

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 1880

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 2 November, 1880.

Formal Business.—Supply.—Leave to attend a Committee.

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

FORMAL BUSINESS.

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

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a Return showing the number of Tickets issued and collected at Yeulba, Bungil, and Roma on each day since the Railway was opened to those places respectively.

SUPPLY.

The PREMIER (Mr. McIlwraith) moved that the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply.

The Hon. S. W. GRIFFITH said he would take this opportunity of asking the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government what were his intentions with respect to the Government business on the paper. It was usual, at this period of the session, to put such an interrogatory. The session was evidently approaching a close, and there was still business on the paper of considerable importance. He particularly referred to the Burrum Railway Bill, the United Municipalities Bill, and the Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill. The Burrum Railway Bill, it was admitted, required to be considerably modified; the Municipalities Bill was of considerable importance to the country; and the Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill was a measure the importance of which could

scarcely be over-estimated. The House might fairly ask for information as to the intention of the Government with respect to these Bills. When was it proposed to go on with them? And what was to be done with the others? There were several Bills lower down on the paper for second reading. He supposed there was little chance of their being brought forward this session; but those he had mentioned should certainly be disposed of. The Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill could not occupy much time, and the Government had once or twice expressed their intention of pressing it on. Considering the length of time that had elapsed since it was introduced, it was not premature to call attention to the question.

The PREMIER said he had no objection whatever to tell the hon. gentleman what they intended to do with the three Bills mentioned. The Burrum Railway Bill would be gone on with at the first opportunity; the United Municipalities Bill would be gone on with in the same way, and he believed when it was carried it would prove to be a very good measure; the Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill he should trouble himself about no more. Instead of the hon. gentleman asking him what was the intention of the Government with respect to this Bill, it would have been more to the purpose if he (the Premier) had asked the leader of the Opposition why he voted for the second reading; because, although he did not use any argument, he was violently opposed to the Bill.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I never said so.

The PREMIER: No. I know you never said so; you took care not to do that; but the hon. members who act with you spoke strongly against it, and then voted for it. I have too much sense, I can assure the House, to attempt to carry through the Bill under these circumstances; and I have no hesitation in telling the hon. gentleman, now, that he has seen the Bill for the last time.

Mr. MILES was understood to say that the greater portion of the Ministry were opposed to the Bill. He was astonished, considering the majority at the second reading, that the Bill was now to be abandoned. If that was so, he hoped no time would be lost in permanently appointing a Supreme Court Judge. The manner in which matters connected with the Department of Justice were carried out reflected no credit upon the Government. He especially now referred to their appointments to the commission of the peace. The present Government put all the tag-rag-and-bobtail they could pick up on the bench, and he knew of a couple of loafers, one walking one side of Queen street and another on the other, and of these, one was appointed a magistrate, and the other would probably be soon appointed. One of them was now sitting on the bench as a magistrate, and it was disgraceful.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Palmer): Name!

Mr. MILES: You ought to know very well who it is.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not the slightest idea.

Mr. MILES: Then if the hon. gentleman wants to know I will tell him; it is Courtenay Spry. He walked up and down Queen street as a vagrant.

The PREMIER: You do not know the meaning of words.

Mr. MILES said the Premier probably did; and, if he did not know the meaning of the word vagrant, he knew the meaning of something a great deal worse. The Government were not acting creditably in reducing the number of the

Supreme Court Judges, and then announcing in the House that they had no intention of proceeding further with the Bill. If the Bill was to be withdrawn, then, in God's name, let them make a permanent appointment to the Supreme Court Bench, and have done with it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could not allow the assertion that the Government had appointed all the tag-rag-and-bobtail to the commission of the peace to pass without a remark. The appointments of the Government would bear comparison with those of any previous Government. At the same time he begged to say that as Colonial Secretary he was not responsible for the appointments. They were all very well fathered; he took care to have a written recommendation for everyone who was appointed, and there was no one appointed who was not strongly recommended by someone well known to the Government. The remarks of the hon. gentleman were therefore utterly uncalled for. With respect to the Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill, the Premier would have shown an amount of folly he had never seen him commit yet if, after the manner in which that Bill was—not supported—but voted for simply as a sham, he attempted to go any further with it. The conduct of the hon. member for North Brisbane in voting for the Bill was beneath contempt. The member for Enoggera (Mr. Rutledge) was also strongly opposed to it, but they all voted for it in the hope of putting the Government in a false position. When the Government could only carry their measures with the assistance of the Opposition, the sooner they abandoned them the better.

Mr. LOW took exception to the highly disparaging manner in which the hon. member (Mr. Miles) had on two occasions in the course of one week thought proper to parade the appointment of country magistrates. It might no doubt be true that some appointments were made to the commission of the peace that might not reflect much credit to that body. There were black sheep in every community. These appointments ought not to be wholly charged to the Colonial Secretary, as they were, as a rule, recommended to him by persons he considered worthy of credit. The hon. member (Mr. Miles), who at one time held the office of Colonial Secretary, ought, of all others, to know the extreme difficulty of discovering the genuineness of every person submitted for the distinction of justice of the peace.

The Hon. J. DOUGLAS said that some of the remarks of the Colonial Secretary ought not to pass without notice in connection with the appointment of magistrates. The hon. gentleman was perfectly aware that he himself was responsible. He did not deny that the appointment of magistrates was often surrounded by difficulty, but the hon. gentleman could not avoid the responsibility or father it upon somebody who recommended such persons. Everybody knew there were numbers of persons who were recommended as magistrates who were not appointed. The hon. gentleman himself, of course, did not appoint all who were recommended to him. No doubt the appointment of magistrates was a difficult matter which every Colonial Secretary had felt; but the Minister could not shirk the responsibility, and it would have been much better if the hon. gentleman had boldly avowed it. With respect to the judgeship, he (Mr. Douglas) had not the slightest doubt that the majority of the members of the House agreed that the business of the Supreme Court could be efficiently carried on by three judges. The real difficulty was, Mr. Justice Sheppard. The Government could not see their way to make any change in the existing state of affairs, but he believed the

northern districts were not inconvenienced by the fact that Justice Sheppard lived at Bowen, nor would they be inconvenienced by a circuit assize. The difficulty was simply a political one, and no other. He did not wish in any way to comment upon the exercise of the Judges' duties. Their functions were performed with great propriety and regularity, but it could not be said that they were overworked; and if the political aspect of the question admitted of the removal of Mr. Justice Sheppard from Bowen there would be no more difficulty.

Question put and passed; and the House went into Committee.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Mr. Macrossan, as Minister for Mines) moved that the sum of £13,108 be granted for the Department of Mines, Goldfields, General Subdivision, and Geological Survey.

The Hon. G. THORN (who could scarcely be heard in the gallery) was understood to ask whether, since the Under Secretary's report had been laid on the table, any new goldfields had sprung into existence; if so, had anything been done to foster them—more especially the goldfields of Moolangal, in the Burnett; Milton, in the Port Curtis; and Mulgrave, in the Cook district? Was there a warden at Moolangal, where, he believed, there were a number of miners? It was a goldfield somewhere near Gin Gin. He believed they were raising a large amount of gold there, but he was not aware whether any miners' rights had been issued.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS was understood to say that the new field referred to by the hon. member was not of sufficient importance yet to warrant the appointment of a warden.

Mr. THORN was understood to ask what was being done at the Mulgrave?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS was understood to say the Police Magistrate did all that was necessary.

Mr. THORN said he was sorry to see that the £2,000 voted last year for prospecting for gold did not appear in the present Estimates. It was a pity the Government could not see their way to encourage this industry, because the colony would be nothing like what it was but for the mining interest. He was not aware that the present Geological Surveyor, who received altogether £1,300 a-year in salary and allowances, had found a single goldfield, and he had yet to learn why that officer should be continually kept in the North. He was supposed to have been looking for coal for the last twelve months, but it was quite time that the South had something of his services. He would not object to this salary if the officer had made any discovery, but, as he had not, £1,300 a-year was too large an amount to pay for nothing.

Mr. MILES was understood to say he should like some more information with respect to the Under Secretary for Mines. For the sake of a paltry £700 a-year, he hoped that officer was not to be sent to the right-about because he had incurred the displeasure of one or two private members? Would the Minister for Works inform the House definitely whether he could dispense with that officer's services without detriment to the public service?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he thought he made a definite statement last night as to what he intended to do. He stated that he would try to work the departments with one officer, and that such a change would in no way injure the Mines Department. The Mines Department did not depend on one particular officer, and as long as the work was done it did not matter who did it.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he knew what the routine duties of the Under Secretary for Mines were, but he should like to know what duties that officer performed which required a special knowledge of mining. For instance, what supervision did he exercise over the wardens? The under secretaries of the other departments did not usually require any special knowledge for the performance of their duties; but, from representations made to him by the miners, he understood that the Under Secretary for Mines did require special knowledge, and he should like to know what it was. This fact was advanced as one of the reasons why the Mining Department should not be abolished.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that the Mines Department would not be abolished. The special knowledge required by the Under Secretary for Mines was a knowledge of the mining laws of the country, and he stood in the same relation to the warden that the other under secretaries stood with respect to the officers under them.

Mr. MILES said they all knew that the Minister for Works was a practical miner, but he hoped that the hon. gentleman would not always hold office—at any rate, he and other Ministers would not hold office any longer than he (Mr. Miles) could help. They must look to the future, and must not, because there was a practical Minister now in office, dispense with the services of an officer who had a thorough knowledge of the working of the department. Would it be wise, for a paltry £700 a-year, to throw the department into confusion?

Mr. GRIFFITH said that the Minister had scarcely answered his question. There were many gold-mining leases which were liable to forfeiture at the discretion of the Minister for non-compliance with certain conditions. In such a case a recommendation was made by the warden. Was it the practice of the Under Secretary to review that recommendation? It was important that they should know that, because if that were the practice the Minister would have no one to guide him if the office of the Under Secretary were abolished. Most of the under secretaries gave no advice. The work of the Under Colonial Secretary and the Under Treasurer, for instance, was mostly of a routine nature. The Under Secretary for Education ought to have special knowledge. He wished the information he asked for, because it had been represented in petitions presented to the House that it was necessary to have in Brisbane an officer who had a thorough knowledge of the mining laws.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that there was the Goldfields Act of 1874 for the regulation and working of mines and the regulations which were founded on it, and there was a law relating to goldfields homesteads: those were the only laws in existence relating to mining. As far as leases were concerned they were granted on certain conditions, and it was the warden upon the goldfield who knew whether or not the conditions had been complied with, and it was his duty to recommend forfeiture or otherwise. The Minister could only take information from the wardens, and almost invariably their recommendations were acted upon. If a warden were to make an improper recommendation, of course it would not be acted upon, but he did not think there was any warden now in the service who would be fool enough to make such a recommendation. There had been wardens in the service who did not understand their duties so well as the present wardens did. He had thorough confidence in them and invariably acted on their recommendations. In such cases the Under Secretary could give but little advice,

as they simply rested on matters of fact which were cognisant to the warden, and to the warden only.

Mr. MILES said that the Government had declared their intention to abandon the Supreme Court Bill, because it had been supported by the Opposition. He believed in retaining the services of the Under Secretary for Mines, but after that declaration from the Government he was afraid that if he urged anything further in favour of the officer he would be likely to injure him, therefore he should say nothing more.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he thought it was hardly fair for the hon. member to make such a remark. The hon. member must remember that last year a motion to knock off the salary of the Under Secretary for Mines was supported by a good many members on the other side, amongst whom was the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. HAMILTON said that he did not agree with the argument that the Under Secretary for Mines required to have a technical knowledge. What was the work of the department? As far as he knew it was simply to fill up fifty cheques a-month, to receive letters from the various wardens, to read them, and to reply to them under instructions from the Minister. To do that work £1,155 a-year was voted. Very little capacity was required for the work, and he believed that the present staff was not necessary—one good man could do the whole of the work. Last year the Minister said that there was not enough work for the Under Secretary to do, but that there would be sufficient for him if he were appointed Chief Inspector of Mines, and the management of affairs relating to coal, tin, and copper mining was transferred from the Lands to the Mines Department. For such a transference he understood it would be necessary to pass an Act.

Mr. GRIFFITH: No.

Mr. HAMILTON said that, at any rate, the Government had not taken any action since that time to effect the change, and the Minister for Lands last night advanced reasons why it should not be made. As to the Chief Inspector of Mines, he emphatically objected to there being appointed to the office any person who was not thoroughly qualified to fill it. A Bill was to be introduced for the purpose of diminishing those sad accidents which were continually occurring in the mines, and to carry out such a measure properly it would be necessary to appoint practical men as inspectors. If men so qualified were not appointed, the measure would be a useless and vexatious one. If it was so necessary that the local inspectors should have thorough qualifications, would it not be much more necessary that the person who was to superintend them should be thoroughly qualified? He should object to a non-qualified man getting such a position through political influence. As to the working of the department, he thought that the two clerks who received £455 between them could do all that was required. He knew comparatively little about Mr. Lukin, the Under Secretary; that gentleman might be a good officer, but the requirements of the service did not necessitate the office which he held. He should object to the work of the department being merged into the Lands Department. It might be a question of sentiment, but he should like to see a separate Department of Mines, and he did not see how that could not be done even without the Under Secretary. Why not call the clerk who received £380 a-year the Under Secretary? He noticed that there was no amount on the Estimates this year for prospecting purposes. He certainly thought that if they could afford to pay £700 a-year for nothing they could afford to spend some money on prospecting. He hoped

that the hon. member (Mr. Thorn), and some other hon. members who appeared to have such an interest in the Mines Department, would support the motion of which he had given notice—that £2,000 be placed on the Estimates for prospecting purposes.

Mr. THORN said if the Government wished to foster the great gold-mining interests of the colony they would have placed an amount on the Estimates for prospecting purposes. There ought to be £5,000 voted. He was astonished at the hon. member for Gympie treating the matter so lightly; he had expected that the hon. member would have strongly denounced the Government for omitting the vote for prospecting purposes from this year's Estimates. He understood that the Under Secretary for Mines was the Inspector of Mines.

Mr. HAMILTON: No.

Mr. THORN said he knew that the Under Secretary had to decide very knotty points occasionally; he had always decided them satisfactorily and had saved an enormous amount of litigation. To his (Mr. Thorn's) knowledge the Under Secretary had saved the colony many thousands by his skill in handling mining disputes. The hon. member for Gympie knew that, but instead of crediting the officer for that skill he came down and advocated the abolition of his office.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) was in a state of perpetual astonishment. A most astonishing fact was that, although the hon. member was Minister for Mines for three or four years, he never put a single penny on the Estimates for prospecting. The first amount voted for prospecting was put on the Estimates by the present Government, and the amount (£2,000) was nearly all expended. The hon. member (Mr. Thorn) talked as if he had done that. The only result which had been obtained from the expenditure of the money was that it had been proved that payable goldfields did not exist in certain places. The best prospecting was done by the miners with their own money, and he defied any hon. member to point to a single goldfield which had been found by Government prospectors.

Mr. THORN: The Palmer was.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that a great deal of tin-mining was done under license, and he did not see why the business should not be transferred from the Lands to the Mines Department.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there would be great difficulty in the way of such a change. Mining under licenses was carried on to a great extent on land which had been surveyed by the Lands Department, and it was thought advisable that the Lands Department should have supervision in such cases. His opinion was that all business connected with mining ought to be transacted by the Mines Department.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he was quite certain that the change could be made without any difficulty whatever.

Mr. THORN said he thought that the Palmer Goldfield was found by Mr. Jones, who was assisted by the Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: You know nothing about it. Mr. Mulligan discovered the field and got the reward. Mr. Jones had no more to do with the discovery than the hon. member had.

Mr. HAMILTON said he believed that the Hodgkinson Goldfields had been discovered through the assistance of the Government. When

Mr. King was Minister for Mines he appropriated a certain sum for prospecting purposes, and sent out Mr. Mulligan to explore the country, the consequence being that the Hodgkinson was discovered. The money appropriated was actually spent before the goldfield was discovered, but had not Mr. Mulligan's party been fitted out he believed that the discovery would not have been made. The statement made by the hon. member, Mr. Thorn, about the Under Secretary for Mines saving litigation, was about as correct as the statement that Mr. Jones discovered the Palmer Goldfield. The Under Secretary had paid only three visits to the North during the last six years, and then he simply took evidence which was to be submitted to the Minister for his decision.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it would hardly be fair of him if he did not clear Mr. Mulligan from the imputation conveyed by the speech of the hon. member (Mr. Hamilton). Mr. Mulligan discovered the Hodgkinson Goldfield with his own resources. He remembered that when the matter was debated in the House on a former occasion an attempt was made to prevent Mr. Mulligan getting the reward, on the imputation that he had discovered the goldfield whilst prospecting with Government money, and had kept his discovery secret for a time so that he might claim the reward. Such was not the case, as all the Government money had been expended, and Mr. Mulligan had returned to Cooktown, where he met some of his old mates, and fitted out a private expedition. They found another party in advance of them actually working on the goldfields, and the two parties joined, and were rewarded.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Minister had not shown that his (Mr. Hamilton's) statement was incorrect. What he said was, that it was in consequence of his labours whilst spending Government money that Mr. Mulligan discovered the Hodgkinson Goldfield. He presumed that if Mr. Mulligan had discovered the goldfield when spending Government money he would have been rewarded.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. HAMILTON said that Mr. Mulligan was a first-class prospector, who deserved the thanks of every miner for what he had done.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he did not feel satisfied with the way in which the Minister had treated the question. The Minister had half admitted that there might be reductions made, but on the other hand he asserted that the management of all business relating to minerals should be placed under the charge of the Mines Department. In that opinion the Minister for Works differed from the Minister for Lands, who held that the Lands Department was the proper department to have charge of the business. Considering how much the future prospects of the colony depended on the development of the mineral resources, he thought it was to be regretted that there were appearances of an inclination on the part of the Minister to submit to a lower estimate of the value of the department by dispensing with the Under Secretary. If they were dealing with some general system of economising it would be a different matter, but they had not heard of any material reductions in other departments. Were they to infer that the prospects of the colony with regard to its mineral resources were less favourable than they were or had been? He was of opinion that there ought to be a separate Department of Mines. They possessed a wonderful variety of minerals in rich measure, and there ought to be a special department, the object of which should be to afford every possible facility for the development of those resources. Such a department could be

utilised in such a way as to be productive of great benefit to the colony, and therefore it was with regret that he heard that it was intended to economise in the existing department, more particularly as no effort was being made to economise in other departments. He had no doubt that the Colonial Treasurer, had he considered it necessary, could have cut down the Estimates by £100,000, but, as no necessity for such a desperate expedient had been recognised, it seemed like cheeseparing and a want of prevision to suddenly arrive at the conclusion that the Mines Department, as a separate department, should be abolished. It would have been better if the Minister for Mines had suggested the readjustment of the department, making all necessary economies, whilst retaining the department as one upon which, to a greater extent perhaps than upon any other, the future prosperity of the colony depended.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he should be very sorry to think that the resources of Queensland depended upon any mining department. No doubt it was an advantage to have a department well administered, but the future success of mining in the colony did not depend upon that. The hon. member should recollect that the very best mining times in Queensland were during the period when the Mines Department was administered by a gentleman who administered the Works and the Railways as well—a proof that the prosperity of mining did not depend in any way upon the existence of a separate department. The Palmer, Charters Towers, Gympie, and Ravenswood were all discovered before the Mines Department was placed on its present footing, and, with the exception, perhaps, of Charters Towers, were all flourishing.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he was quite aware of that, but the same might be said of all other departments. Selectors did not subsist for the benefit of the Lands Department, but the Lands Department subsisted to look after their interests. It was no doubt quite true that at the first outbreak accompanying a gold discovery a great deal was done without Government superintendence at all, but in their later stages all enterprises required to be looked after and encouraged. Miners could no doubt dig for gold independent of law, but as soon as gold was discovered the miner sought for the protection which the law conferred upon him. The indications that the support of the law was about to be withdrawn from mining was not justified by any evidence that the mining industry had gone backward; on the contrary, the reports published by the Mines Department contained hopeful indications for the future with regard to gold, and also coal, silver, and tin. Those industries required to be watched by intelligent men who would never lose an opportunity of drawing attention to the facts connected with those enterprises, both for the information of the people of the colony and of those who might be desirous of bringing their capital and labour to the colony. This was the most important feature in a Mining Department, and in that respect less had been done in Queensland than in New South Wales or Victoria.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member was holding up merely an absurd bugbear when he argued that dispensing with the services of a head clerk meant abolishing the department altogether. A certain amount of work was done in Brisbane in connection with gold-mines by three clerks, and the department was called the Mines Department. If it could be shown that the work could be done as well by two clerks, and that £700 a-year could be saved to the colony, that change might be made without abolishing

the department. Mr. Lukin was not the department. Without wishing to say anything uncomplimentary to Mr. Lukin, he was only an unnecessary appendage as things were at present. Whether the chief of the department were called Under Secretary or head clerk made no difference so long as the work was done. After what had been said last night he felt confident that half the money previously voted would be sufficient to carry out the work belonging to the office.

Mr. SHEAFFE said he held that the mining industry of the colony was second only to the pastoral industry; but he considered that the management of the Mines Department, in Brisbane, had nothing to do with its success. The industry had been successful, not through the fostering care it had received, but actually in spite of the great many difficulties thrown in its way by the department. What had the department ever done towards discovering or developing any single mine in Queensland? Absolutely nothing, but had rather stood in the way. Hon. members had talked eloquently in favour of retaining the department, who probably could not distinguish silver-lead from cream-cheese. He would suggest that those who understood the subject should talk and the others hold their tongues. The extensive territory of Queensland was rich in almost every mineral, from gold to coal, and the mining industry must flourish whether the department was well managed or not. He must confess that he felt hurt to see the position which Ministers had taken up. They brought in Estimates providing for two Under Secretaries and said they could do without one of them, and then were in the painful position of having to rely upon the Opposition to carry the vote. He had not a word to say against the present Under Secretary for Mines, who might or might not be a remarkably good man for it. The present Ministry was a Ministry of retrenchment, and they could very well do without two Under Secretaries to assist them to expend £30,000. The Under Secretary at the Post Office had, he believed, the spending of six times that amount. A fair and just distribution of money was wanted, but when he saw that money was being absolutely thrown away he could not conscientiously vote it. In this case he would vote for the salary of the Under Secretary of Mines, because the Committee had been assured by the Minister for Mines that at the proper time he would do without one of the under secretaries. On that assurance, and on that assurance alone, he should not vote against the motion.

Mr. REA said the hon. member (Mr. Sheaffe) had spoken of the Ministry as a Ministry of retrenchment, but they were the very gentlemen who had proposed to spend £55,000 for a line of steamers to give accommodation to the people of Thursday Island, and near there. The speech of the Minister for Mines led to the conclusion that the office of Minister for Mines should be done away with because he said that the most prosperous time was when there was no official at all, and since then the prosperity had declined. If other colonies might be accepted as guides, this department was the department of all others, especially in Australia, that required careful and generous treatment, because it was gold-mining, more than any other industry, which attracted population. It was now proposed that, in compliance with the personal pique of a Government supporter, an officer should be got rid of even if it were necessary to appoint someone else in his place. The statements contained in the speech of the Minister for Mines, tending as they did to show that mining was not considered one of the leading industries, might act very injuriously to the colony.

Mr. DICKSON said he agreed with the hon. member for Rockhampton in regarding mining as one of the leading industries and as the one most calculated to attract population to the northern territory of the colony. He regretted that the Minister for Mines should have drafted these Estimates in a despondent manner. A comparison of these Estimates with the corresponding ones of the previous year would lead to the conclusion that gold-mining in the colony was rapidly approaching extinction, and colour was given to that supposition by the statement of the hon. gentleman that this and another department might be amalgamated. He noticed that although the number of wardens was not reduced the amount for forage allowances for wardens had been reduced by £250, and that the number of troopers and black trackers for service on the goldfields had also been reduced. All those matters should have been explained to the Committee. He was of opinion that the present depression was a mere temporary one, and he should be sorry to regard the mining industry as one to be annually reduced until it was extinguished. He hoped that before many years prosperity would return, and that this industry would be the means of settling a large population in the portions of Queensland which would otherwise probably remain unpeopled for some time to come.

Mr. LOW said the Minister for Works had that night told the Committee in plain terms that he saw his way to combine the two departments. He had spoken to the hon. gentleman since he came into the House, and he was quite prepared to accept that hon. gentleman's assurance that he could carry out the promise made last night.

Mr. MILES said it was the first time he was aware that the hon. member for Balonne had taken up the position of defender of the Government. When they came to that position they had got very low indeed.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL asked whether it was parliamentary to make puns in this Chamber?

Mr. MILES said he believed the Minister for Mines saw his way to carrying out the proposed change in the department. He would, however, like to know what the Government Geologist in the North was doing? He cost the country a considerable amount of money, and as far as he (Mr. Miles) was aware he had not made any reports lately.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said, before he replied to the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Miles), he would take the liberty of saying that the attack made by the hon. member upon the hon. member for Balonne was rather uncalled for. The hon. member (Mr. Low) seldom rose, and he never spoke without saying something worth listening to. As to the Government being defended, he considered himself as well defended by the hon. member for Balonne as he did by the hon. member (Mr. Miles). The Government Geologist, he might state, was employed during the greater part of the recess in exploring the northern territory from Cooktown to within a very short distance of Cape York. He had been out for the last five or six months prospecting with a practical miner, and he had been wounded in the neck by blacks on one occasion. On his return to Cooktown he asked for and obtained leave of absence, at the expiration of which he went back to duty at Townsville, and was engaged there writing his report until he went further north to engage in surveying work on the Hodgkinson Goldfields, where he was at present. The report he had written was now in the hands of the Printer, and, but for the overpress of work in the Printing Office, would have been in the hands of hon. members

by this time. The report was a very voluminous one, and one which every hon. member would appreciate.

Mr. MILES said he did not ask for the information in an offensive way. Not having heard of the Government Geologist for some time, he thought it not unreasonable to ask what he was doing. Everybody knew that he had a very kindly spirit towards the hon. member for Balonne.

Mr. LOW: You didn't show it, then.

Mr. MILES said if the hon. member chose to get up and defend the Ministry he must take the consequences. That was the hon. member's fault, not his (Mr. Miles').

Mr. LOW said he should defend whom he liked.

Mr. MILES said the hon. member had better keep his position. He knew the hon. member was a pensioner.

Mr. LOW said he did not know how he was an adventurer. He was in his own place now.

Mr. MILES said the hon. member had better not say too much, for he should speak plain. It was usual for a Minister to answer a question asked by an hon. member. He did not know the hon. member was a Minister before, but he had now come to the conclusion that he was a Minister or else an off-sider.

Mr. LOW said he kept his place, but the hon. member made remarks which were quite uncalled for. He did not want to interfere with the hon. member, and he did not want to be interfered with. The remarks he had made were appropriate, and should be allowed to go for what they were worth.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said the hon. member for Darling Downs seemed to think that no one except the Minister undergoing catechism should open his mouth; but Ministers got tired of answering all the stupid questions put from that side of the House, and hon. members liked to give them a little relief and assistance occasionally. Any fool could answer half the questions put, and it was no good for the Minister to be puzzling his brain every minute.

Mr. MILES said the hon. member for the Gregory was only a new member, but he should know perfectly well that, no matter how insignificant a member of the Opposition might be, the Minister must answer him, and he would not be satisfied with a reply from an off-sider. The hon. member for Gregory was himself a fifth-wheeler.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Government have found out this session that they have had a very large number of fifth-wheelers.

Mr. MILES said they appeared to be all fifth-wheelers all round. He thought hon. members had better leave the duty of answering to Ministers.

Mr. LOW said he did not see why he should have been dropped upon by the hon. member, Mr. Miles. He did not take up more of the time of the House than the hon. member did.

Mr. AMHURST said he knew the hon. member (Mr. Miles) well. If the hon. member meant to stonewall, nothing would prevent him: he had fought many a battle with the hon. member before now. The hon. member would ask question after question, and the best way was to get him in a good temper and answer them as quickly as possible.

Mr. BAYNES said he considered the hon. member (Mr. Low) had been most unfairly treated, not only by the hon. member for Darling Downs, but also by the Colonial Secretary, who told him to address himself to the chair,

Mr. REA said the hon. member (Mr. Miles) asked for information which was of great value, not only to the House, but to the public.

Mr. GRIFFITH asked whether there was a warden at Charters Towers now as well as a police magistrate? The salaries for both were placed on the Estimates. If there were not two officers, what did the Government intend to do?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied that the warden at Charters Towers was also police magistrate, and that he received a total salary of £650—namely, £300 as warden, £300 as police magistrate, and £50 allowances.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he believed that arrangement had been made before the Estimates were printed, and it ought to have been shown there, instead of asking for £350 for the police magistrate and £440 for the warden.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he believed the Estimates were printed before the change was made, which was about the end of May or the beginning of June.

Mr. GRIFFITH said that as the Estimates were not brought down till August there was plenty of time to have revised them. Why were the Committee asked to vote £440 when only £300 was wanted? The item ought to be reduced by £140, and if the Minister for Works did not move the reduction he should feel bound to take the duty upon himself.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved that the item be reduced by £140.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had seen a good deal of correspondence lately about the discovery of silver-mines at Ravenswood, and complaints were made that the Government refused to give proper facilities for persons to take up the land for mineral purposes. He should like to know the facts of the case.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it had been long known that silver-mines existed at Ravenswood in connection with gold, and latterly there had been some fresh discoveries made a little outside the township, on the Townsville side. Several applications had been made to take up mineral leases there. The matter was referred to him by the Lands Department, and he decided that no leases should be granted larger than those allowed under the Goldfields Act—namely, twenty-five acres. Many of the applications were for forty acres, and some even for sixty acres. As gold and silver were mixed intimately in the reefs which were discovered, it seemed an attempt to monopolise a large portion of the goldfield, and that was why he came to the decision already intimated. The prospector, a miner named King, was allowed a privilege beyond that—of purchasing a selection which he had applied for a long time ago. That was the only piece of mineral land which had been sold within the bounds of Ravenswood. He might mention that the famous silver-mine in New South Wales was leased in far smaller areas, the majority not being larger than five acres, and some as small as two or three acres.

Mr. MILES said that if one man was to have the large salary of £650 as warden and police magistrate of Charters Towers, he should like to know who they were keeping the billet for?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: For you.

Mr. MILES said he would have nothing to do with it—not for all the salaries the Ministers got. The Ministry were a bad lot, and this was a nice arrangement for some of their friends. It

required a detective to find them out, but they would, he hoped, be found out before long.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the billet was not intended for anybody. It was filled now by a gentleman who, he hoped, would retain it for many years—Mr. Selheim, the best warden in the public service.

Mr. THORN said the colony might well dispense with the services of the Geological Surveyor, who was more ornamental than useful. That official had done nothing, and had been employed only in the extreme north of the colony looking after one or two electorates that were almost depopulated, and he was likely to be kept there. It seemed strange that no other part of the colony should have the services of the Geological Surveyor. Mr. Jack accepted his appointment conditionally—that he should not be kept always in the north. The Wide Bay and Burnett districts, which were full of minerals, ought to be inspected, and he should like to see Mr. Jack's report on those districts. He moved that the item be reduced by £1,300.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he would tell the hon. member what the adoption of such a proposition would mean. Mr. Jack accepted his position and salary on the perfect understanding and promise that he should hold it during good behaviour. If the amendment were adopted, Mr. Jack would have a claim for a large amount of compensation.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the Minister for Works must be mistaken. No doubt an arrangement was made with Mr. Jack for a specific period of three or five years, but he did not believe that any Government would commit itself to the permanent employment of Mr. Jack at that rate. He believed Mr. Jack to be a good geologist and that he had done good work. It was another matter whether it was worth while going on spending £1,300 a year on geological surveys, but that question had not been raised, and he was not prepared to deal with details of that kind apart from the responsibility of the Government. They were bound in law and also in honour to keep their engagement with Mr. Jack, though he did not think it was such a lengthy engagement as that described by the Minister for Works.

Mr. THORN said he could not understand one officer being engaged during good behaviour more than another. Why should a distinction be drawn between Mr. Jack and the dismissed officers from all the other departments, who had also been engaged during good behaviour? There must be something behind the scenes. He (Mr. Thorn) knew what it was, but he was not going to inform the Committee. He would leave that for the Minister for Works to do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was not a public servant in the colony who had worked harder than Mr. Jack, and if the hon. member would take the trouble to ascertain what Mr. Jack had done he would come to a very different opinion on the subject.

Mr. MILES said the Minister for Works did not read the report of the Geologist, and the Committee ought to know exactly what he had done. It was all very well for the hon. member (Mr. Douglas) to say that Mr. Jack was efficient. But what authority had the hon. member for saying so? Where did he get his information? The report ought to have been laid on the table, so that hon. members could judge for themselves. It would be well to postpone the item until the report was furnished. He found no fault with the officer; he only wanted to know what he had done.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I told you.

Mr. MILES said he took with a grain of salt what was told him by a Minister. He wanted the report of the officer, which ought to be on the table.

Mr. BEATTIE said he was rather surprised at the hon. member (Mr. Miles). He was under the impression that the Minister for Works had answered the hon. member's question; and the excuse the Minister for Works made for the late appearance of Mr. Jack's report seemed to him a very fair one. With regard to the employment of Mr. Jack, he thought that as that gentleman had come from England expressly to fill his present position it would be most unfair to him to dispense with his services at any moment. No doubt before Mr. Jack left England he had some specific engagement made with him, and therefore it would be a pity to see the amount struck off the Estimates.

Mr. REA said that if the statement of the Minister for Works was correct, Mr. Jack's salary should appear under Schedule B. That was the same as the tenure of the judges "during good behaviour," or for his natural life. At any rate, the Committee were entitled to have some information given to them as to the nature of the engagement made with that gentleman, and the length of it. It appeared to him (Mr. Rea) that every bit of information had to be dragged out of the Government.

Mr. SHEAFFE asked whether the Under Secretary for Mines had a guarantee fidelity bond—if so, from what office and to what amount?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he believed the Under Secretary for Mines had no fidelity bond.

Mr. MILES said he did not think such a bond was required. As there was no money passing through that officer's hands it would be unfair to ask him to give a bond. With regard to Mr. Jack, he wished to say that he knew nothing at all about that gentleman, and he did not wish to move the reduction or omission of his salary; but he thought that if Mr. Jack came to the colony under Schedule B, and was to remain here during good behaviour, the sooner they arrived at such an understanding the better. If that gentleman had been brought out under a promise that promise should be kept, but he did not think that the appointment should be looked upon as one in perpetuity.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he had just discovered that the Under Secretary for Mines had a fidelity bond.

The PREMIER said the Under Secretary was a public accountant under the Audit Act, and as such had a fidelity bond.

Mr. MESTON said that Mr. Jack was eminently qualified for the position he occupied. That gentleman's reports were not only interesting, but were a valuable educational acquisition, and it was a great pity, therefore, that they were not more generally utilised than they were, and that they were not supplied to the public schools. Before hon. members talked about reducing the vote, they should consider what they were doing, as Mr. Jack's reports were the means of disseminating a great deal of very valuable geological information respecting the colony.

Mr. MILES, referring to the question of fidelity bonds, said he wished to know whether the Commissioner for Railways did not find a fidelity bond; yet neither he nor the Under Secretary for Mines had money passing through their hands, and could not commit a fraud if they wished it.

Mr. SHEAFFE said he looked upon the appointment of the Government Geologist as one of the best ever made by a government, and, although he did not know Mr. Jack, he believed from what he had heard that that gentleman was eminently qualified to fill the office.

The PREMIER said that Mr. Jack possessed the highest qualifications: he was a favourite pupil of Professor Geikie, and was employed by him in conducting some important investigations. He (the Premier) did not believe there was a geologist of the present day who had done more to contribute to the science of geology than Mr. Jack had done, and if hon. members opposite would consult the reports of the Geological Society they would see a great many valuable contributions from Mr. Jack on the geology of this country. As regarded the question of salary it had no weight with that gentleman, as if he liked he could go back to Professor Geikie at any time and get the same as he was receiving here. So great was Mr. Jack's love of science that if he received no salary he believed he would still go on with his work.

Mr. HAMILTON said that Professor Geikie was a very high authority, and there was no doubt that he entertained a very favourable opinion of the qualifications of Mr. Jack. He (Mr. Hamilton) knew as a fact that Mr. Jack's reports as a Government geologist had been of very great benefit to the miners in Northern Queensland, and even although no gold was found by the prospecting expedition to which Mr. Jack was attached, he was perfectly certain that the report which would be brought up by Mr. Jack of the features of the country through which he passed would be worth all the money spent on the expedition.

Mr. THORN said that what he complained of was that Mr. Jack was confined to one part of the northern district only. He considered that the Cloncurry and that part of the North should be visited by Mr. Jack just as much as the Cooktown district; moreover, that during the summer months Mr. Jack should come south, as to keep him up in the north for ever was not fair. That was one reason why he objected to the vote. With regard to the assistance Mr. Jack had been to the miners, he (Mr. Thorn) believed that practical miners were far better than scientific geologists for finding gold—in fact, the Committee had been told that evening by the Minister for Works that the expedition which Mr. Jack accompanied returned without finding gold.

Mr. MILES wished to know what had become of the toy purchased by the hon. member for North Brisbane (Mr. Griffith) when in office—he alluded to the diamond drill?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he believed the hon. member himself was the author of the toy. It was now laid up in ordinary in Cooktown. The last time it was used was at Oakey Creek in the Cooktown district for boring or coal, but it was a very great expense indeed, and he should be very glad to get rid of it.

Mr. MILES said he was not the purchaser of the drill;—he had, it was true, entered into negotiations for buying it, but he did not buy it or commit the country to the purchase of it. He was perfectly certain that if the matter had been left in his hands the thing would never have been bought, as he had made certain inquiries and the information he received was not satisfactory. His hon. friend (Mr. Griffith), who succeeded him in office, on the principle that a new broom sweeps clean, went in and bought the drill; at the same time, he (Mr. Miles) was sorry it had been a failure.

Mr. REA said he had taken some pains when he was in Victoria lately to inquire into the working of the diamond drill, and he found that its usefulness entirely depended on the knowledge of the head men employed in working it. Therefore it was hardly right to say that diamond drills were altogether a failure on the gold-fields.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

On the question—That the sum of £802 be voted for salaries and contingencies in connection with the Museum—

Mr. DOUGLAS said that the amount was smaller than last year, and yet the contents of the Museum had been removed from the old building to the new one, and, consequently, the expenses of the institution had been increased. The fact that a gentleman had been appointed as curator who was known to possess very high qualifications rather pointed to an increase than to a decrease in the expenditure. He was aware that they were not increasing amounts, especially at the present time; but, as it had been thought fit to authorise the construction of a Museum, he did not think they should fall into arrears in other respects. Some credit had been given to Mr. Jack for what he had done in the cause of science, and he (Mr. Douglas) did not dispute the value of what had been done by that gentleman, but he thought that they should be doing something in that direction by means of their Museum. From an educational point of view, for the purposes of the Museum the sum voted was hardly sufficient, if it was to be made effective, and he thought it was his duty to say that he did not think they could do justice to the objects of a museum with such a small amount. With regard to the sum of £200 for a curator, he considered it was much too small. They had previously paid £300 a-year for an analytical chemist, but that department had been abolished at a saving of £538. Whether it would be re-established or not he did not know; but as the Government had introduced a Bill to regulate the sale of food and drugs, he had no doubt that, if passed, that Bill would involve the appointment of an analytical chemist. With regard to the Curator, he did not think they could have made a better appointment than the gentleman who had been acting for the last six months. Although a very young man—and in some instances that was an advantage—Mr. Haswell possessed testimonials as high in his particular branch as those of Mr. Jack, and he also had been a pupil under Professor Geikie. He did not think that they could secure a more promising young man than Mr. Haswell, but he did not think he could be expected to remain for long at such a low salary as he now received. He (Mr. Douglas) should be glad if the Minister for Works would withdraw this estimate and submit another based on that of last year, and on a somewhat more liberal scale as regarded the Curator. He thought the least they could offer Mr. Haswell was what was previously received by the analytical chemist, as his attainments were far beyond those of that gentleman. He hoped the matter would be considered by the Minister, and that a somewhat larger amount would be put on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. HAMILTON said that he quite agreed with the hon. member for Maryborough as to the desirability of increasing Mr. Haswell's salary. In order to efficiently fill the position of Curator to the Museum a man of scientific attainments was required, and the miserable pittance allowed that gentleman by the Estimates was simply labourer's wages. They could not expect to retain him on such a salary, and it would be a great mistake if they lost his services through not

giving him a fair salary. In a new and extensive colony like this, where the field for research in the various branches of natural science was so vast, it was their duty to furnish their contribution towards the cause of science. They were yearly spending immense sums of money in education, and was it not desirable they should have some knowledge of the resources of their own animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms? They had already affirmed this by expending a large sum of money in the erection of a Museum, and also thousands in the purchase of specimens; and now that they had gone to all this expense, and the machinery in consequence was in such excellent order, it would be false economy if they failed to obtain a good engineer. The Curator was the engineer of the Museum, and it would be impossible to retain a good one on a bad salary, and the consequence of having a bad one would be that the machinery would get out of order, and the large sums of money spent on the institution would be in a manner thrown away. In Mr. Haswell they had an exceptionally good man. He (Mr. Hamilton) had lately received a letter from a friend of his, Mr. Ramsay, Curator of the Sydney Museum, who spoke of him in the highest terms. Professor Geikie, of whom he had just spoken in relation to Mr. Jack, bore high testimony as to his distinguished career as a student. Under him he carried everything before him in his classes. Sir Wyvill Thompson, also, Professor of Zoology at Edinburgh University, and who was most generally known, perhaps, as director of Her Majesty's ship "Challenger" in her scientific cruise, also spoke of him in the highest terms, both as a practical and theoretical naturalist, and volunteered his opinion that he was thoroughly qualified for any appointment connected with natural science. Under Professor Huxley, Mr. Haswell during his last year took two first medals, one for practical zoology and the other for theoretical zoology; and only a few years since he obtained the Baxter Scholarship in natural science, awarded to the most distinguished bachelor of science in the Department of Natural Science. In Mr. Haswell they had an exceptionally good man, one who was recommended not by unknown men, but by men who were known and looked on with respect throughout the scientific world, and these men had given him, not stereotyped letters of recommendation, but spoke of him in the most glowing terms from their own intimate knowledge of him, and predicted that his career would be an eminently distinguished one. He thought that the colony would suffer a loss if such a man were allowed to leave them simply because a fair salary was begrudged him, and he hoped the Government would take the matter into consideration, and by giving him fair remuneration for his services not allow this to occur.

Mr. MESTON said he entirely agreed with the remarks of the hon. member for Gympie. Mr. Haswell, as Curator, was an exceedingly promising young man, and came here with very high testimonials, and he (Mr. Meston) hoped the colony would retain his services, although they could not hope to do so at the present inadequate salary paid to him. He regretted exceedingly that the Minister for Works should have felt it necessary to cut down the amount for the Museum, particularly as a new building had just been erected. The fact of a select committee sitting at the present time to inquire into matters connected with the Museum prevented him from going into details he should otherwise refer to; but he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that the present Curator was a highly qualified young man, and that it could hardly be expected that a gentleman of his attainments would be prepared to remain in his position at such an inadequate salary, as he would receive

far more flattering offers from elsewhere. He thought, also, that there should be an analytic chemist appointed. He was not aware what provision the Government had made for chemical analyses, but he was certain that Mr. Staiger, the late analytical chemist, was as competent a man as they could have procured, and that the omission of the vote of last year was a mistake and false economy. He believed that the fees for making analyses would in the course of the year amount to far more than the actual salary. He should have liked to have seen an increase instead of a decrease in the vote for the Museum, and also a sum put down for the purchase of statuary, which was most instructive and valuable as an educational medium. He was in favour of a grant being given for the purpose of establishing a statuary collection in the Museum, because they were far behind the ancient Greeks in their appreciation of the beautiful. There was no era in human history they might copy with more advantage than that of the Greek civilisation in the age of Pericles, when the Greeks had carried their passionate love of the beautiful to the highest stage of development, when the milestones were works of art, and the Greek women placed statues of Apollo and Narcissus in their bedrooms that by daily contemplation of the beautiful they might impress it upon their children. There was nothing which indicated the condition of civilisation more clearly than the state of the fine arts, sculpture, music, and painting; and the highest civilisation of all nations had been conspicuous for the advanced state of the fine arts. While they encouraged an admiration of the beautiful they should avoid as far as possible that gloomy æstheticism which seemed to be a dismal monomania evolved from modern civilisation. One of the most attractive galleries of the Sydney Museum was that devoted to the fine arts, in which were magnificent statues of the Apollo Belvidere, the Venus of Milo, the Laocoon, Hercules, and the Gladiators. The Brisbane Museum was conspicuous by the absence of any statuary whatever. Before the session closed he would make an effort to place the sum of £500 on the Supplementary Estimates to start a statuary collection for the Museum, and he hoped the Minister for Works would offer no opposition to sufficient support being given to the project. It was not only desirable to establish a collection of statuary, but also a collection of paintings, and, with a little judicious expenditure under judicious management and supervision, the Brisbane Museum might eventually be placed in a position rivalling that of the museums of the older colonies. It was desirable in the interests of the colony to encourage the Museum and to add by every possible means to the collection, and develop, as far as possible, its value as an educational institution, the value of which was no doubt of a very high order indeed. He for one sincerely regretted that the hon. the Minister for Works had reduced the sum placed on the Estimates last year for the Museum. The hon. member no doubt had done it in a spirit of economy, but it was mistaken economy. He hoped that sum would be replaced, and that in addition to inaugurating a statuary collection the salary of the Curator would be increased, so that that gentleman might be encouraged in his work, and made to see that he was entirely appreciated and desired to remain in the colony. A salary of £200 a-year, which was the ordinary salary of a clerk, was not anything like sufficient to encourage a man like Mr. Haswell to remain in the colony. He was a young man who would, he was sure, establish a reputation, and he was the kind of man of whom the House should show its appreciation by increasing his salary.

Mr. STEVENS regretted that the Minister for Works had not seen his way to increase the salary of the Curator of the Museum, because this gentleman was induced to take the position on the understanding that his salary would commence with £200 a-year, and would be increased if he fulfilled his duties properly. He believed Mr. Haswell—he had not heard this from the gentleman himself—had applied to the Minister for an increase, but was refused, because the finances of the colony were in a rather low state; and they must be very low indeed if they would not afford £100 or £200 for such a capable man as Mr. Haswell. As was said by the hon. member for Gympie, this gentleman was a man of considerable attainments, and it was desirable to keep him; and it would be a graceful act, and an act of justice, to place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates to increase his salary.

Mr. REA did not consider the references made to the Greeks in the time of Pericles at all applicable, because the condition of those people was not to be compared to that of the population of Queensland. It was perfectly monstrous that they should be talking about uncalled for expenditure in this way in the same session when the Premier had to steal an amount from the Loan Fund to make up a deficiency. He would give way to no member of the House in his desire to encourage a taste for the fine arts, but he could not imagine that in a young colony like this they could talk in this way when the very necessities of life were being heavily taxed. He was very sure that the other colonies when they were of the same population never attempted to burden themselves with museums as was being done here. It was a positive misfortune to the colony that these men of science, of high qualifications, were being introduced and employed merely because they brought letters of introduction from men at home. The salary of the Curator of the Brisbane Museum was a very different thing from the salary of the Government Geologist. The Government Geologist might do something to forward the interests of the working classes, but the Curator would not be able to do anything to lessen the expenses of daily life. It was a creditable action, therefore, of the Minister for Works to refuse the application of the trustees and decline to load the Estimates with anything for the Museum. In his (Mr. Rea's) opinion, instead of this item being increased it should be struck off altogether.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said this was a very practical and utilitarian age, and while nothing should be said to depreciate the value of the fine arts as having an elevating tendency, he could not agree with the member for Rosewood as to the necessity of spending the public money just now in the purchase of a large quantity of statuary: that was a matter for the future. But they ought not at this time to be chary in showing their appreciation of a distinguished student of science who had come amongst them, as they would be doing if they offered him a salary of no more than £200 a-year. He (Mr. Rutledge) was told that Mr. Haswell was offered a salary of £600 a-year in New Zealand and for a time was disposed to go there. Influence was, however, brought to bear upon him by gentlemen interested in the Brisbane Museum, and Mr. Haswell was induced to remain. He was above sordid considerations, and did not hesitate to refuse £600 a-year in New Zealand and to choose £200 a-year as a beginning in Queensland, which he believed offered a larger scope for his abilities. They would be damaging themselves in the estimation of the scientific community at home if it went forth that the Legislative Assembly of Queensland ap-

praised the services of a man like Mr. Haswell at £200 a-year. It had been stated that this gentleman had come with high recommendations from distinguished professors in England and Scotland. These gentlemen had access to all the learned societies and eminent institutions of the home country, and if they communicated to their friends in influential quarters the fact that in the colony of Queensland a man who had distinguished himself as the first student of his year was paid at the rate at which they were in the habit of paying their common labourers, they would be damaging themselves in the estimation of the people of the old country. He picked up a work in the library, the other day, in which Queensland was referred to in this way:—"Mexico, Queensland, and other semi-savage countries." If they gave so little for scientific attainments as £200 a-year to a man like Mr. Haswell they would richly deserve to be described hereafter in that manner.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that if he were Mr. Haswell he should certainly cry out, "Save me from my friends!" This gentleman, he believed, was an admirable selection for the particular position he filled; and although there was no doubt he should be paid considerably more, he believed his cause was not helped by hon. members getting up and saying that he refused to take £600 a-year in New Zealand, and preferred £200 a-year in Queensland. Even if he did so it was his own business. At the same time he (Mr. Morehead) wished it to be distinctly understood that he believed this gentleman should receive more payment than £200 a-year, which was a totally inadequate salary. His cause would be much better established if it had been advocated in the way in which it was advocated by the hon. member for the Warrego, rather than by the plastering of the hon. member for Enoggera. The hon. member told the Committee that if they did not pay these gentlemen more they would be held up as an example of a country that underpaid these most wonderful individuals who came into their midst. The hon. gentleman also said that the question of statues might be referred to the future, no doubt thinking that at some future period a statue would be devoted to him in the Museum, which was a very proper place for him. There were two Roman consuls, he believed, and the effigies of the two hon. members for Enoggera might be placed there as Roman types. The senior member for Enoggera, Mr. Dickson, he (Mr. Morehead) was about to say, might be placed there as resembling Julius Cæsar—only Julius Cæsar was a good-looking man.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Nero.

Mr. MOREHEAD said, yes, the hon. member for Enoggera might go down to posterity as the Nero of the period; while his junior colleague would represent Tiberius Gracchus, only that consul was a respectable man. He (Mr. Morehead) would now invite the Committee to come down to common life and to deal with the messenger of the Museum. It was a tremendous drop from the statues of the hon. members for Enoggera to the messenger of the Museum. He did not know who appointed the messenger, but it appeared to him to be an exceedingly improper appointment; his own experience being when he went there some six or eight weeks ago with a party of friends, that the man performed his public duties in a very offensive and improper manner. No doubt if the man had known the great men he was dealing with he would have adopted a different course; but he and his friends went there as strangers, and found that the man was unnecessarily offensive, and should not be retained in the public service. As

the Museum was a great part of the educational scheme of the colony, they ought, at any rate, to pay the Curator a sum equivalent to that paid to the head-master of a public school. It could not be expected that for £200 a-year they could obtain the service of any competent man to that position. The two messengers were paid nearly as much as the Curator. He did hope the Minister for Works would take this matter into his serious consideration, and would see that if the Curator was any good at all, it was disgraceful to serve out to him the mere pittance of £200 a-year. He did not believe in inordinately paying anyone; but, on the other hand, he did not believe in underpaying a man, especially a man like Mr. Haswell. He hoped the Minister for Works would put something on the Supplementary Estimates to meet the views of evidently the majority of the Committee, and he would again repeat that Mr. Haswell's cause ought not to be allowed to be damaged by the too lavish praise bestowed upon him by the hon. member for Enoggera.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he should be sorry if any good words he thought proper to use should have the effect of damaging the cause of this gentleman, with whom he was not personally acquainted, and his own belief was that he had not damaged it. As to the possibility of his statue being preserved in the Museum, such a thing might or might not be; but in the same good-humored way as that adopted by the hon. member for Mitchell, he would remind that hon. gentleman that there was already in existence the charred remains of an effigy that had been subjected to the action of fire in the electorate of the Mitchell. Subsequent to the burning process it was stated these remains were purchased at a high premium, and might perhaps some of these days be one of the first objects to occupy a niche in their local temple of fame. Mr. Haswell came with the highest recommendations and was reported as highly efficient in his work, and he (Mr. Rutledge) had been spoken to by persons interested in the Museum, who all agreed that his salary ought to be raised, and who suggested that if it was not raised the probability was that the colony would lose the services of the Curator.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it was painfully true that he had passed through the ordeal by fire; but he was happy to state that he stood there to-night unscathed. Whether the hon. member would pass through the ordeal so successfully he would not stop to inquire. He wished to point out that the hon. gentleman had stated that all Europe would tremble and its scientific men turn pale if it was known that the Curator of the Brisbane Museum was only paid £200 a year; and he (Mr. Morehead) had endeavoured to bring down the Committee to the region of common-sense—if, indeed, they could ever be brought so low. What he meant to point out was that by the plastering of Mr. Haswell and the laying it on too thick, the member for Enoggera might defeat the cause he was trying to advocate. He (Mr. Morehead) had expressed the opinion that Mr. Haswell's salary should be increased, not because he had been asked to do so, but because he was a most efficient public servant. He did not ask that his salary should be increased to £600 a-year because he had refused £600 a-year in New Zealand, but because he believed all men should be fairly and reasonably paid, which Mr. Haswell at the present time was not.

Mr. THORN said it was not often that he agreed with the hon. member for Mitchell, but he agreed with what the hon. member had just said, as to the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) being calculated to damage the cause

which he was espousing. He (Mr. Thorn) never took any notice of recommendations made to him outside. He judged men as he found them, and he was of opinion that the Curator was everything that could be desired. As for testimonials, he generally looked on them as useless, as they were often given by people because they knew that the persons receiving them could not use them in the place where they were given. He should like to know whether Mr. Haswell was an analytical chemist. It was essential that the Government should have an analytical chemist in their employ, and if Mr. Haswell had the necessary qualifications he might hold the dual offices of Analyst and Curator. If Mr. Haswell could not perform the functions of the two offices it was an unwise thing to dispense with the services of Mr. Staiger. He should like to know whether the man who acted as assistant to Mr. Staiger had been retained; if not, he ought to be. He should also like to know what had become of the messenger who was employed at the old Museum and who was an excellent servant. It was not right that an old servant should be cast adrift to make way for a new chum. If old servants were not required in one office they ought to be transferred to another in preference to the appointment of outsiders.

Mr. BAYNES said he remembered reading in Shakespeare about a person named Bottom, who had to pinch himself to find out who he was. As Bottom pinched himself to find out whether or not he had been a duke, so the hon. member for Northern Downs pinched himself to assure himself that he had been in office.

Mr. MILES thought that if the salary of the Curator of the Museum was to be increased, the increase ought to be recommended by the Museum Committee. If the Committee had made a recommendation that the salary should be increased it would have been granted without a word. He sympathised with the Government, who were anxious to get on with business which was delayed through the talking of a lot of rot. All the discussion would have been saved if hon. members knew what the opinion of the Museum Committee was.

Mr. THOMPSON said the course which had been taken with regard to the vote was somewhat unusual. The Minister, so far, had not been allowed to say a word; if he had, probably the whole of the discussion would have been saved. The Museum Committee had recommended an increase of salary to Mr. Haswell.

Mr. REA said that the hon. member for Mitchell had accused the hon. member for Northern Downs of never reaching the stage of common-sense, but a suggestion which the hon. member had just made was about the only piece of common-sense he (Mr. Rea) had heard of in the debate—that was the suggestion that the Curator should also fulfil the functions of analytical chemist. He did not know of any office approaching nearer to a sinecure than that of Curator of the Museum. What had the Curator to do which would occupy his attention for more than one day in the week? It was most important for scientific purposes that there should be an analytical chemist, and he trusted that the Government would adopt the suggestion of the hon. member for Northern Downs.

Mr. MESTON said that the hon. member (Mr. Rea) must have very little idea of the duties of the Curator, if he thought they could be attended to by one day's application in a week. He was quite sure that the Curator of even as small a Museum as that in Brisbane, must have enough work to occupy his time from Monday morning to Saturday night. The suggestion that the Curator should also act as an analytical

chemist was simply preposterous. It would be utterly impossible to find a man possessing such a combination of knowledge as would enable him to successfully fulfil the duties of those two positions. Mr. Haswell did not profess to know anything about analytical chemistry. He acknowledged the necessity for such an officer, and should like to know from the Minister by whom the Government analysing had been done since the services of Mr. Staiger had been dispensed with.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said if he were to judge from the amount of pressure brought to bear on the Ministry with regard to this vote, he thought too many representations had been made by the friends of the Curator to members of Parliament. The Curator had been in the colony a few months only, and the fact that such influence was brought to bear did not speak very well for his future career here. Every member who had spoken seemed to have been very well briefed on behalf of the Curator—too much so if they were not very well prompted outside. He wished the Committee to fairly understand that, whatever representations were made to induce the gentleman to come from Sydney to Brisbane, he was not so induced by representations made by him (Mr. Macrossan). He had no intention of appointing a Curator either during the past or the present financial year; but representations were made to him by some of the Museum trustees that it would be absolutely necessary in the interests of the new building that some one should be appointed to look after it. Mr. Haswell was named as a young gentleman who would take the position at a small salary, as he had yet to win his prowess in the departments of science. He consented under that pressure to promise that he would give £200 a-year, but no more. Whatever representations were made to Mr. Haswell beyond that he was not responsible for. He gave the trustees well to understand when Mr. Haswell came here that they must not bring pressure on him to increase his salary, as they were now doing. Mr. Haswell was warned of the position he occupied, and was quite willing to accept the position at the salary named. The very men who induced him to come were the first to try to compel him (Mr. Macrossan) to increase the salary, but he refused to be taken advantage of in that way. He was quite willing to admit that if Mr. Haswell was worth anything at all he was worth more than he received; but under the circumstances he (Mr. Macrossan), to use a colonial phrase, would not be "had" by the trustees. With regard to the new assistant, he was informed that that officer was appointed before the change took place. The appointment of assistants and messengers rested with the trustees, and what had become of the messenger who was at the old Museum he did not know.

Mr. FRASER said that any one listening to the unqualified praise bestowed on the young gentleman who occupied the position of Curator would think that they had amongst them not only a scientist who had gained his prowess, but a veritable Huxley. He had heard different accounts of the Curator to those which had been previously given. He did not know the gentleman, but he was told on what he believed to be substantial authority, that in some of the departments which came under his cognizance he was utterly ignorant. He was told that the Curator knew comparatively little about zoology—a most important department in a colony like this. He agreed with the Minister, that at such an early stage of the Curator's experience amongst them, and seeing that he had to make a reputation for himself, it was hardly fair to press the Government for an increase of salary. The

Minister was perfectly justified in the course which he had taken. If the Curator was a competent man the salary he received was no doubt very small; but he had to show by experience that he was competent. He thought it hardly fair of gentlemen who were willing to accept positions at very low salaries, when they had just settled in the saddle, to bring influence to bear in order to have their salaries increased before the Government had a fair opportunity of proving their capacity.

Mr. HAMILTON said he could not congratulate the Minister for Works on the excellence of his taste, when he said that hon. members had been briefed in favour of the Curator. He was one of the first to rise to speak in favour of the Curator, and he objected to the Minister's accusation. He considered it was the duty of hon. members to ascertain for themselves the qualifications of the various officers whose salaries they were asked to vote. He should just like to remind the Minister of the case which they had previously discussed. The Minister last year acknowledged that there was not enough work for a certain officer, and this year he said that the same officer's services were not necessary; yet he was quite prepared to vote £700 to that officer, whilst he refused to give a scientific man more than labourer's wages. The opinion of every hon. member ought to be respected by Ministers, and when they got up and said what they thought of any public officer, they ought not to be told that they had been briefed. He had learnt what he had stated to-night in his position as a member of the Museum Committee. The hon. member for South Brisbane said he had heard that Mr. Haswell was thoroughly ignorant of his duties as a zoologist, but against that it might be noted that Professor Huxley, one of the first men in the scientific world, had stated that he was fit for any appointment connected with natural science. The Minister for Works should have a fellow-feeling for this gentleman. When the hon. gentleman had a holiday he spent his time in inspecting roads and public works, and in the same way Mr. Haswell, as a student of Nature, devoted his hours of relaxation to visiting the sea-shore, inspecting sea shells and snails, and to other congenial pursuits. His heart was in his work, as the heart of the Minister for Works was in his. Every hon. member who had spoken with authority had given Mr. Haswell a high character, and whether briefed or not had stated facts which were indisputable.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he thought the Minister for Works was not justified in expressing himself as he had, implying that hon. members who advocated an increase of salary to this gentleman had been canvassed, either by the gentleman himself or by his friends, to bring pressure to bear on the Government. As far as he was personally concerned he repudiated the insinuation. His knowledge of this gentleman and his emoluments had been gained in the course of conversation with friends of his (Mr. Rutledge) who were deeply interested in the prosperity of the Museum. He felt a certain amount of humiliation when he found that the head of the Works Department could consent to appraise the services of a gentleman fit for that position at that small annual sum.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the greatest rascals he had ever met had baskets-full of recommendations. People in that way often got into situations, and it was found before they had been in them a week that they were not fit for their positions. It was matter of bad taste for gentlemen who were on the Museum Committee to get up and speak on the subject at all. It showed that they were somewhat more interested in the subject than general fairplay would

warrant. He had in his possession a letter in which he was told that the committee was a job and that the affairs of the Museum would be burked. He certainly did not believe the statement that this gentleman, who came to the colony a few months ago at a salary of £200 a-year, had been offered £600 a-year elsewhere. That was not the general way of doing business, and it was not likely to be a fact. It had been stated, also, that in some departments of the Museum this gentleman was not competent; and he took this opportunity of asking the members of the committee not to close their labours now, as there would be more evidence coming forward to prove that Mr. Haswell in some departments was not competent. Some of the best taxidermists in Australia, including Mr. Jameson, of Ipswich, had applied for employment and been refused; and this gentleman appeared to employ none but his own friends in the Museum. Whatever this gentleman lacked was made up by the puffing he received in this House. The gentleman knew that he was to get only £200 a-year, and it was too soon to bring outside pressure to bear on the Government to obtain him an increase. If that salary was not enough, he could go back to New South Wales and could be very well replaced here. He was told by parties able to judge that the superiors of this gentleman were here already. For those reasons he was highly pleased with the stand which the Minister for Works had taken in refusing to submit to pressure. Such pressure ought to do Civil servants more harm than good. He was now saying merely what he had heard outside the House. He did not know the gentleman at all; he might be the best man in the colony; but there were two sides to every question, and he was giving the other side.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said it was a great misfortune for this gentleman that his name should be dragged across the floor of the House. If this gentleman really possessed superior qualifications, they would be discovered without the necessity for any special communication. It certainly appeared as though some of the hon. members who had spoken had been acting on instructions—they did not pick up their information by intuition. He did not know the gentleman, but he had heard an excellent account of him, and he had no doubt that so many virtues and merits would be discovered in time. He was not forced to come to the colony, and when hon. members said that he had come at a salary of £200, though offered £600 elsewhere, he (Mr. Perkins) thought the hon. members must have been led astray. It had been very wisely pointed out that the trustees of the Museum should know best whether this officer was entitled to an increase or not. He did not believe in spoon-feeding Civil servants—they might be allowed to paddle their own canoe a little, and the good ones would very soon be found out. When he saw five or six members getting up and praising a Civil servant he began to think there must be something crooked.

Mr. HAMILTON: That's very uncomplimentary to the members.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said he did not intend to be complimentary. He believed in paying a good man and getting good servants, and he believed there were men, if they could only be secured, who were equal to two or three now drawing pay from the State. This gentleman was an utter stranger to him, and he had not yet learnt sufficient about him to be able to say whether he had any speciality for the duties. He hoped the Committee would proceed to more important business and leave this matter in the hands of the trustees of the Museum and the

Minister for Works; and they might rely upon it that if the gentleman in question possessed merits ample justice would be done to him.

Mr. NORTON said it was a very great pity that so much had been said in praise of this gentleman. He had no personal acquaintance with him, but he had seen letters in which he was very strongly recommended. He should, however, be very sorry on that account to urge upon the Minister the desirability of increasing his salary. As the gentleman had been in the colony so short a time it would be better to allow time to see what he was. It was all very well to say a few words in a man's praise, but it was better to leave the matter alone unless well acquainted with the gentleman's qualifications. He could not help thinking that some of the hon. members who had spoken could only have obtained their knowledge by hearsay, and he did not wonder at the Minister for Works getting rather sick of it when he heard such speeches as that of the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge). It was the greatest mistake in the world to overdo the thing as the hon. member had done. Seven or eight members had got up one after another to speak in the gentleman's favour, and most of them could scarcely have had an opportunity of judging whether he deserved the praise they lavished upon him. It would be better to give the trustees and the Minister time to judge for themselves of this gentleman's merits.

Mr. HAMILTON said the Minister for Lands had stated that he did not intend to be complimentary. He (Mr. Hamilton) did not intend to be so either. He considered it was very impertinent for a Minister to presume to dictate to any hon. member what expressions of opinions he should use. The subject was open for discussion, and all hon. members were equal in the House, and equally entitled to express their opinion. Moreover, the hon. gentleman seemed to think that the fact that a number of members enunciating the same opinion was a reason why their opinions were not entitled to respect. The hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) said that nobody could get employment in the Museum except friends of Mr. Haswell; but that was absurd, because that gentleman was not the employer. All who were employed were engaged by the trustees. If the hon. member expected his own opinions to be respected he should respect those of others. He (Mr. Hamilton) had good reason for what he had said. The hon. member finished by saying it was bad taste to act in this manner. With regard to that they were quite capable of judging for themselves.

Mr. REA said that even if Professor Huxley himself had made the same bargain with the Government that Mr. Haswell did, it would be disgraceful for him to want to break his bargain by asking for an increase of salary.

Mr. RUTLEDGE said he had no desire to be lectured by the hon. member for Port Curtis as to his conduct in supporting an increase in the Curator's salary. He had lavished no praise on that gentleman, whom he did not know, and whom he had not, to his knowledge, seen. What he said was that Mr. Haswell was doing the highest kind of intellectual work at labourer's wages, and he spoke from that point of view only. It seemed strange that hon. members might say all sorts of hard things about Civil servants without objection, and yet the moment a word was said likely to put a man in a more favourable light, they were told that they held briefs on behalf of the person so spoken of.

Mr. DOUGLAS said the statement of the Minister for Works was quite explicit, and he took no exception to the grounds on which he had acted in connection with the appointment of

the Curator. As so much had been said, it was desirable that the Committee should know exactly what the trustees had recommended, and he would read the following paragraph from their report referring to the matter:—

"The Trustees have been extremely fortunate in securing in this all-important post the services of a gentleman (Mr. W. A. Haswell, M.A., B.Sc., of Edinburgh) in every way competent to fulfil the duties appertaining to a position upon which the entire future success of the institution undoubtedly depends, and under whose care it is confidently believed the interests and the objects of the Museum will be successfully advanced. The provision made for the remuneration of this officer—viz., £200 per annum—being, as is obvious, of but a mere temporary character to meet the occasion, requires now to be placed on a more satisfactory footing, and it is hoped that the Government will recognise the necessity of remedying this palpable incongruity by providing a salary consistent with the importance of the office and adequate to the acquirements of the holder thereof."

He (Mr. Douglas) was one of the trustees, but was sorry to say he had not attended many of the meetings.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Were you at the meeting when that report was adopted?

Mr. DOUGLAS said he thought not. He did not object to the position of strict economy which the Minister for Works had taken up, but the £200 a-year he agreed to pay was not in reality contemplated as being the fixed salary of a permanent Curator. If the trustees had publicly notified that they required the services of a Curator for the Museum they would have had to offer a salary of at least £500 or £600 a-year in order to obtain the services of a high-class man. The trustees, hearing of Mr. Haswell, were prepared to take him upon trial, and did not look upon him at first as Curator. It had since appeared that Mr. Haswell was a gentleman capable of discharging the duties of the office permanently. There could be no objection to the bargain that had been struck between the trustees and the Curator, and the latter had no claim further than that which he had accepted. On the other hand, if the Curator was really a superior man he ought to be placed in a suitable position. He desired his remarks to refer rather to the office than to the man, and the Curator of the Museum should be a man to whom credit would attach as the representative of the colony in all matters scientific. It might be admitted that Mr. Haswell was too young for that position; all that he (Mr. Douglas) contended for was that the Government should look forward to making sufficient provision for the office of Curator.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said there was a tale connected with the report of the trustees which was not highly creditable. The report was placed in his hands two or three weeks ago, with the names of the trustees, of whom he was one, attached. On reading the report he saw the paragraph recommending the Curator for increase of salary, and took no exception to it, believing that the trustees had a perfect right to express their opinion on the subject. But on coming to the end he found his own name attached to the report, and he had never given his sanction to it. The name of another member of the Government was also attached, and on inquiring he found it had been appended without that gentleman's sanction; and the same was the case with another trustee of whom he had inquired on the matter. And now the hon. gentleman (Mr. Douglas) told him that he, too, was a trustee, but was not present at the meeting at which the report was adopted.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he must correct the hon. gentleman. He was not present at the meeting at which the report was considered, but he was present at the meeting when it was finally adopted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it struck him as strange that his name and the names of other trustees should be appended to a report recommending themselves to increase the Curator's salary. The bargain he made was full and explicit, and there was a fair understanding between him and the trustees, and yet Mr. Haswell had not been in the colony two months before pressure was brought to bear to increase his salary, and he (the Minister for Works) refused to do so until it was proved to the satisfaction of the trustees and the people of the colony that Mr. Haswell was capable of performing the duties properly. Gentlemen capable of judging had spoken very highly of the Curator's abilities, but that was not sufficient without the further proof of which he had just spoken. He objected to the report, and refused to lay it on the table until his name was struck off, and the consequence was that the report came up with simply the chairman's name attached.

Mr. NORTON said he had no intention of imputing to the hon. member (Mr. Rutledge) that he held a brief for the Curator; but he held that hon. members ought not to be so lavish in their praise unless they were justified in doing so from their own knowledge of the facts. The hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) complained that in some departments the Curator was not well up. How could such a thing be expected—it would not be found in one museum out of fifty.

Mr. MESTON said that as chairman of the Museum Select Committee he intended to say as little as possible about the item under discussion; but he might say that those who spoke in favour of the Curator could afford to laugh at the insinuation that they came here at the instigation of the Curator and his friends. Mr. Haswell had no doubt a great deal to learn, particularly with respect to the classification of Australian birds and insects; but he was quite satisfied that the man from whom Mr. Haswell's testimonials came would not have signed them unless they were perfectly convinced that the recipient was possessed of the qualifications with which he was credited. Hon. members need be under no apprehension that the inquiry was going to be closed. He hoped to have the report on the table during next week, and he believed the report would justify the inquiry, and show that it had not been a waste of time. The inquiry would have ended before now but for the difficulty he had found in getting together a quorum of members.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he was glad to hear that the inquiry was not going to be closed, as he believed there was some rather important evidence to be given. With regard to the trustees' report, he should like to know who wrote it, who printed it, and how it found its way into the House, when it had been repudiated by four or five of the trustees whose names had been appended to it without their sanction? The Curator must be a very young man or he would have avoided raising a debate of that kind, which would do him no good in the long run. It had been stated there that night that before Mr. Haswell was two months in the colony he tried to bring pressure to bear to have his salary raised. As to what had been said about the disgrace of paying him only labourer's wages, the colony was not after all so wealthy, and if they could get a good curator at labourer's wages he did not see why they should not do so. To him there was something very suspicious about the whole thing, as he knew old colonists, men who had a good share of brains, who had never pushed themselves forward, and no attempt had ever been made to increase their salaries, and yet this young raw bird, who had just come up from New South Wales, wanted after being two

months here to have his salary increased. To his knowledge Mr. Haswell made several applications for the position, and he (Mr. O'Sullivan) believed he would have taken it at £100 if that was offered to him.

Mr. STEVENS said he was quite certain that what had been said by the Minister for Works was true—that to ventilate the supposed grievances of a Civil servant was to injure his prospects in the future.

Mr. THOMPSON said that Mr. Haswell was a personal friend of his, and he must say that he thought it was an unfortunate thing for that gentleman that his name had been so prominently brought forward and that the debate should have taken such a personal turn. The question was whether their scientific departments were to be warped—whether they were so badly off that they could not afford more than £200 a-year for a Curator of the Museum. In other colonies the curatorship cost thousands—for instance, in New Zealand Dr. Hector received £1,000 a-year, and had others under him. He regretted the discussion had taken such an unfortunate turn, but it might have arisen from the fact that Mr. Haswell was an exceptionally modest man. He (Mr. Thompson) had found him to be so, but on getting into conversation with him on a subject of which he himself knew something—namely, natural history—he found out what he was worth.

Question put and passed.

On the question that the sum of £6,765 be voted for Salaries and Contingencies in connection with the general establishment, &c., of "Railways"—

Mr. THORN said that when he had lately called the attention of the Minister for Works to the alteration in the time-table between Brisbane and Roma he was told that the people were satisfied with it, but on the following day the Mayor of Roma waited on him and told him that the people there were not at all satisfied with having trains only three times a-week, and people in Brisbane had also expressed their dissatisfaction with the new arrangement. He trusted, therefore, the Minister for Works would go back to the old system and have at least one train a-day. There was another thing he would mention. He was at the railway station when the train came in at 11 o'clock that day, and a more dejected lot of passengers he never saw; most of them had the appearance of having been on a spree, and one, who was a doctor living at Roma, complained very much of the discomfort. That was owing to the want of proper sleeping-cars and the absence of any proper places for washing along the road, and he really wondered why the Minister for Works had not a Pullman car on the line for these night trains. He was informed, also, that there was only one first-class carriage from Roma last night, and that there were very few passengers. The hon. member for Maranoa was a passenger, and he should like to know what the hon. member's opinion was of the first experiment of the night train.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY asked what was the name of the doctor alluded to by the hon. member?

Mr. THORN said it was the name of a gentleman not at all unknown to the hon. member.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he could supply the name—it was Dr. Webb. That gentleman was in his office, and said that the new arrangement was a very great improvement on the old system, and so far from looking seedy Dr. Webb looked as fresh as paint. So much for the hon. member's statement.

Mr. LALOR said he considered the change a great improvement—in fact, it was a luxury to travel now compared with what it was under the old system. As to its being impossible to sleep, he slept very comfortably last night. With regard to the number of persons travelling, he had never seen so many before.

Mr. THORN said it was a fact that the people were not comfortable, and complained very much. No doubt Dr. Webb looked fresh when he called on the Colonial Secretary, and made himself look spruce for the occasion. However, as he had said, the Mayor of Roma was not satisfied with the present mail communication between Brisbane and Roma.

Mr. LALOR said that where the shoe pinched the hon. member was, in his having to get up at 7 in the morning.

Mr. THORN asked if the Government intended to stick to the new arrangement of having only three trains a-week to Roma—were the people in the South to have mail communication with Roma only three times a-week whilst people in the North had a daily mail? He believed the hon. Minister for Works tried to do as much as he could to accommodate the people, but in the present instance the hon. gentleman had been led astray in the time-table he had adopted. He (Mr. Thorn) found that it took goods trains forty-two hours to go from Brisbane to Roma, a distance of 300 miles, whilst between the capitals of New South Wales and Victoria, a distance of 600 miles, passengers were conveyed in eighteen or nineteen hours, which time would be reduced when the link was finished. He hoped out of justice to the people in the South the present time-table would be altered.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that he had consulted the Mayor of Roma when he was there, and also since then; and that gentleman told him that he and the people of Roma would be satisfied with three trains a-week if they got their mails daily, and that they would get; so that it was useless for the hon. member to try and mislead the Committee. The hon. member also said there was only one carriage, whereas there were two first-class carriages. By-and-bye, no doubt, there would be better accommodation, and a Pullman car had been sent for; but they could not do all things at once. He could assure the hon. member he should do the very best he could for the people of the southern part of the colony, as well as for those in the North. His reputation was concerned. The people of Roma were quite satisfied with this arrangement, and would rather travel at night than start at 3 o'clock in the morning and arrive in Brisbane at midnight. He knew very well what made the hon. gentleman so anxious; it was because the new arrangements made him get up a little earlier in the morning if he wanted to catch the train, and the hon. gentleman would like the whole of the people along the line to be inconvenienced rather than he should be disturbed in his bed.

Mr. THORN said this was not so; he had always considered the night train was much better than the day train. All he wanted to see was daily communication between the metropolis and Roma.

Mr. DICKSON said the time-table made provision for passenger trains only for three days a-week; but they now learned from the Minister for Works that the mails would be transmitted daily. It would be very advantageous if, in addition to this, arrangements were made for daily passenger traffic. It was a remarkable commentary upon the great railway professions of the present Government that this state of things should happen. The Government had

boasted that they were extending their lines into the interior towards the setting sun in order to provide for close settlement, and now it was found that the more the lines were pushed into the interior the less was the necessity for passenger accommodation. If this was to be the result of the construction of the Carpentaria line it was high time to discontinue railway construction altogether. It was the duty of the Government to see that one train daily connected the great centres of population with the sea-coast. The time-table itself was a secondary matter compared with the arrangement by which one train per diem should connect these two extremes. He should be glad to hear from the Minister for Works what the intention of the Government was with regard to the extension of the line westward from Roma. The tenders which were invited some six months ago had not yet been accepted, and while these estimates were before the Committee it would be appropriate to ask what the Government intended to do. Would the Government accept tenders for construction from loan, or stop their construction altogether westward from Roma until further steps had been taken in connection with the Preliminary Railway Companies Bill? He hoped that, having obtained provision from loan, the Government would now proceed with all expedition and extend the line to the end of the first section, as arranged some time ago.

Mr. THORN: Does the Minister for Works intend to say that daily communication takes place between Brisbane and the head of the line?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have said so before.

Mr. THORN said that if this was really done there was no reason why the time-table should not be amended and a passenger car put on. In New South Wales the trains went out once in twelve hours; in Queensland they should go out once in twenty-four hours, and not once in forty-eight hours, as was the case on the Southern and Western line.

Mr. MOREHEAD hoped the Minister for Works would stick to his position, and only run three trains per week to Roma. That number was quite sufficient to do the work, and why should they be taxed because the hon. member lived on the line, and would like to have his personal convenience studied?

Mr. LOW said it was very easy to show from facts that there could be no excuse for running more trains than were at present on the time-table. If the trains were run, the Government would be doing the foolish business of running them for nothing.

Mr. MILES said he did not think any man of business capacity would run more trains than were sufficient to meet the requirements of the public. If there were no passengers to travel, he hoped the Minister for Works would not run extra trains. The hon. gentleman had stated that the average was one passenger and a-half per day; and that being so, he hoped he would not allow himself to be forced into running a train every day. At the same time, it spoke very badly indeed for the settlement of the colony that the further the railways were extended west the less was the traffic. It was really a deplorable state of things, and every member should seriously consider it. Until recently they had had a through train daily; now three times a-week were found to be sufficient. These facts were stubborn things; and if the three trains were sufficient, he sincerely trusted that the Minister for Works would not think of running more merely for the sake of saying that a through train was run every day.

Mr. LALOR said he was well acquainted with the line and its requirements, and he could inform the Committee that on many occasions he had been the only first-class passenger from Dalby to Roma, while the other passengers in the second-class carriages were employes engaged on the line. In his opinion it would be absurd to run a through train every day.

Mr. MACFARLANE said no doubt three trains per week were sufficient to carry all the passengers at present travelling between Roma and Brisbane. A very great number of complaints, however, had been made with reference to the small number of trains running between Ipswich and Brisbane. The trains ran so far apart as to time that men going to Brisbane from Ipswich had to lose the whole day in consequence of the time wasted between the running of the trains. One train a-day extra between the two places would not cost much, and would accommodate a great many people who were much put about at the present time. Unless a person in Brisbane now left at 6 o'clock in the morning he could catch no train that would enable him to do a satisfactory day's business at Ipswich.

Mr. LOW said that the outcry about the inconvenience of the present time-table was he believed quite unwarranted.

Mr. THORN was understood to say that there was a large amount of traffic from important country districts into Chinchilla, Miles, and Yeulba. He did not say there was a large amount of traffic every day, but on Fridays and Saturdays there was, between Roma and Dalby, and this time-table would effectually put a stop to the custom which had grown up of people travelling to Dalby on those days.

Mr. KELLETT said the time-table was a move in the right direction; and whoever had instigated the reform he hoped would go a little further and make some great alterations in the goods department. All the people who had been doing business with this railway had been for some time crying out against the anomalies and absurd rates charged for goods of all descriptions. So much was that last year the case that a great quantity of goods went by drays alongside the railway, and successfully competed with it; and a gentleman told him that he had engaged drays at Dalby to take goods out beyond Roma at a saving as compared with what they could be carried by the railway. If these railways were to be run as ornaments it was no use going on any further with railway construction. It was well known that the goods rates were most puzzling. It would take a very clever lawyer to understand the tariff of goods, and he believed there were very few men even belonging to the Railway Department who understood it. He had noticed when he asked men employed on the line at what rate certain goods would be charged that it took them about a quarter of an hour to study the goods rates. He did not know who was responsible for this condition of affairs, but he would give one instance to show that there was something wrong in the traffic department. He had in his hand the list of rates charged for wool on the railway;—he did not know how it had been got at, or for what reasons; but he found that from Warwick, which was 166 miles to Brisbane, wool was carried at a little more than 6½d. per ton per mile; from Roma, which was 317 miles, it was charged at 7d. per ton per mile. He could not see how anyone could show it was right to charge more in proportion per ton per mile for goods carried double the distance. He always understood the principle to be—the longer the journey, whether by land or sea, the less in proportion the charge for carriage. This

anomaly existed all through the table, and another very extraordinary one was that in getting wool down from Roma to Ipswich, where there was a woollen factory, the cheapest process was to send the wool twenty-five miles further to Brisbane, put the department to the expense of unloading it and storing, and then sending it the twenty-five miles back again. By doing this they could save 17s. 1d. per ton. If the bright genius in the Railway Department that invented this idea was fit to occupy his position 24 hours longer, he would leave it to the House to explain why. He could tell them for a fact that for the carriage of wool they had to pay £9 5s. per ton from Roma to Brisbane, whilst the cost from Roma to Ipswich—23 miles less—was £10 19s. 9d. The Commissioner for Railways had been in the department almost from the first starting of railways, and if after all his experience he had not learned any better way of fixing the rates, it must be evident to the Committee that the sooner they got a better man in his place the better would it be for the country. He knew that different Ministers had been afraid to tackle the question of adjusting the railway rates because of the uncertainty of their tenure of office, but the permanent heads of the department ought to find means to make alterations for the better, or give place to men who could do so. If a junior clerk who had been in the department six months could not make out a better time-table than that which he had in his hands he ought to be dismissed. He knew that the existing anomalies had been pointed out to the heads of the department from time to time. The Commissioner himself must know that the rates were absurd; and the only way in which he (Mr. Kellett) could account for their being adhered to was that the Commissioner was afraid to alter them, because if he did it would be patent to everybody what damage had been done to the department for years past. He was satisfied that unless some vital change was made the railways would not pay for many years to come. If the railways were put into the hands of private companies—and he wished that they were—they would soon see whether they would pay or not. He was satisfied that they would pay, and pay well, but there was no hope of that when they saw goods going up and down by road day after day instead of by rail—which fact seemed to him to be the best proof that the railways were not managed properly. When the railways were constructed it was anticipated that the carriage of stock would have been one of the great sources of revenue, but he could state from his own knowledge that two-thirds of the sheep slaughtered in Brisbane during the last twelve months had been brought down by road. As they extended the railways into the interior the more would it be necessary for them to lower the rates for stock if they wished to secure the traffic. He should like to hear some explanation from the Minister respecting the anomalies which he had pointed out.

Mr. LOW said he could endorse the statements which had been made by the hon. member (Mr. Kellett). He knew that to take goods from Toowoomba to St. George by dray it cost £7 10s less than it did to take goods from Toowoomba to the same place by rail. There must be something radically wrong or there could not be such an enormous difference. The sooner some alteration was made such as to secure the traffic for the railways the better.

Mr. MILES (a portion of whose speech was inaudible in the gallery) said he was quite prepared to take some responsibility in connection with the rates between Warwick and Brisbane, and between Ipswich and stations westward. They had to compete with river boats the owners

of which were threatening to do this and to do that, and he took the responsibility of increasing the rates from the intermediate stations to Ipswich whilst lowering them through to Brisbane. If there was blame attachable to anyone for that change it was attachable to him, and not to the Commissioner for Railways. He gloried in what he had done, and he would do it again if he had a chance. People who used the railways should pay something like a fair equivalent for the privilege. It was all very well to say that carriers could take goods by road at lower rates than were charged by the Railway Department. They all knew that at certain seasons of the year farmers who had nothing to do with their teams were only too glad to put them on the roads, and they could afford to carry at low rates. It was absurd to say that the Minister should be continually changing the railway rates so as to check that competition. An important consideration was the improved facilities afforded by railways for getting produce to market, and of receiving goods from the seaport—surely that was worth something extra. He could remember the time when his teams used to be six months on the road. On one occasion he was taking up some immigrants on his drays, and owing to the bad state of the country they were delayed such a length of time that the whole of the provisions on the drays were consumed before they reached the end of their journey. Contrast such a state of things with what existed now, when a man could get goods at Roma within forty-eight hours! Before railways were made storekeepers who bought goods on four months' bills often found the bills matured before they had received the goods. Taking into consideration all these advantages, his candid opinion was that if the present rates were not too low they were low enough, and he believed that the Minister for Works would think twice before he made any reduction. He would not give the slightest facilities for the maintenance of roads alongside railways. The railways were made for the people and they ought to use them. The Government ought to advise divisional boards not to make roads alongside railways, and ought not to subsidise them for any such work if they did it.

Mr. LOW said that when the New South Wales Government brought their railway to the border of that colony, which would be soon, the Queensland Government would be compelled to lower the rates whether they liked it or not.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he had listened with a great deal of interest to what had fallen from the hon. member for Darling Downs, who had told them that he accepted a responsibility which he (Mr. Morehead) fancied no one would cast on him. It was all very well for the hon. member to say that he was responsible for so-and-so; let him be responsible for what he did when he was in office—he believed that they would always have to refer to the hon. member's ministerial career in the past tense. He was not going to deal with what had been, but with what was. Every word which had fallen from the hon. member (Mr. Kellett) was perfectly true. The hon. member for Darling Downs had said that it was not the duty of the State to keep in order roads to compete with railways, and he also suggested that the divisional boards should be advised not to keep in order the roads running along railways. He presumed that the divisional boards would attend to such matters in the way they thought best without accepting advice from the Government or the Director-General of Railway Works throughout the colony, which was the position that the hon. member for Darling Downs had assumed. He would refer to the railway rates, and he proposed to make

what he thought would be a wonderful exhibition. Hon. members had heard of the Athanasian Creed: well, he would make the railway rates sheet, 1; the Minister for Works, 2; and the Commissioner for Railways, 3. These were three incomprehensibles, yet only one incomprehensible. He would direct attention to the way in which the goods classification was divided. The question was not a new one, as it had been brought under the notice of every Ministry since they had had railways in the colony. He believed that at one time they had a very able but tyrannical traffic manager who formulated these subdivisions. There were three subdivisions, the first of which he would refer to further on. What did hon. members think the second class was?—he was sure no hon. member could answer him.

Mr. MILES: You are one of the second class.

Mr. MOREHEAD said probably he was. The hon. member was quite right, the 2nd class being "goods in general not otherwise classified." The 3rd class was defined, and under it he found corks and bungs were carried. Feathers were in the same category, and were carried at the same rates as marble. That was one of the bright classifications endorsed by the Minister, if not made by him. Then he found that wool in pockets came under the 3rd class, whilst wool in bale was dealt with in a different way. Why there should be a difference he could not see. Then he found that sponges were carried under the 3rd class—they could find some of those on the other side of the House. He also found in the 3rd class, which included feathers, iron safes and slate slabs for billiard tables, respecting which the hon. member for Darling Downs was doubtless an authority. He also found in the same class "millinery in case"—perhaps the hon. member for Northern Downs knew something about that. He was astonished to find quicksilver carried in the same class, considering that it was one of the heaviest of articles, whilst being about the easiest of carriage. Ginger wine also appeared in the third class. Perhaps the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Macfarlane) was gratified at that, although he would probably be sorry to hear that empty bottles were carried first-class. Common oil was carried third-class, whilst other oils were carried in the second and third classes. He merely brought these things forward to show how disgracefully the Railway Department was managed. He used the word disgracefully advisedly—he did it with sufficient knowledge of the way in which the department had been and was being managed. He recollected some time ago he went to the Minister for Works to point out to him that it was unfair to charge the same rate on greasy as on washed wool. The answer he got from the Minister was that he had consulted the Commissioner, and the reason given why the rates were made equal was that it would induce wool-growers to wash their wool, and thus employ labour, which would be a very good thing. If every grower washed his wool the effect would be that the department would lose half its revenue if the rates remained the same, and they would have to carry the same bulk. He then expressed the opinion that it was the action of a truly paternal Government to presume to interfere with the management of a man's private concerns; and also pointed out that the arrangement was one that told not against the rich man but against the poor man, because the latter could not afford to wash his wool. In dealing with a man who could bring forward such an argument as that it was useless to argue or talk or attempt to make him see the difference between sponges and iron tanks; he had not grasp of intellect enough to see it. He

had no wish to make any charge against the present Minister for Works, because the system which that hon. gentleman had fallen into had been adopted by his predecessors; but he contended that any man of common-sense who considered the tariff classification would see that there was something very wrong indeed about it. Where did the fault lie? If the system were successively adopted by each Minister, the fault could not belong to the Minister, and it must be the Commissioner who was primarily and principally to blame for the way in which the traffic was mismanaged. It was all very well for hon. members to say that roads should not be kept in order, so that traffic might be diverted to the railway; but he knew from his own knowledge that wool had gone into Toowoomba which would have gone into Yeulba, on account of the excessive rates charged under the existing tariff. He held that the blame lay chiefly with the Commissioner, who was the means through which one of the best men ever engaged on the Queensland railways—Mr. Statham Lowe—left the service of the colony.

Mr. MILES: I deny it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member was not a Minister, and he did not believe he ever would be, unless it were a minister of the Gospel. He believed the hon. member had been going lower and lower, and he might come to that. While he hoped that the hon. member was not going to sink into such a degraded position, he must say that the hon. member was not likely to be a Minister of the Crown, though he might become a minister of the half-crown. The difference between the one and the other seemed to him to be the difference between a Minister of the Crown and a minister of the Gospel in this colony. The system of dividing the goods into first, second, and third class was monstrous and would not hold water. He had with others upon one occasion waited upon the present Speaker, when that gentleman was Minister for Works, and pointed out the existence of these anomalies. The hon. gentleman admitted their existence, and had he remained in power no doubt they would have been removed, but since that time nothing had been done. To show how utterly absurd and monstrous the tariff was, he might mention that although no distinction was made between greasy and washed wool, an allowance of 10 per cent. was made when wool was dumped. It was at once admitted in that case that where an increase of weight was obtained without an increase in bulk some concession should be made. In that case also the rich man benefited, because the poor man was not so well able to dump his wool. He did not wish, however, to deal with the question on that basis, and he had only made reference to that view in order to show how fallacious the argument used by the Commissioner of Railways was. His business was simply to get as much traffic as possible, and he would probably find that if his theory was carried out, and all wool washed on the station, a great deficit in the railway revenue would result. He (Mr. Morehead) would also point out that the present railway returns showing an apparently increased revenue were really utterly fallacious. As the hon. member (Mr. Miles) had stated, wool travelled down very much faster than was formerly the case. For that reason the railway revenue was very much swelled for a few months; but if the returns were spread over a longer period it would be found that there was no actual increase. The railway having penetrated further into the interior the wool had come down quicker, but next quarter a great falling off in the returns would be found. The Minister for Works should give very careful

attention to the facts which had been brought before him by the hon. member (Mr. Kellett) and by himself (Mr. Morehead). The hon. gentleman had now a powerful majority to support him, and no better opportunity could be looked forward for adjusting the injustices which existed under the present tariff. The hon. gentleman had that opportunity, but he (Mr. Morehead) believed the hon. gentleman was trammelled and weighed to the ground by the same drag which had weighed upon every Minister since Mr. Herbert had been Commissioner for Railways. It was perhaps a hard thing to say, but Mr. Herbert had been a drag upon the proper railway management in this colony.

Mr. MILES: Why do you say that?

Mr. MOREHEAD said he said so because it was the truth. It might be unpalatable to the hon. member because he did not indulge in it much himself. However unpalatable it might be, he must state that so long as Mr. Herbert remained in his position, so long would the railways be mismanaged, and so long would there be complaints time after time to deal with. If he were Minister of Works for only one day, the first thing he would do would be to dismiss Mr. Herbert and get a good and proper man in his place. He spoke strongly because he felt strongly. He knew a great deal about the matter, and so did the hon. member for Darling Downs and the present Minister for Works; but they were bound while in office to defend their own servant. He maintained that the position which Mr. Herbert occupied in the Government service was the means of crushing the railways from north to south.

Mr. MILES said everyone knew that the hon. member was the greatest slanderer in the House. It was a gross act of injustice on the part of the hon. member to use his privilege for the purpose of slandering perhaps one of the best officers in the service of the Queensland Government. The hon. member also paid a very poor compliment to Ministers. He (Mr. Miles) presumed that the Minister for Works had sufficient determination to enable him to carry out any necessary reform in spite of all the commissioners. It would be a great misfortune to the colony to lose the services of the present Commissioner. There was no officer in the service who had more difficult duties to fulfil in dealing with claims which were continually put forward by the public. He was often in the position of being between the devil and the deep sea, and he always had to fight the battles of the Government single-handed. The hon. member said if he were Minister for Works for one day he would dismiss Mr. Herbert. The hon. member would never be a Minister with his (Mr. Miles') consent, as he considered it would be one of the greatest calamities that ever happened in Queensland if the hon. member became the Minister of one department or another. With regard to the probability of his being a Minister again, that might depend upon circumstances; but if he were he would make the hon. member feel it. The hon. member might expect no favours from him. It was mean of the hon. member to get up and abuse a public officer in the way he had done. The whole career of the hon. member showed that he had been a privileged slanderer both inside the House and outside; in fact, he was a sort of a buffoon. The hon. member had never brought forward a single measure for the benefit of the country, but had taken the rôle of a slanderer.

Mr. MACFARLANE said it was scarcely fair of the hon. member for Mitchell to throw the responsibility of the unequal rates upon the Commissioner for Railways. The hon. member for Darling Downs, while Minister for Works,

took the responsibility of making the rates, and if that were the case the Minister and not the Commissioner should be blamed for any anomalies. He had had some experience in sending goods to Roma, and he would state a fact or two. He found that goods could sometimes be sent cheaper by parcel rate than by freight rate, which appeared to evince the existence of some irregularity. With regard to quickness of transit he had known goods sent from Ipswich to Roma to be eight days on the road, either because there was not sufficient trucks or because the department was short-handed.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said the hon. member (Mr. Miles) had made use of an expression of a rather important character. He said that the rate of 7d. per ton per mile was a very reasonable rate, and that it was as low a rate as could be charged to allow any chance of a fair return. He inferred from that that the actual cost of carrying goods under the present management was something like 7d. per ton per mile. The experience of other countries, especially America, went to show that with proper management and supervision goods could be carried at about one-third of that rate. It would not do, therefore, to be satisfied until goods could be carried for a distance of over 100 miles at the rate of 1d., 1½d., or 2d. per mile. In the case of Roma, perhaps it was desirable that the largest possible returns should be obtained until a profit could be shown, provided that the rates were such that the whole of the traffic would be attracted. He believed, however, that it was in the power of the Minister to immensely increase the amount of goods carried by reducing the charges in some cases. For instance, he believed that the Railway Department should be in a position to carry, at a reasonable rate, the whole of the stock coming to the seaports. The present rate was not low enough to destroy competition with stock coming down by land. If the frozen meat exportation assumed large dimensions it would be impossible to compete with America unless it could be carried upon the railways at 1½d. or 2d. per ton per mile. As far as he could see, there was no possible reason why that should not be done here, as it had been done by private companies in America. He admitted that much had already been done by the Minister for Works in the reduction of cost of construction, but he trusted that within a few months they would see a large reduction in the cost of maintenance of the lines of railway, which was at present enormously expensive. He admitted that reduction would be difficult, but, judging from what had been done in other countries, it was not impossible. There were far too many men employed in the work, and a large number might easily be dispensed with. Such a step would no doubt be disagreeable and unpopular, but as several other lines were now about to be constructed the present was the right time to commence reductions. Considering the small amount of traffic and the small weights carried, the cost of maintenance was enormous, and did not display that amount of economy which would be the case if the railways were in the hands of private companies. As to anomalous tariffs, it was often an exceedingly difficult matter to prevent that occurring occasionally, as in the case mentioned by the hon. member (Mr. Kellett), but those were matters of detail which could be easily rectified by the department. On the Central Railway the tariff was so high—he did not say it was too high under the circumstances—that it was possible for carriers to carry goods at a lower rate from Broadsound to Clermont and Copperfield, and at the present time there were from fifteen to twenty teams on

that road. If the rates were reduced the Government would monopolise the whole of the traffic on their railway. Another matter worthy of notice was the difficulty that existed in the way of obtaining redress for breakages or losses incurred on the lines, there being a general feeling that it was no use going to law with the Government in order to recover damages. He knew instances where great damage had been done in consequence of carelessness of railway employes, and when application had been made for compensation they were told that it could not be done unless they had paid a certain rate—and a very high rate—for insurance. But the Government were carriers, and as such were bound to deliver goods entrusted to them safe and sound. Still the general belief was that to go to law with the Government to recover compensation only meant throwing good money after bad. That such an idea existed was a disgrace to the country, and that it existed was certain. In cases of that sort, the Government ought not to place undue obstacles in the way when they knew their servants had done injury by their gross carelessness, and ought to pay the amount of damages to which those whose goods were so damaged were fairly entitled.

Mr. GRIMES said the principal objection of hon. members opposite to the tariff seemed to be the high freight on wool. It did seem high, but wool-growers received corresponding benefits. As the hon. member (Mr. Miles) had pointed out, under the old system of bullock-drays, stores one way and wool the other were often six months on the road and subject to all the variations of the weather. Another set-off against the high tariff was that under the old system it constantly happened that twelve months elapsed between the time the wool was clipped and the time it arrived in England. Now the whole operation did not occupy more than four months, and the saving of interest on the wool clip for eight months was something considerable.

Mr. WELD-BLUNDELL said he had not, so far, made any actual complaint against the charge for wool. All he had protested against was that 7d. per ton per mile should be the price below which goods could not be carried and be made to pay. He believed they should be able to carry at at least a third of that rate.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said it should be borne in mind that the Commissioner for Railways saw so many changes in the official head of his department that he found it difficult to please everybody; but he believed that his principal object in his regulations was to make the railways pay. Speaking as a private member, he confessed that there were anomalies which ought to be removed. One of those was that there was no diminution in the rate for long journeys, and that the same charge was made for goods which gave no trouble beyond loading and unloading as for others which required the greatest care during transit. Such a system was very unfair. If a certain rate were charged for the carriage of goods to Toowoomba or Roma, it was certainly unfair to charge at the same rate for the carriage of the same goods 500 or 600 miles further. That state of things the railway authorities here did not appear to have awakened to at present. There were a great many demands made on the Commissioner, but he had to think of the revenue and to try and make the railways pay, which was a very difficult matter considering the great expense incurred in making the railway from Brisbane to Ipswich and from there to Toowoomba. That the railways would pay if constructed at the present cost of making them there was no doubt. From some lack of com-

mercial knowledge, perhaps, on the part of the Commissioner, although a great many suggestions had been made to him on the subject of freights, very little attention had been paid to them. He did not blame the Commissioner for Railways as his position was a very difficult one, and he might not have been acquainted with the working of railways at home, and perhaps had had to get all his experience in the colony. There was no doubt that the matter of freights was one which required to be readjusted, and that the freights on some classes of goods were too high there was no doubt—he had told his colleagues that, and would repeat it now. He happened to know that a bullock-team or horse-team could compete successfully with the railway in many instances, which was a state of things that should not exist, as after the country had gone to the expense of constructing a railway that railway should be able successfully to compete with any other means of communication that might be started against it. Classification of goods was another matter requiring readjustment. He was quite sure that his colleagues found the present state of things in existence when they took office, but that it was wrong he had no more doubt than he had that the seasons would come round. There should be no distinctions whatever, but a general rate for all goods, which should be taken by weight only. He would point out to the hon. members that the railways formed part of the State system, and, therefore, it was unfair for them to attack the Commissioner, who was not in the House, as the hon. member for Mitchell had done, as he (Mr. Perkins) was quite certain the Commissioner had only one object in view—namely, to consult the wishes of the Ministers and to raise revenue from the railways. He failed to see the utility of occupying so much time about a paltry £6,000 odd, a sum he had often settled by a mere stroke of his pen; and he trusted hon. members, if they wished to bring the session to a close, would pass the vote and get on with business.

Mr. STEVENS said that no one could deny that the tariff on the Southern and Western Railway was bad—that had been pointed out by several hon. members that evening. His own experience was that storekeepers only got those goods by rail for which they had an immediate demand—at least half of the goods they required they got up by teams; so that in reality the present tariff was a dead loss to the country. He did not know who was to blame for such a state of things—whether the Minister for Works or the Commissioner for Railways, but from the calm manner in which the Minister sat and listened to the debate he presumed it must be the Commissioner.

Mr. GROOM said that, strange to say, it was only yesterday that he was reading an account of a deputation having waited upon the Premier of New South Wales, at Orange, on this very question of freights, having previously failed to get any satisfaction from Mr. Lackey, the Minister for Railways, and he had in his hand the answer given to the deputation. It was, after all, a pure question of revenue as long as the railways remained in the possession of the Government, and he took it to be this—that, supposing the charges were to be reduced in the way suggested, there would be a large deficiency in the railway revenue which would have to be provided for by a tax on the general community, so the thing would be as broad as it was long. If the freights were reduced so that the revenue would be decreased, then the Government would have to provide revenue from another direction, and it would still come out of the pockets of the general public. That there were anomalies, he

was prepared to admit; drays were competing with the railways. He would give a case in point: Messrs. Stevens and Co., of Toowoomba, were able to send an empty dray to Ipswich and bring back caustic soda at such a rate as satisfied the carriers, and at the same time saved them three or four pounds a-ton. The Minister for Works promised some time ago that there was to be an alteration in the tariff, but these gentlemen were now having this particular article and another article connected with the manufacture of soap carried by drays—it paid them better. He was one of those who believed that as they had railways it was just as well to make the best possible use of them, and if the charges were reduced, not only as far as passage traffic was concerned but also as regarded freight, it would induce traffic. That was not only necessary, but it was important that the management of the railway should be properly conducted. A case had just come under his own observation: A train left Toowoomba at twenty minutes to 2 o'clock with one solitary passenger-car which was pretty well crowded at Toowoomba. The train took in passengers at Highfields, Murphy's Creek, Helidon, Gatton, Laidley, Grandchester, Rosewood, and Walloon, and when they got to Ipswich there was not standing room for the second-class passengers, among whom there were ladies and children. Why there was not an extra car put on at Toowoomba for the accommodation of passengers from wayside stations along the line he did not know. Again, the most insignificant passenger-cars were placed on the line from Ipswich to the western interior, while the best carriages were run between Ipswich and Brisbane. As an illustration of this they saw the anomaly that while the train from Toowoomba to Ipswich was crowded with passengers, five or six carriages attached to an engine at Oxley contained one solitary female passenger. He did not say the Commissioner was to blame, but there was room for improvement. Take another case in illustration. They might have facilities for travelling, but they ought to be made known. He saw an announcement in the New South Wales newspapers of the excursion trains that would run there on the Prince of Wales' Birthday; but no one knew anything about what was to be done in this colony on that day. They should not only afford facilities for the travelling public, but should, with the means they possessed of cheap advertising, make those facilities known. The present practice might be economical; but if the necessary information were scattered broadcast so that the public might know it, particularly now the line was open to Roma—instead of there being a passenger and a-half per day, there would be a far greater number. The hon. member for Mitchell had made certain charges against the Commissioner for Railways, but he (Mr. Groom) thought the Commissioner was placed in a very invidious position, and considered the responsible head of the department was to blame—not the present Minister for Works, but the Hon. Mr. Thorn and other previous Ministers.

Mr. THORN: I did my work well.

Mr. GROOM was not going to say the hon. member did it badly, but it was the duty of the Minister to ask the Commissioner to place before him what he thought a reasonable scale of charges; and if he were a business man he would soon be able to decide whether they were fair or unfair. He believed—but spoke under correction—that at the present time £9 per ton was charged for taking reaping machines and other agricultural implements on the line to Warwick, 130 odd miles. He thought that rate if it were charged was too much, and might be reduced with advantage.

He did not blame the Commissioner for Railways, but thought the head of the department should consider the revenue, and, although he sat on the Opposition side of the House, he would make this concession—that if the Minister for Works were to reduce the railway charges so that there would be a large deficiency, the Opposition would be the first to find fault with the hon. member for doing so. So long as they had railways under their own control, and had to pay interest on construction and cost of maintenance, they were bound to raise a revenue in some way. Even if the charges were high, there were many counter-balancing advantages. He could remember when, instead of leaving Toowoomba at twenty minutes to 2 o'clock and taking his seat in the House in the evening, he had to live in Brisbane three months at a time. At one time they could not get goods to the Downs under £12 or £20 a-ton, and now look at the rates! It was well known that on some stations on the Darling Downs in the old times there was actually wool in the shed of one shearing when the next commenced, owing to the difficulties of transit. Everybody knew what it was to travel from Ipswich to the foot of the Main Range. It took people a week to get through the Rosewood Scrub, with eighteen or twenty bullocks dragging the dray through this slough of despond. But take an instance at the present time. Look at Jondaryan, and the advantages it possessed to-day. There was a railway to its very door. The wool was taken off the sheeps' back to-day, sorted to-morrow, dumped in the woolshed next day, and in forty-eight hours placed on the deck of the vessel in the river, and when the wool was on the ship the owners got their advances from the banks and thus saved interest. Those were advantages which should be taken into consideration. As the Premier of New South Wales said, the other day, it was a pure matter of revenue for the House to decide. If they wished the freight to be reduced, and there was a large deficiency in the revenue, it would be the duty of the Treasurer to provide revenue in some other way, and there would be a tax on the whole community. But it would be unfair to tax people deriving no benefit from the railway. However high the charges might be there were counter-balancing advantages; and, as he said before, he did not agree with the wholesale charges made against Mr. Herbert. If the responsible head of the department were satisfied that the tariff was excessive he had the power to make it conform to the public benefit. He sincerely hoped that the Minister for Works would make better provision for the accommodation of the travelling public, who were put to great inconveniences—more particularly those who travelled second-class.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was bound to defend himself in regard to the charges which he had brought against Mr. Herbert. Those charges he should maintain. Charges might be brought against Ministers, but they were not like Mr. Herbert, as he went on for ever whilst they changed. The railway tariff never changed; therefore he attributed it to Mr. Herbert. The hon. member, Mr. Groom, in talking about the benefit which the country had derived from the construction of railways, had said that the railways had enabled him to come to the House oftener than he otherwise could do. If that were the only result it might be a question whether it would not have been better had the railway never been constructed. Whoever was responsible for the sheet held in his hand had no right to be an officer of the Crown. It was a disgrace to a government, or to any colony, that such a

system of charges should exist. He would repeat that he held Mr. Herbert primarily responsible for it, as he had been Commissioner for many governments who had gone whilst he had remained, and would probably remain. There was no doubt that once a man got firmly set in the Government service in this and in other colonies, and got firm friends to stick by him, he would stick there like a cancer, although he might eat out the heart of the State. There was no help for that, apparently. They could get no change either from gentlemen on the Government side or from gentlemen on the other side of the House. The management of the railway system which he fathered on Mr. Herbert was worse than it was in any other colony of the southern hemisphere. Those were strong words, but words which he thought could be borne out by facts. He only wished that some Ministry would get into power who would have the pluck to cut out such cancers and rid the State of them, no matter at what cost. It would be a good thing to pay many thousands of pounds to let Mr. Herbert go away. He was an incubus; they did not want him; they would get on a great deal better without him. He spoke of Mr. Herbert purely as an officer of the State and not as an individual, and he would leave it to any honest Minister, who would state what he honestly knew and believed about Mr. Herbert and his management of the railway system, to state whether he was not doing great harm to the State. That that was so he believed was proved by the document which he had shown to the House. Any man of common-sense who perused that document must come to that conclusion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said it would be impossible to frame any railway tariff which would not be found fault with by someone. Speaking of Mr. Herbert as a Government officer, his firm conviction was that there was not a single officer in the Government service who had the interest of his department more at heart than Mr. Herbert had. He said that after an experience of eighteen months with Mr. Herbert in his official capacity. No doubt the management of the Railway Department was open to improvement; but was it any wonder that it could not be and was not improved, seeing that the system was to a certain extent under the pressure of members of the House, and that political influence inside and outside was brought to bear on the Ministry, on the Civil service, and on officials of the railways? He knew that was done.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Give names.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is no use discussing it; every member knows it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I do not know it; my hands are clean.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said a great deal had been said about the high charges. They must remain high so long as the traffic was limited. If they had a large traffic they could reduce the rates; but the charges must be in proportion to the amount of traffic and the amount of revenue which must be derived from the railways. It was all very well for hon. members to say that goods were carried at 1d. per ton in this country and that; but it must be borne in mind that in countries where the carriage was only 1d. per ton per mile they carried 100, and in some instances 1,000, tons for each ton carried on Queensland railways, and that made all the difference in the world. He maintained with the hon. member for Darling Downs that the charges were not excessive.

Mr. MOREHEAD : They are not equal or fair.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the charges were as fair as the department could make them, although individuals might not think so. Hon. members who represented agricultural constituencies thought that the rates for agricultural produce were too high, and that the wool rates were too low ; whilst the wool-growers held the reverse opinion. The rates were in proportion to the value of the goods carried. They could not charge a high rate on an article of small value unless they wished to stop traffic altogether.

Mr. MOREHEAD : What about flour ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said if they had an uniform charge the charge for flour would perhaps be £2 per ton more, and so with other necessities of life. One hon. member had said that one half of the traffic was carried by dray. He had caused inquiries to be made, and he could find out no such result. There was a certain amount of traffic by dray which would continue. The carriers had not made the roads over which they travelled, and they had only a small sum of money invested in their teams compared to the costly appliances of the Railway Department ; besides, it was well known that at certain seasons of the year farmers were only too glad to work their teams at low rates. In many parts of the country the carriers were working at starvation rates. The railways could not compete with such men. As regarded stock he would say that as long as they had plenty of grass and water in the country, and the country was unfenced, stock would be travelled instead of being sent to market by rail. They could not make the rates for stock so low as to induce owners to send them by rail when there was plenty of grass and water in the country. He was making as many alterations as he could with a view to increase the traffic, and he hoped that he should be successful. He had gone into the question mentioned by the hon. member for Clermont as to the rate of carriage between Broadsound and Clermont. The department would lose a deal of revenue if they reduced the rates on the Central line to such an extent as to drive the carriers off the Broadsound road. The 500 or 600 tons which they would get additional would not make up for the loss on the 4,000 tons at the reduced rate. Every question which hon. members had raised had been considered by Mr. Herbert and himself, and he presumed by Mr. Herbert and former Ministers. He believed that Mr. Herbert was honestly and faithfully doing his duty to the State according to the best of his ability. He hoped that he should be allowed to pass the estimates. He had refrained from talking, as it was his duty to pass the estimates and not to keep up the debate. For all that had been charged against the management of the department he was responsible, and not the Commissioner for Railways, and he was willing to take all the responsibility.

Mr. GRIFFITH said he had been waiting for the Minister for Works to speak, because he was satisfied that the hon. gentleman would not allow the debate to close without defending the Commissioner for Railways, and stating that whatever blame there was in connection with the management of the department rested on his shoulders and not on those of the Commissioner. He had not had long experience in the Works Department, but he had had some, and before he went there he had heard Mr. Herbert abused in the House as being an incubus in the service. He was therefore not prejudiced in Mr. Herbert's favour, but he found him as good an

officer as he had ever met with in the Government service, and quite the opposite from what he had been represented. Instead of insisting upon having his own way and sticking to old routine, he found him perfectly willing to place all his information at the service of the Minister, and to carry out any changes that might be required. He considered the attack that had been made upon Mr. Herbert quite unfair. He had heard complaints made about the railway tariff before, but he believed there were weighty reasons for every item. That was, however, a subject upon which he need not now express an opinion. He would, however, say one word with regard to railway tariffs generally. He believed the system recently introduced in South Australia, of diminishing the rates for long journeys, was a very sound one, because no doubt the expense did not increase in proportion to the length of the journey. It was all very well to calculate at so much per train mile in making comparison between one year and another, between one line and another ; but it was not a fact that it cost three times as much to truck goods 300 miles as it cost to truck them 100 miles, including loading, unloading, getting up steam, &c. The expense did not increase in proportion to the length of the line. He agreed with the Minister for Works that the Government was obliged to get as much revenue as possible consistent with securing all the traffic. He maintained that having these roads they should insist upon making them a monopoly as far as possible ; though, of course, they could not expect to carry stock where there were good country roads with plenty of grass and water.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thanked God that he never had been a Minister of the Crown, and please God he never would be. He hoped he should not, because he found that both Ministers and ex-Ministers got up and defended every Civil servant who had been under their control. He spoke as one of the outside public who had had considerable dealings with the Railway Department, and he said that Mr. Herbert was an inefficient officer, and one who did a great deal of harm to his department. He used the words advisedly and markedly, and wished them to be recorded. He maintained that Mr. Herbert was not the man to work the Railway Department of the colony. He (Mr. Morehead) was an outsider, having no interest whatever in the matter, except as regarded the carriage of goods ; but his words were entitled to just as much consideration as the words of Ministers to whom Mr. Herbert had been a subordinate. No doubt he had been a very affable subordinate, and appeared everything that was fair and square to those who had presided over him in an official capacity. The hon. member (Mr. Griffith), the present Minister for Works, and the hon. member for Darling Downs had had nothing to do with Mr. Herbert except as a subordinate ; but he (Mr. Morehead), speaking as one of the outside public, maintained that if Brisbane were polled to-morrow as to the propriety of Mr. Herbert remaining in his present position he would be put out : and he did not only rule Brisbane but the whole of the railways of the colony. Mr. Herbert was not the right man, and he could prove it in a dozen ways. He was the incarnation of red-tape and nothing beyond it. When disembowelled, as was said at a dinner at Roma, there was nothing of him but red-tape, in which he was swathed. If a man had to enter into a correspondence with him for the recovery of money he might as well give up all hope of it at once, for the Commissioner would slink from hole to hole and get away in every direction until at last he sheltered

himself under some regulation invented for the purpose. He (Mr. Morehead) was not speaking these words without due consideration. He came to the House to-night with the intention, as far as he could, of exposing that man—of showing to the Committee, and he hoped to the country, that the colony was saddled with a man who existed from bygone times—almost from the time when the colony was governed by Sir George Bowen and those who hung on to him. That time had past, and Mr. Herbert was not a man for these days. The Minister for Works got up and defended him, but none knew better than the hon. gentleman that he was an inefficient officer. No man knew that better than the hon. member for North Brisbane, but he also left it to others to say so.

Mr. MILES: I don't know it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he counted the hon. member for nothing. Those hon. gentlemen he had referred to left the opprobrium upon his (Mr. Morehead's) shoulders of pointing out the blot, and he would point it out without caring what came of it. Mr. Herbert was the man who was preventing the proper management of the railways in this colony, and Ministers and ex-Ministers sheltered him under their wings, or their petticoats, or whatever they might call them. He had crippled the railway service of the colony. Had he been able to acquire any information, he might have learned that by judiciously lowering the rates he would be able to diminish the competition existing between teams and railways; but he had apparently no mind at all, and apparently he had every successive Minister under his thumb. He had got one of the most dangerous men to him in the way of ability—Mr. Lowe—a man more capable than himself, out of his path; and now he remained master of the situation, and dictated to the Minister for Railways what should be the rates of wool. He (Mr. Morehead) was really ashamed that Ministers and ex-Ministers should get up and defend such a man: he was a relic of by-gone days, and the country wanted none of him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said with regard to the rate for greasy and washed wool, he must inform the hon. member that he had consulted squatters who were squatters, he believed, before the hon. member was born, and they had advised him to make no such alteration.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that the statement he had made to the Committee was word for word as he received it from the Minister for Works himself.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is quite true, but I got advice elsewhere.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said if the hon. member came into the House with the intention of abusing the Commissioner for Railways the hon. member had succeeded to a hair in carrying his intention out. The hon. member had taken advantage of the privilege of the House to accuse an officer in the service. Hon. members were not supposed to know the officer in question; he was not responsible, and his name ought not to have been mentioned. As to Mr. Statham Lowe, he would not take advantage of his position to give his opinion of that gentleman, although on a former occasion, when the necessity arose, he did so without the slightest hesitation. To one remark of the Minister for Works he could not agree, and that was that the rates must be high because traffic was so limited. Under such circumstances the way to increase traffic was to lower the rates, not to raise them. When Sunday trains were first started they were run at excursion prices, with

but little success; but when at his suggestion the fares were reduced one-half the traffic increased largely. With regard to long journeys, the bullock-drays always reduced the rates the further they went, and the same should be done with the railways.

Mr. MILES said that no change could be made in the time-table, nor any alteration in tariff, until it had been submitted to the Cabinet and approved. It was absurd to charge the Commissioner for Railways with having done this, that, and the other.

Mr. REA said that even in Victoria, with all their experience, the same difficulty had been found in arriving at a tariff which would please everybody. He had within the last few weeks heard in the Victorian Assembly complaints similar to the complaints made here to-night, each man wishing his commodity to be favoured. If those hon. members who made such grave charges against the Commissioner were to draw up a tariff of their own, it would show even worse absurdities than those already pointed out.

Mr. KELLETT said the Minister for Works might take upon himself the responsibility for certain things, but the Commissioner should be the man to point out to a new Minister the anomalies which the Minister previously in office would not allow him to change. According to the admission of the Minister, the colony had reaped a great benefit from getting rid of Mr. Statham Lowe, and he believed that still more good would ensue if another highly-placed officer, the present Commissioner for Railways, was got rid of. If, as stated, Mr. Herbert was a most efficient officer, the rest of the service must be very bad indeed. Every Ministry that had been in power for years knew that the same complaints had been made, and they had been afraid to take the work of altering the tariff, which they knew to be a bad one, into their hands. He would make a suggestion. Some time since a Civil servant whom it was desirable to get rid of was told to take six months' leave of absence, and the plan succeeded, for the man had not been heard of since. Let the Commissioner for Railways be invited to take six months' leave of absence, too. He (Mr. Kellett) believed it would be the saving of thousands to the colony if some other commissioner was tried for a little while, and he was certain that people who carried goods along the railway would be so grateful to any Minister who got rid of the present Commissioner that they would erect a monument to him for having done so. He had himself asked the Minister for Works to point out one improvement which had ever been made by the Commissioner, and he could not do so.

Question put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again on the following day.

LEAVE TO ATTEND A COMMITTEE.

In reply to a message from the Legislative Council, leave was given to the Hon. J. M. Macrossan to attend and give evidence before the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the Brisbane and Sandgate Railway.

In answer to Mr. GRIFFITH, The PREMIER stated that the first business to be taken to-morrow would be the Branch Railways, which would be considered *seriatim*. Supply would follow, and then the Burrum Railway and the United Municipalities Bills.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 11 o'clock.