgot to mention the important part of what he (Mr. O'Sullivan) said. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) never made up speeches—he did not care what he said, so far as wishing to see his name in *Hansard*—and he was thoroughly satisfied with the reporters. No complaints ever came from him—he had no need for being so particular, as he did not intend to be a Minister of the Crown or have his name going down to posterity. He should drop into oblivion as able men before

him had, and therefore he said just what he thought. He took this opportunity of saying that he was sorry the hon. member should have provoked the reply he got. With regard to the tender, he was prepared to give the hon. member the finest possible opportunity of contradicting what he had said. He should go outside and repeat what he had said, taking no advantage of the privileges of the House. The hon. member got these tenders in an improper and unprecedented way from the Chief Engineer; he had them in his pocket and showed them to him (Mr. O'Sullivan); he (Mr. O'Sullivan) could find two other men who saw them; and he believed he knew the man who made out the contract. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) had been the greatest possible friends with Mr. Bashford; and nothing he could fairly have done for Mr. Bashford he had not done. The late Mr. Thorn was also his particular friend. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) was in the House the whole time the discussion was going on; but it was no part of his business to speak. He did not intend to be Ministerial scavenger and tell-tales. If anything had been done wrong it was for the Minister for Works to find it out—he was well paid for it. That was his (Mr. O'Sullivan's) reason for not meddling. This gentleman (Mr. Thorn) should not throw stones at him and the other hon. member for Stanley; but it was notorious that the hon. member talked for over two hours at them last night. Did the hon. member think that he had no feeling? The very fact of his colleague being absent exalted that hon. member in his estimation. He did not know whether his statement was a missing link or not; but he knew that the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) had the tenders in his pocket, and that he (Mr. O'Sullivan) saw them; and that two other men saw them. He knew the hon. member had had a brother in the House—they were like vultures over a carcass, watching those benches until the hon. member got into power. Then the hon. member squared matters, and as soon as he got the tenders walked quietly out of office. With regard to the telegram which the hon. member (Mr. Kellett) referred to as having been sent to Dalby, with the intention of defeating Mr. Coxen in his contest with the late Mr. Thorn, he would do the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) the justice to say that he did not send it. The hon. member knew that it was sent by a man from Dalby, who was then in his (Mr. O'Sullivan's) house, because the hon. member was there. It was sent in the interest of his (Mr. Thorn's) brother, but not by the hon. member. The hon. member was not the man to concoct such an affair; it was done by a carpenter in Dalby. If that statement were contradicted he was prepared to go into names and figures. There was another man, also, in the house. The man who sent the telegram was within reach, and could be got within an hour. If he was vexed with the hon. member last night because of the way that he went on, he would not do him an injustice. He also said that the hon. member was outwardly in a hurry to have the Fassifern line started, but the reason of that was because there were 32,000 acres of land in the vicinity belonging to the Thorn family. The estate was being wound up, but the land would fetch nothing comparatively until the railway was got. Those 32,000 acres of land were the father of the Fassifern line. He was not opposed to the line, but he did not think it was so important as a line to deep water, or that it would do Ipswich any good; but he did not know that it would increase the value of the 32,000 acres. He could not contradict the statement made by his colleague with regard to the false whiskers and old clothes. When the elections to which allusion had been made were

on, men were hired to vote; and one voted as Doctor so-and-so, and another as Captain so-and-so. They all had their names. Those votes cost a deal of money, but he thought they were partly a failure. However, the hon. member for Northern Downs and himself were getting a little more honest now. The hon. member had said that what he did not know about political matters was not worth knowing. That might be true, but it was not language that should be used in the House. He could not hold the hon. member accountable for the polling places to which his colleague had referred, as he was on his trip to England at the time. It was the hon. member's brothers who were accountable, they having profited by the lessons which he had taught them. A very remarkable circumstance occurred with regard to the election of the hon. member for Fassifern, and he would particularly call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to it. It had been the case in this colony that polling places had been gazetted at the stations of the candidates; but that should not be done, and he would give a reason. In the neighbourhood of Normanby there were about fifteen voters who were all known. At the election for Fassifern, Mr. Persse got four or five votes at Normanby, but to his great astonishment fifty-four votes altogether were polled. As to the challenge of the hon. member, before he should resign his seat for Stanley and face him he would have to prepare for all the contingencies to which he had referred, and would require a lot of money to cope with him. The only place that he would care to meet the hon. member would be in his own electorate of Northern Downs, and if the hon. member cared to resign, and pay his expenses of contesting the seat with him, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) would hand him his resignation. He would apologise to the hon. member—if on the previous day he had said anything which was hurtful to the hon. member's feelings he was sorry for it. He was hot-tempered, and did not study what he said; but as to the truth of the statements that he had made, he was prepared to challenge him outside the House.

Mr. THORN said he did not intend to notice the personal remarks that had been made, but he rose to make a few observations regarding the matter of the "missing link." After one of Bashford and Company's tenders was accepted, the present member for Stanley (Mr. O'Sullivan) came to his office to bring pressure to bear on him to secure the acceptance of the other tender, but he declined, having previously refused at a meeting of the Cabinet to make the recommendation. Had he made it both of Bashford and Company's tenders would have been accepted by his colleagues. He would repeat, that after he brought the tenders to his office the member for Stanley came to him and tried to induce him to recommend the acceptance of Bashford's tender, and he (Mr. Thorn) declined, telling him it was dangerous, and to be off. The tenders were public then, and he would have shown them to anyone. He also showed the hon. member the telegrams which were received from Victoria against the man who was the lowest tenderer, and the hon. member was then anxious that he should bring on the tenders a second time, with a recommendation in favour of Bashford. There was the missing link! There was a formal recommendation of Bashford's tender by Mr. Stanley, which he was bound to bring up, but he would not initial it, and his initials were not attached to the document. He refused to make any recommendation to the Cabinet, because a relative of his was connected with Bashford. Bashford had actually suffered through his action, for he had been the means of doing him

an injury at the time. The hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) was the only man, outside of the Cabinet, to whom the telegrams from Victoria were shown; and after seeing them he said, "Go on, and bring up a recommendation." He declined, and felt vexed that the hon. member should come into his office and tell him what he should do. With respect to the Fassifern election, he never intended to oppose the hon. member Mr. Persse, and was astonished, when he returned to the colony, to learn that he had been put up against him. The hon. member was the last man that he should have opposed. He would deny that he had said or intended anything personal on the previous evening. It had been said that he called the members for Stanley fools. What he said on a former occasion was that they were fools if they believed the Government were sincere about the branch lines; but what he said last night was that they were blind followers of the Government. He spoke more in praise than in dispraise of the junior member for Stanley's speech. What he had said about him was said in fun and by way of chaff, and no harm was intended.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he hoped the House would allow him to explain that he saw the tenders in a public-house.

Mr. MILES said the exhibition to which hon. members were being treated was deplorable, and it seemed to him that the Government were following the course of the Opposition—they were going in for stonewalling and blocking the business of the country on private members' days. It was very unseemly and unjustifiable that members on one side should bandy words with members on the other, and accuse each other of being bigger robbers, bigger thieves, and bigger blackguards. It was high time that they turned their attention to the business of the country and left private characters alone. The hon. member who cried "hear, hear" sarcastically had never known or heard him (Mr. Miles) make any accusations, and he would appeal to the Speaker in confirmation of the statement. He could see plainly that the Government and their supporters intended obstructing business with their howling and shouting, but the House had a right to expect something better from them. The accusation that had been brought against the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) was debated last session, and if he was not mistaken the Minister for Works, if he did not apologise, at any rate admitted that he made a mistake.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I did neither the one nor the other.

Mr. MILES said, then he ought to have done. Would the hon. gentleman also deny that he did not abuse the leader of the Opposition about his connection with the Townsville Railway, and that he did not acknowledge that he made his statements without any foundation? The aim of the Government and their supporters was evidently to rake up charges and slanders against members of the Opposition. He had been accused by the Colonial Secretary of selling land to himself whilst holding office as Minister for Lands. The Minister for Lands also brought an accusation against him, asserting that he had robbed and plundered the country by closing certain roads. The Government tried to do all they could against him at the last election for Darling Downs, and the Minister for Lands supplied his opponents with maps to indicate what he had been guilty of, and these were placarded everywhere. Whatever he had done had been done in the usual way, and in accordance with the law.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hear, hear.

Mr. MILES said the Colonial Secretary had a nasty and offensive way of interrupting a speaker. The hon. gentleman should remember that he was paid to be in the House, and that although he (Mr. Miles) was not bound to listen to him, he (the Colonial Secretary) was bound to listen to him. The hon. gentleman would not deny that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do deny it.

Mr. MILES said that he was not bound to remain in the House when the hon. gentleman was speaking, but if the hon. gentleman chose to go out of the House whilst he was speaking he would bring him back. However, that was beside the question. He had no desire to be on unfriendly terms with the hon. gentleman, but he must know that he retarded business by his offensive sneers at members of the Opposition. It was lamentable and deplorable that hon. members could not find a better occupation than bandying words across the House one against another, one member accusing another of dishonourable action or of committing robbery. What were the outside public to think of it? He heard the other day of two boys fighting, one a big lad and the other a smaller one. A party came up and asked the big boy why he was striking the little fellow. "Why, sir," replied the boy, "he called me a director of the Glasgow Bank!" If things were not altered the members of the House would be looked upon as the boy looked upon the directors of the Glasgow Bank. The public outside looked upon members of the House as—he hardly liked to make use of the expression. It should be the endeavour of the Government to keep the House in order; he had endeavoured to do all he could to throw oil on the troubled waters, and he did not think any hon. member could accuse him of getting up and bringing an unjust accusation against any member of the House. He had never got up to abuse anyone, but, at the same time, had always endeavoured to defend himself when attacked; and he was perfectly justified in doing that. The Minister for Lands had accused him of being guilty of fraud, had said that he was always preaching about his honesty, and that he was this, that, and the other. The hon. gentleman had charged him with having prevented the contractors for the Western Railway from drawing timber through his paddock. That was not true, and he had a letter he could read to the House denying every single word. However, perhaps it was not worth while reading the letter; he would upon this, as upon everything else, be content to leave the public to judge between him and the hon. member. It would not be to his (Mr. Miles') interest to prevent those people making use of his land, and he was not going to take credit to himself for what he had done. He had permitted the temporary use of his land, and when it had been made use of for that time there was an end of it. He would submit all his actions to the judgment of the public—if they were right, his conduct would be approved; if they were wrong he would be condemned. The whole discussion had been carried on, no doubt from the first, at the instance of the Government, who wanted to stone-wall. This was a private members' day, and the Government were determined they should not proceed with business; and the present adjournment was got up to refer to what the member for Northern Downs said last night. He (Mr. Miles) thought himself that hon. member went a little too far when he said he had kept the hon. member for Stanley out of the House seven years and would keep him out seven years more.

Mr. THORN: I did not say so. I said the hon. member for Stanley said I had done so.

Mr. MILES said, at any rate the hon. member said he was blamed for keeping the hon. member for Stanley out of the House for seven years, and for saying that he would keep him out seven years more; but he did not believe the hon. gentleman was the man to keep out anyone. With respect to the complaints that had been made about *Hansard*, all he could say was that since he had been a member of the House he had never made a complaint as to how he had been reported. He knew his own failings—that he was a very bad speaker and very hard to report; but he had never complained. He believed the reporters always did their very best; and he had never taken the trouble to correct a single word of what he had said. He could quite understand why the Minister for Works was so indignant and annoyed about the omissions from *Hansard*. This morning he (Mr. Miles) saw forty or fifty people busy reading *Hansard*; they were reading it, not only at the Railway Station, but also in Queen street. They did not read the *Courier*, the *Observer*, or the *Telegraph*; it was *Hansard* they wanted. He used to say it was a costly toy, but he had come to the conclusion that *Hansard* was a great power, and his firm belief was that it would kill the present Ministry. It was easy to see, therefore, why the Minister for Works was indignant because there was some omission of what was said against an hon. member on the other side. *Hansard* was, no doubt, a very expensive toy; if last year there had been a motion to abolish it he would have supported it, but it was just possible that it would eventually recoup its cost to the country by the way in which it was exposing the transactions of the Government; and he would think twice before he would vote for a motion to abolish *Hansard* at present. He hoped the Government would for the future refrain from taking up the time of the House on private members' day.

Mr. MESTON said he had listened with considerable astonishment to the accusation which had been brought by one of the hon. members with reference to *Hansard*. It had become customary with some hon. members, who had, or fancied they had, any cause of offence to attach the blame to the *Hansard* staff. He was well acquainted with the exact position of the *Hansard* in New South Wales, and from his knowledge of that, and also of the Victorian *Hansard*, he could without fear or hesitation say that the *Hansard* staff of Queensland were infinitely superior to either. He believed that the *Hansard* reporters of the House were as good a class of men as were to be found in Australia. The chief was a man of considerable reputation as a British journalist, and to his intelligence and discretion they might safely leave the editing of *Hansard*. It was a preposterous suggestion to say that it should be edited by any member of the House. No member would exercise more discretion, or ability, or capacity, than the chief of the *Hansard* staff at the present time. He (Mr. Meston) spoke with perfect impartiality. He had himself sometimes been misrepresented, and occasionally omitted entirely; but he believed it had always been when he was speaking of things that were of no general interest to the colony. As far as he could judge of the staff, and the way it was conducted, and the wise discretion used by the chief, he was quite certain that if the reports were not always done to the satisfaction of all, by no possible arrangement could the publication be managed better. He said conscientiously that no better chief could be found for the staff, and no better set of reporters could be found in the Australian colonies. He felt it his duty to state this, and he believed that it was the opinion of the majority of the House. At the present time,

he quite admitted the necessity for faithful reporting, but there were occasions when a fit of temporary madness seemed to pass through the House, and then hon. members said things that had better not be reported. Only the other evening he himself made a speech which he sincerely regretted on reflection, not that he believed that what he said was not true, but he now thought it was an error of judgment. Considering, however, it was a matter affecting his position as a member, he thought it his duty to bring the matter before the House, but upon reflection he was of a different opinion. The hon. member for the Darling Downs rose and expressed at the beginning most proper sentiments, but at last he drifted into the course which he condemned in others. The hon. gentleman seemed to have been practising facial contortions and nasal discord in order to bring ridicule on the Colonial Secretary. When hon. members said things in the heat of passion the chief of the *Hansard* staff should have discretionary power to eliminate if he thought fit. The circulation of the *Hansard*, he might inform hon. members, was very extensive; and at present the number of copies that were sent out was 6,500 per day; and these were read with quite as much interest as any newspaper. It was necessary, therefore, there should be faithful reports; but he did not think it was wise to admit any expressions of opinion that were really disreputable, and which they themselves would afterwards be sincerely pleased to go omitted. He felt bound to express his opinion of the able way *Hansard* was conducted, and thought he might claim some little knowledge of the subject.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for the Darling Downs had denounced the course taken by some hon. members, and then pushed it to a greater extent than anyone else. He had threatened the Colonial Secretary as to what he would do outside the House. That hon. member had informed against the Colonial Secretary, he believed, but he (Mr. Lumley Hill) did not suppose that that hon. gentleman was afraid of his threats.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not take notice of any threats. He did not take the vulgar speech of the hon. member as such.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for Darling Downs spoke so indistinctly that it was hard to hear him. He imagined, however, that threats were made use of. He then said the Government were stonewalling. That was not done on the Government side of the House, though they saw plenty of it on the other. They knew pretty well that whatever business they attempted was stonewalled, and a little of such treatment applied to the other side would not do the least harm. If their constituents could see them as they were seen from that side, and knew what they really were, it would be a very good thing. Some of them would not be returned to the House again. He had been listening to the speech of the hon. member for Normanby, and quite endorsed what he said about the leader of the Opposition using his influence to get into the House men who had disgraced themselves in private life, and certainly were not fit to be members. He had alluded to one of them the other night, but what he said was totally omitted from *Hansard*. That member was unfortunately not in his seat then, but if he wanted to hear what he said he (Mr. Lumley Hill) should be happy to give him the information at any time.

Motion for adjournment put and negatived.

PETITION.

Mr. BAYNES presented a petition from Conditional Selectors in the Burnett District, praying for relief from certain grievances.

Petition received.

FORMAL BUSINESS.

On the motion of Mr. FRASER, it was resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the desirability of introducing a Bill to encourage the Manufacture of Colonial Wines, and to regulate the sale of the same.

PROPOSED RAILWAY TO NERANG.

Mr. McLEAN moved,—

1. That in view of the large settlement that has taken place in the Logan Electorate, this House is of opinion that a Line of Railway should be constructed to connect the Districts of Logan, Coomera, and Nerang with the Metropolis.

2. That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Administrator of the Government, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the next Loan Estimates a sum of money for the purpose of giving effect to the above Resolution.

Four years ago he carried a motion, unopposed, for a sum of money for the survey of a line between Brisbane and Nerang Creek. Three or four surveys had since been made, one of which passed four or five miles beyond the Coomera River. Shortly after the House sanctioned the survey he happened to be in Sydney, when he saw the manager of the Sugar Company there, and that gentleman agreed with him upon the advantages which would accrue from the construction of a line, seeing the difficulties which attended the navigation of the river. When he visited the Tweed River, twelve months ago, he was informed that a number of settlers were leaving the district because they could not get their produce sent to market. The land in this locality was first-class agricultural land, and in considering the construction of a railway the House must take into consideration the probable amount of traffic which the line was likely to receive from that source. The district of the Logan was a very old one, and at the present time it contained as dense a population as could be found in any agricultural portion of the colony. He would make that fact perfectly clear before he sat down. He had previously pointed out that Southport was coming into repute as a seaside resort—indeed, he believed that it would become the great sanatorium of Queensland. Four years ago there was scarcely a habitation there; but the place now boasted considerable settlement. Many people were astonished that the Logan district had been so long left out in the cold in the matter of railway communication. At the time he moved for a survey of a line the hon. member for Warrego (Mr. Walsh) expressed his great surprise that the representatives of the district had not taken action much sooner. When the first line of coaches was put on between Beenleigh and Brisbane it was generally thought that the proprietor had more money than sense. But people—himself among the number—were greatly mistaken. Shortly afterwards Cobb and Co. started a second line, and succeeded in running off the first. At the outset their coaches ran twice a week, but not long afterwards they had to run them three times. This arrangement, however, ultimately proved insufficient, and at the present time there were daily coaches between Beenleigh and Brisbane—in addition to a private coach. Within a few years travelling facilities had been spread all over the district. They could all remember the time when Cobb and Co. accommodated the whole of the passenger traffic between Ipswich and Brisbane; but it would require rather a large number of coaches to accommodate that traffic at the present rate.

Two or three years ago the Under Secretary for Lands, in his report, mentioned the Logan as the principal portion of the colony in which agricultural pursuits were carried on. The land was not taken up for speculative purposes and held in large blocks until the value increased; it had been occupied for purposes of settlement. He would acquaint the House with a few facts in connection with the police district of Logan. The estimated population on the 31st December, 1879, on the basis of the census of 1876, was 5,200 persons. On the 31st December, 1878, there were 4,881 horses, or 3 per cent. of the whole of the horses in the colony; 49,050 cattle, or 2 per cent. of the whole of the colony's cattle; and 950 sheep, or 0.018 per cent. of the whole of the colony's sheep. The extent of land under crop in 1878 was 7,572 acres, or a proportion of 7 per cent. of the whole of the land under cultivation in the colony. There were 3,958 acres of land under maize, which produced 146,923 bushels. He should like to point out the disadvantage under which the producers of maize in the district laboured. The distance from Beenleigh to Brisbane was about the same as the distance from Ipswich to Brisbane. The cost of carriage of a ton of maize from Ipswich to Brisbane by rail was 2s. 6d., whereas the cost of carriage of a similar quantity from Beenleigh was 10s. With such a difference in the cost of carriage, it must be evident to hon. members that the farmers on the Logan could not compete successfully with the farmers of West Moreton. In the district there were 277 acres of land planted in potatoes, which produced 630 tons; there were 2,675 acres under sugar-cane, which produced 1,625 tons of sugar. Since the date of the return from which he was quoting, the acreage of land under sugar-cane had been largely increased. In 1878, 68,022 lbs. of arrowroot were produced in the district, and a much larger quantity was being produced now. It had been used as an argument against the construction of a line, that there were ample facilities for the conveyance of produce by water. He would state distinctly that there was not first-class water communication, but even if there was, as he had already pointed out the selectors in the district would be placed at a great disadvantage in comparison with those in the West Moreton district if they had not railway communication. There was a large quantity of sugar land along the river, and the only means of getting the produce to market was by water. If a railway were constructed he was sure that a large proportion, if not all the sugar grown, would be sent by rail. Let hon. members consider what an advantage it would be to the sugar-planters if they had railway communication. A man having fifty or sixty tons of sugar in his store-house might receive intelligence that sugar had gone up in price 35s. or £2 a-ton, and if he could send his sugar to Brisbane within twenty-four hours he might be able to secure the increased price, but when he had to wait for a week or a fortnight before he could get the sugar to market he lost all chance. He had been a resident in the electorate for the last fourteen years, and knew the district as well, probably, as any man in it. He should hesitate about proposing the expenditure of public money on the construction of a line if he believed that the line would not be remunerative. He felt confident that the line which he indicated in his motion would be a remunerative one—that it would pay not only the interest on the cost of construction, but would yield a considerable amount in excess of that, which would help to make up the revenue which was deficient from the main trunk lines. The question of constructing branch lines was one of more than local significance; it was of national

importance. In a leader in to-day's *Darling Downs Gazette* the writer said:—

"The experiment of branch lines has not yet been tried, but we have no doubt that in the district referred to in Mr McLean's resolution, and in all similarly populous districts, the branch lines would be not only a great public convenience, but would in the present condition of the colony more than pay the interest on the cost of construction besides working expenses, and would ultimately become a valuable source of revenue. Anyone familiar with the district must have been struck with its fertility, and must at once concede what an impetus would be given to settlement and production by a branch line running through it. The district is essentially a sugar-producing one, and therefore if not wealthy at the present, possessing all the elements of prosperity—a prosperity that would be fostered and hastened by the proposed line."

There were sources of wealth in the district other than those resulting from the cultivation of the land. Valuable seams of coal were to be found in the banks of the Logan River, and these and many other sources of wealth would be opened up if facilities were offered. Up to the present no encouragement had been given for the development of the resources of the district. Some of the finest timber in the colony was grown in the district; nearly all the shingles used in Brisbane came from that direction. As the timber around Brisbane became exhausted they would have to go further back for their supplies, and he believed that on the line which he proposed there would be a large timber trade—in fact, a large quantity of the timber now cut up in Brisbane came from the district. The line could be constructed at less cost, he believed, than any other line in the colony could be; a considerable portion of the land over which the line would pass was still in the possession of the Crown, and nearly all the timber required could be procured in the immediate vicinity of the line. In bringing forward the motion, he did not wish to embarrass the Government; he simply wished the House to recognise the justice of the claims of the district.

The PREMIER said he would at once acquit the hon. member of any intention of embarrassing the Government by bringing forward the motion—in fact, he did not see how he could well embarrass the Government. The only embarrassment which was likely to result from the passing of such motions would be to hon. members themselves, as a great number might be passed, and the Treasurer of the day would be compelled to overlook some of them. The hon. member must know that the Government could not allow such a motion to pass prior to their intentions as to a Loan Bill being made known or to their bringing forward a scheme of branch railways, which the Government had not done up to the present. However, he would say a few words on the merits of the line which the hon. member proposed, because the hon. member had advanced arguments to show that the line he indicated ought to be constructed in preference to all others. He did not think that a line for the Logan district ought to be taken *via* Coomera, Nerang, and Southport. The hon. member said such a line would enable the farming produce on the Tweed River to be brought to market. He should like to know why the Government of Queensland should construct a line of railway for the purpose of enabling the farmers of the adjoining colony to compete with their farmers. If he thought that such a line would be a profitable one he might entertain a different view. The hon. member (Mr. McLean) had said that water carriage was more costly and slower than railway carriage would be. His opinion was that the district was well placed in that respect, inasmuch as it was intercepted at different places by capital water communica-

tion—better, he believed, than was to be found in any part of the colony. He was sure that a railway could not compete with the water carriage. If a line were to be constructed at all he hoped that it would go in another direction to that proposed by the hon. member—he hoped it would go through the rich agricultural land on the upper part of the river. No doubt, as the hon. member had said, population and settlement were increasing in the district, but he did not think that the hon. member had made out a sufficient case. The hon. member gave it as his opinion that the proposed line would return a surplus, which could be utilised by the Treasurer to make up the deficiency of the revenue from other lines. If he could see any prospect of such a result as that he would be very happy indeed to support the proposal, but the hon. member had not brought forward any facts in support of his statement. If there were such excellent prospects why had not private individuals offered to construct the line? The hon. member would see that the motion was premature at present. He thought the hon. member should be contented with having brought forward the matter and should not press it any further, not because he (the Premier) was afraid of the motion, if carried, embarrassing the Treasury, but because he believed it could be better discussed when a loan for railways came before the House.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that as the matter, if discussed, would open up a large question for debate, he thought, after what had fallen from the Premier, that there was no occasion to go into a long discussion on it. He should have no hesitation in voting for the resolution as a general proposition, but if it became concrete and they had to vote the money it would be a different thing altogether. The Premier had just told them that the resolution, if carried, would not lead to any embarrassment of the Treasury. That, certainly, was a very pleasant view to take, but it was one he (Mr. Douglas) did not agree with at the present time. He presumed the hon. gentleman did not mean that, but merely that a draft might be passed and a cheque drawn, but it would not be payable just at the present time. There was no doubt that the district referred to in the resolution was one which should be opened up by railway communication, and he trusted it would be before long. He wished at present more particularly to reply to some remarks made by the hon. gentleman about a proposition that was made by the Colonial Sugar Company of Sydney at the time he (Mr. Douglas) was a member of the Government, that proposition being that the company would be prepared to make a railway if they could get any inducement from the Queensland Government to do so. It had been frequently said that the Queensland Government refused to hold out any encouragement to the Sugar Company, but the reply given to the company was really an encouraging one; at the same time, nothing definite was said as to what the Government would do until a proposition was made by the company, or a reasonable expectation was shown of the undertaking being entered into by them. With regard to a railway to Beenleigh, he considered there was more justification for such a line than for some of the railways already sanctioned, as the traffic on the road justified the belief that such a line would pay, and the fact that there was a considerable and an increasing population on the Logan and Albert justified the opinion that it was just one of those railways that would pay for its construction. The extension of the railway beyond Beenleigh was another matter; but it appeared to him that a line to Beenleigh was just one of those which recommended itself more than many of those which had received the

favourable consideration of the House. It seemed to him that it was unquestionably desirable that when the time arrived for an extension of a line beyond Beenleigh it should be extended to the southern border in the direction indicated by the resolution, and that the object should be to get into close communication with the people on the Tweed River. It had been said that there was good water communication to Nerang Creek, and so there was; but when they went beyond Nerang there was no good water communication between it and the Tweed, and therefore it was necessary that there should be a railway. He believed there was now a railway in course of construction between Grafton and Casino, and when that was accomplished he did not see why this colony should not be connected with Grafton by railway in a way that would be mutually advantageous to the southern portion of Queensland and to the northern portion of New South Wales. The people of that district of New South Wales were not at present connected with any important centre of commerce, and if this colony was only connected with it by rail it would practically become part of Queensland. Thus there were to his mind great justifications for the construction of that line. At the same time, he could not promise the hon. member that he would vote for the resolution, and he did not suppose that the hon. member expected it would be carried. The same arguments that were used to justify this motion might be used in justification of others similar to it, although, as he had said, he thought the line proposed by the hon. member recommended itself more than many that had been sanctioned by the House.

Mr. McLEAN said that his object in moving the resolution was not to bring the selectors and sugar-growers of New South Wales into competition with those of Queensland, but he had endeavoured to show the House that the trade derived from the direction of the Tweed would considerably augment the revenue derived from such a railway as that he proposed. A very large quantity of sugar was grown in the Tweed district which would form a large item in the railway traffic, as, although there was an import duty of £5 a-ton on sugar, it could be carried from the Tweed in bond to Brisbane, from whence it could be shipped. The Premier had alluded to the difficulty of making railways compete with water carriage, and alluded to the facilities for water carriage in this particular part of the country; but in America, where there was any quantity of water carriage, railways were made to wherever there was any population, and in the old country railways ran side by side with canals—in fact, no person would ever dream of travelling by water, and spending ten hours on a steamer, when they could go the same distance by railway in three hours and a-half, at the outside. Last year, when he asked the Premier what the intention of the Government was with regard to the railway to the Logan, he understood the hon. gentleman to say that there were two railways under consideration—one to the Logan, and one to South Brisbane—and that the latter ought to be the first to be constructed, with the exception of the line to the Logan. On reference to *Hansard*, he found the hon. gentleman made use of these words when speaking of the railway to South Brisbane; it—

“was the first that ought to be constructed, with the exception of a line to the Logan, which ought to occupy the premier position.”

He did not feel inclined at present to go into the question of expense, but, seeing that the district was not very far removed from the metropolis, it would not require much argument to show

that the proposed line would be a remunerative work. He trusted the House would see the reasonableness of the claim he had put forward. He did not say that the work should be carried out this or even next year, but he hoped they would take into their consideration the reasonableness of the proposition.

Mr. MESTON said he entirely believed in this line as one of the most justifiable that could be undertaken. He was considerably amused at the beautiful theory of the hon. member for Maryborough as to the probability of railway communication between Brisbane and Grafton. He remembered a Queensland journal some years ago suggesting the construction of a line of railway from Ipswich to Maroon, from thence across the range down the valley of the Richmond, to bring the whole trade of the Clarence and Richmond across the Macpherson Range into Queensland; and that was just as improbable as the suggestion of the hon. member for Maryborough. It would be perfectly useless to extend the line towards the Logan beyond Nerang Creek, because there was scarcely any cultivation between Nerang Creek and Tallebudgera and Carumbin. The produce raised about Tallebudgera could be carted into Nerang Creek and brought by the Logan Railway to Brisbane. There was not the slightest probability of the Colonial Sugar Company bringing sugar to Queensland. They had their own steamers built expressly for the purpose of running on a light draught of water and adapted for the navigation of such difficult rivers as the Tweed, and they would always take their sugar by steamer to Sydney. From Nerang to the Tweed, about twenty-three miles, would be a very expensive line, unless it were taken along the coast to the Tweed Heads. Supposing it were taken on the upper track to Kynnamboon on the Tweed, which was the only way it could be taken with any possibility of going to Grafton, it would have to be taken over some of the roughest country in Australia. From the Tweed to the Richmond was about fifty-four miles, and along the coast a line could be taken more economically, but he questioned whether it could be built for less than £8,000 or £10,000 per mile. The mail between the Tweed and the Richmond was taken by horse once a week, and there was no probability of the communication being increased. Such a railway was utterly impossible of realisation. But supposing they had such a line, they would have to take it about 160 miles to the Richmond River. That river was navigable a considerable distance for large ocean-going steamers; the farmers there had every facility for taking their produce to Sydney—in fact, Sydney was their only market; and the idea of suggesting that the farmers on the Richmond should bring their produce 160 miles by railway into a far less reliable market instead of sending it direct to Sydney was absurd, and showed that such a project was utterly impossible of realisation. If they attempted a line of this character they must leave New South Wales out of the question altogether, because they would never bring traffic out of that colony over the border. He had a perfect knowledge of the country from Brisbane to Sydney along the coast and how it was situated. He thought there were strong claims for the Logan Railway, and he quite agreed with the hon. member for Logan that Southport would be the watering-place of the colony in the future. He remembered coming along the coast to Queensland about eleven years ago, and that time there was not a single building at Southport, and he was astonished on returning to find that so much progress had been made there, and far greater progress would have been made if the people of Brisbane had better facilities for getting down there. At present there were no regular facilities for getting to South-

port, and if there was a railway running there unquestionably a large number of people would travel by it. The line from Brisbane to Nerang would pass through an immense extent of agricultural country; but the hon. member must not overlook the fact that it would be a somewhat expensive line. It would have to cross the Albert, Logan, and Coomera rivers, necessitating bridges of a more or less expensive character. He believed that a line to Nerang Creek would take the whole of the trade from the steamers, because the rivers in that district offered very little facilities for anything but very small craft. In fact, the people there had considerable difficulty at present in getting their produce to market; and he certainly believed that a line to Nerang Creek would be profitable—even if it cost £5,000 or £6,000 a-mile he believed there would be sufficient traffic to pay working expenses and fair interest on the cost of construction.

Mr. DAVENPORT said he had listened attentively to the arguments of the hon. member for Logan in favour of this motion, and he failed to see anything that would tempt him to vote for the proposition at the present time. He looked upon this as simply an addition to the branch railway log-rolling, which he was afraid, if the House indulged in to any appreciable extent, would very nearly ruin the country. Especially were there little claims for this railway. There was plenty of water communication for all the produce the settlers in the district could gather, and he should certainly vote against it, as he intended to vote against many other branch railways, unless it was the South Brisbane one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Mr. Perkins) said he could scarcely have supposed that the hon. member for the Logan was serious in putting the motion on the paper, knowing what he did about the district. He (Mr. Perkins) happened to make a tour not long ago to Nerang and Southport, and a greater disappointment he never experienced. He was on the lookout for settlement—for smiling homesteads and flourishing farms; but when he made inquiries, he found that most of the land along the road had been taken up in anticipation of a railway going there. He only desired to point out that this district had within it three navigable rivers; that there was nothing in it to take away except sugar and maize; and that if a railway were made there at the present time it would not be used except by those who had the railway station at their doors, but that all the produce raised in the district would be sent by water. He also learned that while carriage from there was only 7s. 6d., many residents on the river, whose time seemed to be valueless, chose to employ their own horses and waggons and earn the 7s. 6d. themselves. He thought these facts, and bearing in mind that other parts of the country were languishing for railway and road communication, should be quite sufficient to hunt the motion out of the House. He also discovered, to his astonishment, that there were more bridges between Brisbane and Nerang—where there was scarcely any traffic whatever, for he only met a few German waggons with solitary occupants—than there was on the whole of the Darling Downs. Thousands and thousands of pounds had been wasted there for the benefit of no one except the contractors, who, he hoped, did very well out of it. He would be quite prepared to support any proposition of the hon. member, no matter what it was, if it was for the benefit of the country; but he denied that there was any necessity for this railway. He believed the present means of transit was sufficient, and would be for years to come.

Question put and negatived.

STEAMER PASSES TO MEMBERS.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN moved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an Address to the Administrator of the Government, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause provision to be made on the next Supplementary Estimates for providing Free Passes for Members of the Legislative Assembly by Steamers from Brisbane to and from the Northern Ports once in each year, when travelling on purely political business.

He said he had not much to say on this question. The reasonableness of it was so obvious that he thought he might read over the statement made by the Colonial Secretary, the other night, as to the ignorance southern members displayed about the northern ports, and that alone would be sufficient speech for him to make in favour of the motion. If the motion were allowed to go into committee he would make a couple of alterations in it to meet the views expressed by the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Maryborough last year. He had those hon. members' speeches before him, and he entirely agreed with them. The leader of the Opposition voted against the motion last year because it was too limited. That hon. gentleman appeared to be a thorough believer in the payment of members' expenses, and he (Mr. O'Sullivan) could only tell him that he could very feelingly go with him in that matter, and for that reason he should move in committee that the words "free passes" be expunged, with a view of inserting "reasonable expenses," and that "members of Parliament" be substituted for "members of the Legislative Assembly." His reason for saying "on purely political business"—which, perhaps, it was rather hard to define, but in his mind's eye he could define it well enough—was that members should not make use of these passes merely for pleasure, or in any way by which they might put money in their own pockets. His own idea, all along, had been that southern members should really visit and see the northern parts of the colony, for which they were called upon to vote money every year. For instance, he scarcely knew any more about the Fitzroy River or the jetty at Townsville, and other places, although he had been twenty years in the colony, than he did about Candahar or Cabul. He simply read about them, and that was about all he knew of them. Personally, he should like to have a look at the various places, if only to see what became of the money which he was asked year after year to vote. The proposal was not nearly as formidable as it seemed, for the money would be saved indirectly. The personal visits of the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Works—especially the latter, who never spared himself—had been the means of saving large sums of money to the revenue. When hon. members said that such and such a work required to be done, the Minister went and saw for himself whether the work was really wanted or not. They might possibly have the mail contract very shortly, and it might be easy to come to some arrangement with the company by which members of Parliament might visit the northern ports on reasonable terms. With the consent of the House, he would alter the words "free passes" to "reasonable expenses," and as the journey was limited to once a year the cost would not be very great. There seemed to be an injustice dealt out to the northern members in this matter. They had to come down to Brisbane at a heavy expense, and to stay here at their own cost, while southern members could travel to their homes on the railway lines free of all charge. It was objected last year that this was the thin end of the wedge for payment of members. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that it was, it was a thing that was done

in all the other colonies. In New Zealand there was a Government steamer for the use of members, and in New South Wales the A.S.N. Company gave free passes from the Hunter River. They did not extend their generosity further north, he was sorry to say. The amount the scheme would cost might be cut out of many useless expenditures—indeed, he need not go outside the House to find one—and would come to a mere nothing. He had suggested the substitution of the words "reasonable expenses" for "free passes," in deference to an objection made during the debate last year by the leader of the Opposition. On that occasion the hon. member

"Apologised for following the hon. member after he had replied, and said he was strongly in favour of payment of members, as he believed that that House would never be a thoroughly representative body until that system prevailed. He did not mean payment of salaries to members, but merely payment of their expenses whilst from home, and he should very cordially support such a measure whenever it was introduced, which he hoped would be next session. He did not see his way clear to support the present resolutions, as they were too small an instalment of the system, and because he was afraid that they would tend rather to interfere with the adoption of payment of members than assist it."

He did not think there was anything novel in this small instalment which allowed members to see the ports of the colony they represented. The thing was so simple that he had made no attempt at speech-making in its favour, and he would conclude by asking that the motion might be amended as he had asked.

Motion, by leave of the House, amended.

Mr. AMHURST said that he should be only too happy to support the motion as it originally stood, because he believed that every possible facility should be given to hon. members who wished to inspect for themselves the improvements which were going on in the North; but he should oppose the alteration which the hon. member proposed to make, because he regarded such a proposition as the thin end of the wedge to payment of members, and to that he was deadily opposed. He saw no reason why the northern members should not be provided with means of communication with the capital as easy as those provided for the Darling Downs members. The establishment of such facilities of communication would do much to create a feeling of good fellowship between the North and South. At the present moment hon. members, generally, did not know what the North was; but when they did know they would see how advantageous it was that the two portions should be united together to make one strong colony. During the five years he had been in the House he had advocated—not separation, but amalgamation, believing that while North and South were united the colony would be stronger, and the administration of its affairs could be carried on more cheaply. But he was not going to vote for anything approaching payment of members, having seen how destructive it had proved to the self-respect of members in Victoria, and how difficult it was under such a system to get good government. What was wanted was the best administration obtainable, and he felt that any man who had any stake at all in the community could raise sufficient money to enable him to represent a constituency. No man should be debarred from representing a constituency solely on account of want of money, and no doubt any man who was fit to be a representative would always have friends to raise for him sufficient money. It was a very different matter when the whole of the colony was taxed to supply money to enable dodgers to get into different electorates to simply fight for plunder. A clever man in whom his constituents placed confidence could be placed in a proper position by means of private sub-

scription, and such a man might hold up his head anywhere, because money did not make the man; but when the money came from the State the payment became a species of plunder. He should have voted for the original motion, but he should vote against the motion as proposed to be altered by the hon. member.

Mr. BAYNES considered it his duty at this stage to protest against the introduction of any measure in the shape of payment of members. He maintained that hon. members had no right to vote one shilling into their own pockets; if they did so they would be acting contrary to the pledges they had given to their constituents. In asking the payment of their expenses to the northern part of the colony, they were asking the country to feed them. With all respect to the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan), who, much to his honour, had been a representative for twenty years, he trusted the hon. member would see fit to withdraw his motion. The hon. member, with his long experience, must be aware of the harm which had resulted to countries where paid parliaments existed—America, New Zealand, and especially Victoria. It must be patent to every member of the House that in introducing such a system they were degenerating from the English House of Commons—their great model. Only last night it was noted how much superior in its moral tone was this Parliament to those of the southern colonies; but if the proposition of the hon. member for Stanley were carried into effect, hon. members would soon be in the House who could not remain there without being paid. He trusted that some hon. member, abler but not more earnest than himself, would take the matter up.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said he intended to vote against the motion. If hon. members began to adopt this principle, he did not see where they were to leave off, or why free passes along coach lines should not follow. He should certainly avail himself of a pass to Rockhampton if free passes were given. To reach his place of abode, however, he had then to travel on the railway line; and after that he went for a considerable distance in Cobb and Co.'s coach. Why should he not have a free pass by the coach, and why should he not then be paid reasonable expenses for accommodation at hotels? He did not ask for anything of the sort. He considered he had a sort of right, as a member of the Parliament of the country, to travel free upon the railways, which were the property of the State. That right was admitted in all the Australian colonies. In New Zealand he was aware the members had also steamboat passes, received £200 a-year, and enjoyed other privileges—and similar advantages were given to hon. members in Tasmania. Their Parliaments did not, however, appear to be any better on that account, and probably the Parliament of Queensland would not be. He was utterly opposed to payment of members in any shape or form. It must be a very poor constituency, hardly worth representation at all, which could not afford to pay their representative a reasonable amount for expenses, if no individual could be found sufficiently patriotic to represent them without such assistance. This was the thin end of the wedge, and he should oppose it if it were ever so unimportant in itself. An ounce of practice was worth a pound of theory, and hon. members had had plenty of experience of what had happened in other colonies where payment of members was in operation. At one time he had been in favour of the theory, but time had entirely changed his opinions on that point, and he was now utterly opposed to the system. If "reasonable expenses" were paid there would be no limitation; the

position of a member of Parliament would become a sort of honorary appointment, and members would probably be a greater expense to the State than they would be if paid regular salaries. Any member who wanted a couple of months' holiday in the recess might take a trip to Thursday Island and back; but there was very little chance of any mail contract being entered into by which hon. members would have the privilege of travelling by the steamers without expense to themselves or the country.

Mr. THORN said he should support the motion because it would be the means of giving hon. members an opportunity of witnessing the extensive works now being carried on in Northern Queensland—more especially in the Fitzroy River. Hon. members would then be able to judge whether the money spent on improving the Fitzroy had been wisely or unwisely spent. So far as he could judge from the newspaper reports, and his experience of what had taken place some years ago on the Brisbane and Bremer rivers, he was afraid the money was not being wisely expended; and hon. members should have an opportunity of deciding whether the work should be stopped or not.

The Hon. J. M. THOMPSON said he should support the motion for another reason. He considered it a step towards a good principle, that principle being payment of members. He had always held the opinion that the principle was a good one, and did not consider that the experience of Victoria was anything to go by. He could not conceive that payment of members would have any other effect than inducing a superior lot of men to come into the House. It would be worth the while of men of talent to come to the House if they knew that they would receive something for their services, and he believed that the services of many men of talent were unavailable because they could not afford to give their time gratuitously. As to the system having the effect of introducing adventurers, he maintained that it would not. Adventurers could not afford to come to the House unless they received support from somewhere. Where did they receive, or were likely to receive, such support? The House knew that sometimes it was from their constituents, and that at other times it was from the increased business which they got from their position. Members of Parliament would be put in a much more satisfactory position if they were paid for their services. The only objection that he could see to that proposal was, that it would make the Government of the day stronger than was now generally the case;—but, perhaps, that would not be an unmixed evil, for as a rule their Governments were too weak. A strong Government felt its feet, and understood thoroughly what it was about. Under the system of payment of members Government would not be so likely to be turned out by people anxious to get their places, because members would be unconsciously influenced by the fact that a dissolution might deprive them of a position which they valued from the fact that it gave them something for their services. This might be a gross way of viewing the question, but they could not shut their eyes to the fact that they had no leisured class, and that unless members of Parliament were paid their expenses only certain men of sufficient leisure and money could be got to attend.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: How did you get in?

Mr. THOMPSON said he had got in by mere accident: the accident of having a little surplus money to spend at the time he was asked to stand. He had got to the House at great expense and happened to be able to afford it, but

he did not hesitate to say that better men were prevented from coming for fear of expense and the loss of business to which they would be subjected.

Mr. KINGSFORD said the proper time to discuss the subject of payment of members was when it came before the House. He could scarcely see that any mischief would result from giving members free passes to the northern ports, and it might perhaps tend to some good by making members better acquainted with that part of the colony. He should like to have the privilege of visiting the North. He did not think that the motion would facilitate the introduction of payment of members, and if that question should ever come up while he was a member of the House he should oppose it tooth-and-nail, because he believed it could be shown very clearly that wherever the system of payment of members had been adopted the legislature had degenerated;—instead of causing the interests of the country to be better attended to, it had resulted in a continual scramble for power amongst the representatives.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he expected that the Government would have expressed their views before now, but as they had not thought fit to do so he wished to say a few words. He disapproved of the motion in its present form, holding that the proposition to give free passes to the northern ports was too small to be worthy of consideration by the House. At the most it would amount to a present of £20 per annum to each member. Cooktown would be the furthest place that a member would be likely to visit on political business, and the cost of a passage there would not amount to more than £20. A member might like a trip to Thursday Island, but he would scarcely go there on political business. He heartily endorsed all that had been said about the desirability of members visiting the northern ports. He wished personally that he knew as much of the interior of the colony as he did of the coast, and that they were all better acquainted with the colony as a whole, and he thought that that contention of the member for Stanley was a correct one. He did not believe in payment of members—in paying salaries to members which would induce them to look upon seats in the House as a means of livelihood, or have the effect of raising a class of political adventurers, or men who depended upon their salaries as a means of livelihood; but he did think it fair that members who came from a long distance to attend to their legislative duties should, as far as practicable, be placed on equal terms with town members: their expenses whilst they were absent from home should be paid. The motion should go further, and provide for the payment of the expenses of members when absent from their homes attending to their legislative duties in this House or the other. It should not be in the nature of a salary, but should go as far as he had said. The question of payment of members had often been debated, and it was not necessary on the present occasion to go into the matter fully, particularly as before it could be finally disposed of it would have to be brought forward in the form of a Bill; but in order that members of the House, who might be inclined to go further than the hon. member for Stanley proposed, might have an opportunity of recording their opinions, he should move an amendment which would place the matter on a basis which he conceived to be a true one for the House to adopt. He should move the omission of the words after the word “to,” in the third line, with a view of inserting the following words:—

“Recommend the necessary appropriation for defraying the expenses of members of Parliament while absent from their usual place of residence in performance of their legislative duties.”

That did not involve the payment of salaries. The amount of the expenses to be allowed would have to be considered in committee on the Bill. If the motion as amended was carried, the matter was well worthy of being considered. He did not know whether the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) would accept the amendment, but he believed that if he would it would be carried.

The PREMIER said that although the debate did not commence in that way, it had been diverted to the subject of payment of members. That subject had been before Parliament on previous occasions, and when it was so he had always been a strong supporter of it. He had always strongly advocated the theory of payment of members in the House, and, he believed, before his constituents also; but they all lived and learnt, and although theoretically there was no subject for which better arguments could be brought forward, on looking at the results of the system in the other colonies he had been fully justified in completely changing his opinion. When the motion was read he at once objected to the words “free passes” being omitted with the view of inserting “reasonable expenses,” for the reason that it would amount to an amendment similar to that proposed by the leader of the Opposition. The hon. gentleman said he did not believe in payment of members, but that he believed in putting the different members on an equality—that was to say, that country members should be placed on the same footing as town members. The hon. gentleman forgot, however, that the great loss to which a country member subjected himself was not in being obliged to pay his expenses whilst he was in Brisbane attending to his legislative duties, but in being absent from his business; and if the hon. gentleman had carried out his own argument he would have come to the question of payment of members. The subject was not to be hidden or met half-way in the manner proposed by the leader of the Opposition. He believed, himself, that the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan's) motion might be carried without violating the principle of the non-payment of members. It was hard to see why members who lived contiguous to the railway lines should have the means of access to the Houses of Parliament over those lines, and that those who lived in the districts that had no railways should be obliged to pay their own expenses. Carrying that argument to its conclusion, however, they would be obliged to go further, and provide that those who lived in the interior should be paid their coach fares, or other expenses—paid by whatever mode of travelling was possible—to reach the Houses of Parliament. It was not proposed to carry it out so far as that, but only limit it to travelling by steamer, once a year, on the coast. Looking at the matter in that way, he had not much objection to the motion. He believed a great deal of good would accrue, and money would be saved by the knowledge that hon. members would gain, by visiting the northern ports, at almost all of which large sums of money voted by the House was being spent. If it would act in that way he did not see any reason why the money should not be spent, at least for one year, as an experiment, to see how it would succeed. The hon. member for Stanley had given as a reason for passing this resolution, that down in New South Wales free passes were given to members. It was not so. He believed the A.S.N. Company presented the members with free passes, and a more objectionable form of payment to members he could not conceive. He had been informed that the A.S.N. Company sometimes presented members of Parliament in Queensland with free passes along the coast. He had heard that said, and knew members who had had the privilege of free passes. It was not

right. He did not think that any member of the House should be under a compliment to Government contractors. That might be a reason why the House should grant free passes: at any rate, the Government granting free passes would be a much less objectionable form than the one in vogue in New South Wales. He had no intention of going into the question of payment of members. Did he think for a moment that this was the thin end of the wedge to the adoption of the system of payment of members in this colony, he would oppose it in the House and in committee, tooth and nail. The hon. member for Ipswich had said that he did not think the experience of Victoria was an argument against the payment of members, but in his (the Premier's) opinion the result to that colony had been most disastrous. There had been nothing that had lowered parliamentary government so much as payment of members. The hon. member himself said that the only objection he saw to the payment of members was drawn from the experience of Victoria—namely, that the application of the principle there had led to putting members of Parliament too much in the power of the Ministry of the day. That, itself, was a grave objection. No doubt it was the weakness of this country that Ministries were as a rule not strong enough. It would be much better if Ministries were stronger; but it certainly was not an advantage to a country if its Ministry was made strong by a number of adherents who supported a bad Ministry rather than give up the emoluments to which they were entitled. In Victoria they had only to look to how the principle worked under Sir James McCulloch and Mr. Graham Berry;—under both party leaders was the evil principle manifested. Sir James McCulloch kept on in spite of the country for a considerable time, because his men were banded together to save their salaries, and they kept on to the time when Parliament expired by effluxion of time. That could never have happened where there was no payment of members: and if there were no other reason, that would be sufficient to damn the system and prevent it being initiated in this colony. He had another objection, however, to the amendment moved by the hon. member for North Brisbane. The hon. member said he could not agree with the motion because its limit was too small: it was just because it was small that he (the Premier) gave it his support. This was not a time for members of Parliament to spend money upon themselves, when they found such difficulties in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the Government as they did at the present time. If they incurred further liabilities, it should not be upon themselves. They should look for more prosperous times before they did anything of the kind, unless they could see a distinct advantage to the colony. There might be an advantage in giving members free passes, but he could not see any giving them their expenses. He did not believe the hon. gentleman who proposed the amendment knew what it would cost. If he examined into it he would find that it cost thousands, if members were allowed the ordinary rate of expenses which would be, perhaps, a guinea a-day. On the list of members he could, at the present time, count thirty-nine who would be entitled to have their guinea a day all the time they were attending Parliament. He objected to that expense, which would run into thousands a year; and the Treasury could not afford that at the present time. When they came to a discussion of the granting of thousands a year to pay the expenses of members of Parliament, the question would have to be considered a great deal more thoroughly than at present. He

opposed the amendment for this reason, and also because it would not do what the hon. gentleman who proposed it said it would do—namely, put all members in the same position. It would do nothing of the kind. Town members had advantages which no artificial regulations they chose to make would do away with. Country members, no doubt, laboured under great disadvantages while attending Parliament. They had to go long distances and be at great expense in living away from home, but the greatest expense was to pass so much of their time away from their places of business. He would oppose the principle of the amendment in the House and in committee. He had no objection to the motion as it stood going into committee, but he should strenuously oppose the principle of payment of members, which was so forcibly embodied in the amendment of the hon. member for North Brisbane.

Mr. DOUGLAS said this was, no doubt, a very interesting subject, and one with which previous Governments had identified themselves. The Government with which he was connected determined to introduce a Bill to secure this object; and so far they identified themselves with the principle of payment of members. This, he presumed, was not a party question in any way, and it should be discussed on its merits. Referring to previous discussions on the question, he observed that the Minister for Works had supported a similar resolution to that moved by the member for Stanley, and he had a lively recollection of the sentiments of the Minister for Lands. It was constantly a matter of accusation against the previous Government that they did not show sufficient earnestness in this matter. The Minister for Lands had made it a matter against him personally that he professed to believe in the principle, but that practically he had done nothing to give effect to it. No doubt there was important business at the time which had to be disposed of; and, though he had no desire to give effect to the principle of payment of members, he believed it to be a true one. They gave expression in this colony to a form of democratic government, and it was an essential of that form of government that members of Parliament should be paid. It had been constantly said that they were to be deterred from following the example of other colonies by their bad example. Victoria was pointed at always as an illustration of the bad effect of payment of members, and he objected to the quotation of Victoria as an illustration of the bad effects likely to accrue from the adoption of the principle of payment of members. New Zealand might be quoted as an illustration, on the other hand. For many years, and even up to the present time, he had no reason to suppose that New Zealand had lost its good name, or that the people of New Zealand, as a community, were unable to conduct their own affairs with decorum and with judgment. Almost from the foundation of the settlement of New Zealand payment of members had been in force, and he had never heard that anything very scandalous had arisen in consequence—in fact, it soon became apparent that if the different settlements of New Zealand were to be fairly represented, payment of members was necessary. In Victoria, on the other hand, payment of members had unfortunately been too much mixed up with great constitutional fights, and made the battle-ground of a faction and of a party. The evils attributed to it, therefore, were not fairly to be attached to the principle itself. He doubted very much whether, even in Victoria, when payment of members was finally adopted as a part of the fixed practice of public affairs there, it would turn out to have such a radical effect upon the constituencies as was generally supposed. There was in the present Victorian Parliament a

arger number of members who were committed to the principle of the payment of members than there were before. Probably there was a larger conservative element in the Government of Victoria than there had been for years, though the members as a body were more numerous than before. He doubted, therefore, very much whether they were justified in coming to the conclusion that payment of members was inevitably connected with what were called advanced opinions in politics. Turning to Canada, they there saw that for many years—almost from the date of the commencement of constitutional government there—payment of members had been the practice, and it was not connected with extreme opinions in any way. There it was almost a necessity, as they could not get men to represent the constituencies unless they were paid. The theory of constitutional government was that there should be no limit to the choice of representatives; but at present there was an absolute barrier to a free choice. If desirable he could refer to particular instances in which this was the case, for it was an indisputable fact that some constituencies had a choice so narrow that they were not adequately represented. He spoke from some experience of the constituency which he himself represented. The Wide Bay and Burnett districts comprised a group of electorates in which the choice of representatives was limited in a most unwholesome manner, from the fact that there were men in those localities capable of discharging and willing to discharge parliamentary duties, but unable to submit themselves as candidates through their inability to bear the additional expense entailed by a five or six months' residence in Brisbane. The operation of the existing system, in fact, tended in the direction of disfranchisement. He understood the Premier to say that he objected to the amendment of the hon. member for North Brisbane because it did not meet the merits of the whole question. Upon that point he was inclined to agree to some extent with the hon. gentleman. If we were to deal with the payment of members, let us deal with the subject in a more comprehensive manner. For his own part, he was willing to vote for the amendment as an approach towards the adoption of that principle. Upon a previous occasion he voted with the hon. member for Stanley upon this question, and he would be pleased to support him again. At the same time, he hoped that the hon. member would accept the wider recognition of the principle he advocated which was to be found in the amendment of the hon. member for North Brisbane. In any fresh contract for the coast service he had no doubt that the Government would be able, if they chose, to provide for the issue of free passes to members of Parliament. That would be far better than that members should be under an obligation to different companies. The Premier had referred to the fact that the A.S.N. Company were in the habit of granting free passes to some members of Parliament in this colony. He was aware that the Postmaster-General was generally presented with a pass; and he believed that the Minister at the head of the Government was treated in a similar manner. When he was in office himself he received a complimentary letter from the A.S.N. Company, enclosing a pass in observance of the usual custom; but he only had the honour to possess it a few days, during which he never once used it. A similar custom obtained with the mail contractors in Victoria. The whole of the Government mail contractors were compelled to carry members of Parliament free of charge; and seeing that their own contractors were very well paid, he did not see why they also should not be compelled to carry members of Parliament free of expense where they ran vehicles. He hoped the House would recog-

nise in some form or other the principles indicated by the motion. Last year he believed the proposal of the hon. member for Stanley reached committee, but was there thrown out by a narrow majority. He hoped the hon. member would be more successful this year. If he were able he would vote both for the motion and the amendment; but he hoped the hon. member would accept the amendment.

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Maryborough had unintentionally misrepresented what he said in referring to the distribution of passes by the A.S.N. Company. What he said was that he had heard that several members had received free passes from the company. He did not know what he had mentioned to be a fact.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that if the hon. member for Stanley hoped to carry his motion he would not accept the amendment of the hon. member for North Brisbane. The only ground upon which he supported the motion was that it was exceedingly desirable that members should be educated—that they should have some opportunity of seeing the northern portions of the colony. As he had recently remarked, the ignorance of southern members with reference to the commerce and trading facilities of their northern ports was deplorable, and could not be exceeded in any Legislative Assembly. With a view, then, of disseminating some useful knowledge, however small, as to the capabilities of their northern ports, he would vote for the hon. member's motion as it now stood. The amendment opened up quite a different phase of the question; and upon this occasion he was, as usual, in a state of fog as to whether the hon. member for Maryborough intended to support the amendment, the original proposition, both, neither, or some other abstract proposition which he had not explained. But he held that the amendment was totally out of place. It opened up a question which should be argued upon its own merits—the question of payment of members. Even if the amendment were agreed to, it would be necessary to introduce a Bill to carry out the purpose the hon. member had in view. He did not think that in the present temper of the House the hon. member was likely to succeed in carrying a Bill which introduced payment of members. A great many hon. members who supported this proposition before we had the frightful example which had been displayed by Victoria were now among its most determined opponents. In previous years—although he had always strongly condemned the principle—he had voted for the proposition twice as a mere matter of expediency, to enable men who would not otherwise possess the means to enter the House as the representatives of remote constituencies with the wants of which they were well acquainted. But, as he had already had occasion to observe more than once, he had seen reason to completely withdraw even the modified support he had previously given to the proposition. He believed the evil effects of the principle far outnumbered any benefits they might expect to derive from it. To any attempt to introduce payment of members, therefore, he would offer a most strenuous opposition. He believed it had done more harm to the colony of Victoria than any measure ever introduced there. The object of the hon. member for North Brisbane, in moving his amendment, was evidently to block the proposition of the hon. member for Stanley. He did not think it at all fair of the hon. member to move such an amendment, and he hoped that it would be negatived, and the proposal of the hon. member for Stanley carried.

Mr. FEEZ said that, as one of the northern members, he felt it his duty to say something upon this question. He thought the motion of the hon. member for Stanley dealt out fairly.

Hon. members representing the southern districts were able to avail themselves of free passes on the railway, and he did not think that course could be objected to when they were engaged upon the work of the country. If the motion of the hon. member for Stanley enabled some members to form a better judgment of the wants of the northern part of the colony, it would, upon that ground alone, be of great service; but it would also allow northern members to enjoy the advantage now enjoyed by southern members. He had had considerable dealings with the A.S.N. Company, and he must say that he had never found them so unfair as he had heard them represented to be in the House. He never had any offer from the company, in any shape or form, of a free pass between Rockhampton and Sydney. As for payment of members, he should be very sorry, poor as he was, to see the principle adopted here. The injurious results that had followed the adoption of the principle in Victoria—through which there had been introduced into Parliament a band of obstructionists and professional politicians—ought to deter them from following the example of that colony. He trusted that the proposition of the hon. member for Stanley would be agreed to.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said he thought that a discussion on the question of payment of members ought not to take place on such a motion. He concurred in the proposition made by the hon. member for Stanley; but, being adverse to the principle of payment of members, he should vote against the amendment. The advisability of affording members facilities to go to the North was well exemplified in the speech of the hon. member (Mr. Thorn), who had shown his ignorance with regard to the works being executed at the Fitzroy River. The hon. member had said that the expenditure was wasteful, but he (Mr. Paterson) was assured on good authority that already the works had resulted in the obtaining of seven feet of water where there had been no water before at low-water, and that when the work was completed the depth would be increased to nine or ten feet.

Mr. SCOTT said he intended to oppose the amendment of the hon. member for North Brisbane for two reasons—the first being that the principle was bad, and the second, because, if it were agreed to, it could not be applied to this session. Free passes might be granted to hon. members, but during this session they could not grant direct payments to themselves. He was not sure whether, under the Standing Orders, the votes of hon. members who voted in favour of the amendment could not be objected to, on the ground that they were voting for something in which they had a personal interest.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (who was indistinctly heard) said that he should have given a silent vote had the hon. member (Mr. Douglas) not challenged him. When the hon. member for Stanley brought forward a similar motion last year he opposed it, because he thought it would be introducing the thin end of the wedge towards payment of members, but since then he had seen reason to change his opinion. He thought it was desirable to grant free passes to hon. members, so that the ignorance which they displayed with regard to the northern ports might be dispelled. For that reason, and that alone, he should vote for the motion; but he thought it should be amended by the omission of the words "political business," so that hon. members from the South might be at liberty to travel once a year for the purpose of acquiring that education which had been spoken of. The leader of the Opposition had stated that his amendment did not mean payment of members. He (Mr. Macrossan) thought it was payment of members

just as much as if it were proposed to vote direct salaries. They might have payment of members in different forms—it was simply a question of degree or character. If they paid the expenses of members coming to Brisbane, they would be voting the equivalent to a salary—there was no earthly difference, as far as he could see. The hon. member (Mr. Douglas) contended that they could not take the present Parliament of Victoria as an example of the result of payment of members, because it was more conservative than any parliament which had been in existence in that colony for many years. The hon. member seemed to overlook the fact that the increase of the Conservative party was brought about altogether apart from payment of members. It was said that to carry democracy to its legitimate outcome they should limit as little as possible the free choice of the people. That was very true, but he denied that payment of members put all men on an equality to become representatives. If men were paid the inequality of wealth would still exist, and everyone knew that wealth was a great power towards success at an election. They had examples of the result of payment of members other than that afforded by Victoria. There was a worse example, but they were in the habit of quoting Victoria because they were neighbours, and because they lived under the same laws and were ruled by the same Sovereign. In the United States they had the most democratic form of government in existence. Payment of members there had certainly not resulted in improving the respectability of members; it had tended to deteriorate the representatives, and to introduce into the legislature a class of mere adventurers. If the motion were carried, and a clause was inserted in future contracts with the steam navigation companies to the effect that members of Parliament were to have free passages, he had no doubt that the companies would increase the amount of their tenders. When he entered the House first he was an advocate of payment of members, and spoke in favour of it before he became a member. He voted in favour of a Bill to provide for payment of members, but before he had been in Parliament three years he changed his views and announced the change of his opinions on the same platform on which he had previously expressed himself in favour of the principle.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that as the amendment was in keeping with opinions which he had always entertained he should vote for it. He did not think that this was the time to go into the question of payment of members, but he did think that the arguments on the side of payment of members were more numerous and much stronger than they were on the other side. He knew many places in the colony where there was great difficulty in finding men who had the time and means to devote to public business, and therefore he was of opinion that if members were remunerated for their time during the actual sitting of the House, it would be the means of getting a superior lot of men. He should therefore support the amendment.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he had nothing at all to complain of in the debate which had taken place, but he must protest at once that he had not had the slightest idea of provoking a discussion on payment of members when he moved his resolution. His proposition was the simplest thing possible, and he had brought it forward on the high grounds mentioned by the hon. Minister for Works, as he had always felt a great reluctance in voting money for the North when he knew nothing about the places for which it was voted. He did not suppose there was a member who entered that House who did not only sacri-

fice a great deal of his time, but also spent a great deal of his own money in attending to his duties, not only in travelling, but in telegrams and other things. He had himself paid as much as 25s. in one week for telegrams which he had not gone to the Government for, and he did not see why it was not enough to give his labour to the country without giving his money also. People did not take into consideration the amount of correspondence members of Parliament had to get through and the cost of elections they had to contest; and why, then, there should be so much made of a pass to the North he could not understand. If the Government robbed a man of a deposit he had paid on a piece of land, they said they could not give it back and nothing more was done; in fact, he had himself been robbed several times by the Government in that way. However, that had nothing to do with his argument that, year after year, members had to vote on matters of which they knew nothing simply because they were ignorant of that part of the colony to which they referred. As to the idea of travelling for pleasure, or going to Thursday Island for recreation, that was out of the question, as Cooktown was the last northern port to which the steamers went. If the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Griffith) would bring forward a Bill for payment of members he should be very happy, if in the House at the time, to discuss it; but at present that was not the question. He would acknowledge at once that he was in favour of the hon. member's amendment, as it was a broader question than he (Mr. O'Sullivan) brought forward, but his idea had been to put his resolution in such a form as to be beyond any debate on payment of members; should that question be brought forward he should be very willing to go in for such a proposition as that contained in the amendment. The hon. member would see that in the present temper of the House, if he withdrew his amendment, he (Mr. O'Sullivan) would be able to carry his resolution—whilst, if they carried a motion for payment of members, notwithstanding what had been said to the contrary, they would have to go to the country before they could reap any benefit from it.

Mr. MILES said he should not have risen to address the House had it not been for what had fallen from the hon. leader of the Opposition. If he caught properly what the hon. member said, it was that he would not confine payment of members to the Legislative Assembly, but extend it to members of the other Chamber. If that was what was meant, he (Mr. Miles) would oppose such a proposition by all the means in his power. If the hon. member thought he was going to get him to assist in pensioning off members of the Upper House he was very much mistaken, as it would make a seat in the other Chamber a mere sinecure. In the elective branch of the Legislature they had to go before their constituents, and if they did not do their duty those constituents could turn them out; but when once a man was in the Upper House there was no getting him out. He thought the hon. member had better qualify his amendment, and if it was withdrawn he should vote for the resolution, as he believed, and always had, in the payment of members. He would ask hon. members opposite, if a man was to go to any of them and offer to manage a station for them on the Flinders, or elsewhere, for nothing, whether they would accept such a man's services—would they not say that he could be no good? He was quite sure that if a man offered to serve him for nothing he should know that he intended to pay himself somehow or other and must be a rogue; and as he considered that every man should be paid for his work, he thought it would be far better if the House went in for pay-

ment of members at once. He could remember when the present Minister for Lands was a strong advocate of payment for members, and when he used to ask the hon. member for Maryborough when he intended to introduce a Bill for that purpose. He believed at one time such a Bill even formed part of the programme in the Governor's Speech, but somehow it got to the bottom of the business paper. He did not know that this was the proper time for such a measure, as there was so much work on hand; but he hoped that if the Government did not introduce such a Bill, either the hon. member for Stanley or the hon. member for North Brisbane would do so.

Mr. KATES said he was so thoroughly opposed to the payment of members, or anything approaching to it, that he should oppose both the resolution and the amendment. If an hon. member wished to educate himself by going north to see the public works there, the least he could do was to pay his own passage money.

Mr. THOMPSON said that, perhaps, the best way to narrow the question would be to vote for the resolution of the hon. member for Stanley, as the House did not seem in the humour to entertain the idea of payment of members. Though it was a long time since he had been north, yet if the resolution was carried he might not take advantage of it; but still it might be a good thing to give hon. members who had voted money for the north an opportunity of going up to see how that money had been expended. It had been said by the Premier that it would be a very great expense, and that thirty-nine members would take advantage of it; but his own opinion was that instead of thirty-nine there would not be more than nine who would do so.

The PREMIER: What I said was that thirty-nine members would come under the motion.

Mr. THOMPSON said he did not suppose that very many members would take advantage of the passes—probably none at all this year, and, anyhow, nobody would be inclined to go north in the summer time—not to see the public works, at any rate.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that the argument used by the hon. member who had just sat down was the most extraordinary he had ever known brought before the House—even by a lawyer. He said he could see great advantages in the proposition, because it would enable hon. members to see how the large amounts of money that were being expended in the north were being laid out; and then he said that probably, unless it was in the winter season, they would not go at all. The sole reason given for voting for the resolution was that possibly out of thirty-nine members nine might take advantage of the passes. The hon. member for North Brisbane had succeeded in knocking a little fun out of the senior member for Stanley, and he (Mr. Morehead) gave him great credit for it, for that hon. member was generally equal to three ordinary members of the House. In his (Mr. Morehead's) opinion no hon. member in his senses would vote for either the amendment or the original motion. If the question of payment of members was to be brought forward, let it be brought before the House and tested in a proper way. The very terms of the amendment were absurd. Who was to decide what "purely political business" was? It was simply a waste of time and playing with legislation. Even if the motion was carried, the House, when it resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, would never allow the resolution to get out alive again. Not only was it an absurd resolution as it stood, but it was miserably crude. They were to pay the

way of hon. members up and down the coast once a year. According to this they might make that once always, and never get off the ship at all. It might mean the whole year, for they might say they were not satisfied with the first turn round, but were going on the same old travel. The argument that it would be a good thing for hon. members to see how the money was being expended was also a perfect farce. How could they? He said without hesitation that nine-tenths of them were not competent to judge; they had not knowledge enough to see whether money was being properly expended or not. And even if they had the knowledge, they had not the time to stop and see. Supposing they went to Townsville and saw a great public work going on, they would stop for two or three hours and then they would come down to say either that it was all right or all wrong. Much in that case would depend upon the person who showed them round. If it was a good affable Scotchman they would be induced to believe that everything was admirable, but if it was a blundering Irishman they would be persuaded it was a bungle, although the Irishman might be right and the Scotchman wrong. He gave the hon. member for North Brisbane great credit for the ingenious way in which he had moved the amendment. He was always moving amendments; it was his mission, and he did not believe he could live without doing so. One thing had been gained, at any rate, for notice had been given that the hon. members for North Brisbane and Darling Downs were in co-partnership; and that would be a very nice and interesting thing. He was glad to see that the latter hon. gentleman had come out of his shell. He (Mr. Morehead) was afraid he had become cramped, or had got into somebody else's shell and would never come out. He had come out on two occasions, and although, perhaps, he did not do much when he did come, yet it was something to get him out; and if they got him him out far enough they might cut off his retreat. He (Mr. Morehead) was glad to see that there was life in—he would not say the old hound, because it was not parliamentary, although it was classical—but in the most aged member of the House: and that if he could not bite he could make a sort of growl—an indistinct kind of bark. The hon. member for Moreton had also been injudiciously silent for some time past, and he hoped it was not from any injury to his lungs in consequence of the amount of roaring he had done in the early part of the session. To come back to the subject, he sincerely trusted the motion would not be carried at the present time, and he should vote against it.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had no objection to withdraw his motion, but would take an early opportunity to bring it forward in another way.

The SPEAKER: Does the House consent to the withdrawal of the amendment?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No!

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. MILES said he wished to call attention to a letter in to-day's paper referring to the hon. member for the Mitchell as a privileged slanderer.

The SPEAKER said the hon. member must speak to the question before the House.

Mr. MILES said he was saying that the hon. member for Mitchell was described as a privileged slanderer.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Supposing I called you a privileged liar?

Mr. MILES said everybody knew that the hon. member used his privileges as a member of the House to slander, abuse, and scandalise not

only members of the House, but individuals outside of it, and he felt that he must express his abhorrence of it in the strongest terms he could command. The hon. member had referred to members of the Opposition as renegades, and had used against them all the offensive epithets he could find. The hon. member was now getting up in years, and would be very well if he were to abandon his foolish, boyish habits, and endeavour to direct his great abilities to the good of the country. The hon. member might abuse him (Mr. Miles) as much as he liked; he did not care a straw about it, for it would only recoil upon his own head. Everybody knew what the hon. member was, and that he endeavoured to make tomfoolery of everything that was brought before the House. If he had not been ruled out of order, he would have read the letter to which he had referred, because it said the hon. member sheltered himself under the privileges of Parliament, and that was exactly what he was in the habit of doing.

Original question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 25.

Messrs. Palmer, McIlwraith, Macrossan, Perkins Beor, Persse, McLean, Scott, Norton, Low, Garrick Douglas, Feez, Macfarlane, Miles, H. W. Palmer, Bailey, Thompson, Beattie, Thorn, Kingsford, Swanwick, Cooper, Davenport, and O'Sullivan.

NOES, 18.

Messrs. Griffith, Dickson, Stevens, Morehead, Baynes, Amhurst, Lalor, Hill, Kates, Weld-Blundell, Stevenson, Fraser, Hendren, Rutledge, Meston, Paterson, Archer, and Horwitz.

While the division was proceeding,

Mr. O'SULLIVAN challenged Mr. Amhurst's vote, on the ground that he had seconded the motion.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was of no use now; the hon. member had been appointed teller for the "Noes."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he was not asking the opinion of the hon. member for Mitchell, who was not Speaker yet.

The SPEAKER: An hon. member who seconds a motion is at perfect liberty to vote against it. He may second it for the purpose of having it put to the House, as it could not be put without a seconder.

Question, therefore, resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 9—after a protest from Mr. MILES, on the ground that there was important business on the paper, which might be cleared off before rising—till Tuesday next.