

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

TUESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 1880

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*Tuesday, 16 November, 1880.*

Brisbane Racecourse Bill—first reading.—Suspension of Standing Orders.—Railway Companies Preliminary Bill—third reading.—Gulland Railway Bill—second reading.—Maryborough and Burruon Railway.—Oxley and South Brisbane Railway.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN took the chair at 4 o'clock.

**BRISBANE RACECOURSE BILL—
FIRST READING.**

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding this Bill for the concurrence of the Council.

On the motion of the HON. C. S. MEIN, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended during the remainder of the current Session as will admit of Bills passing through all their stages in one day—

said that he might state that it was not his intention to hurry measures unnecessarily through the House. The motion was one which was always proposed and passed towards the close of a session. At present he was not aware that he should require to ask the House to pass any measure, except the Appropriation Bill, in accordance with the powers contained in the motion. It was possible that the Brisbane Racecourse Bill which the Hon. Mr. Mein had in charge might have to be accelerated, but with that exception, and the Appropriation Bill, he did not know that the motion would apply to any other measure likely to come before the House.

Question put and passed.

**RAILWAY COMPANIES PRELIMINARY
BILL—THIRD READING.**

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, this Bill was read a third time and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly with the usual message.

**GULLAND RAILWAY BILL—SECOND
READING.**

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the measure was to authorise Mr. James Gulland to construct a branch line, connected with the Southern and Western Railway. The branch line was intended to provide for the coal traffic which would be furnished by the mines Mr. Gulland was working. It would be found, on examining the Bill, that the terms upon which Mr. Gulland would be allowed to construct the line were equitable. The second clause provided that the line was to be constructed in accordance with plans and books of reference to be approved by Parliament. Those plans were already before the House. The lands required for the line were to be resumed by the Commissioner in the same manner as the House had already approved in connection with the Railway Companies Preliminary Bill. The Commissioner made use of the machinery provided by the Railway Act, and the compensation and expenses were to be paid by James Gulland. If he failed to pay the compensation awarded he would be liable to a penalty of £200. Then, by the 4th clause, James Gulland was authorised, subject to the provisions of the laws in force for the time being relating to the construction, maintenance, and management of railways, to exercise the same powers and privileges as were under those laws exercised by the Commissioner; but he was required to make gates, bridges, arches, culverts, and passages for the convenience and accommodation of the owners and occupiers of lands adjoining the branch line. He was also to provide a good and sufficient fence separating the branch line from the adjoining lands, with all necessary gates and stiles, and to construct all necessary arches, tunnels, culverts, or other passages, over, under, and alongside of the branch line, of such dimensions as to convey the water as clearly as before the construction of the line from the lands lying along or affected by the line. If any difference arose as to the dimensions or sufficiency of such works, or the maintenance thereof, the same should be determined by the Commissioner. The 6th clause provided that the railway should at all times, when not in actual use by James Gulland, be open to the public for the passage of locomotives, waggons, and other vehicles, upon payment of such tolls and dues as James Gulland might prescribe from time to time. These tolls were liable to be reduced at the discretion of the Governor in Council. In the discussion of the Bill in the other House it was considered that this clause was scarcely sufficient for the protection of the other coal-owners, and that it was necessary to give some specific power which would enable them to claim the use of the line on equitable terms. If, in the consideration of the Bill in committee, hon. members thought there should be any further stipulation than was now contained in it, he should be very willing to consider it, and to consent to its insertion if he could approve of it. Another provision was that James Gulland should carry mails, and the persons in charge, with all reasonable despatch. The 9th clause said that James Gulland, and the Commissioner, and any person for the time being authorised to use the branch line, might use and employ thereon locomotive engines propelled by steam or other motive power, and carriages and waggons to be drawn and propelled thereby; and by the next clause Mr. Gulland might require the Commissioner to carry his coal and waggons over any portion of the Southern and Western Railway, subject to such terms and regulations as the Governor in Council might prescribe. He

thought the House would feel disposed to encourage private enterprise in this direction, and it might reasonably be hoped that if Mr. Gulland's experiment was a success the traffic on our main lines would be considerably increased by the feeders, which he trusted would be established without expense to the State. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

The HON. C. S. D. MELBOURNE said he rose, not for the purpose of opposing the progress of the Bill, but to draw the Postmaster-General's attention to the fact that in moving its second reading he referred to the measure clause by clause, with the intention of explaining it. When, however, he (Mr. Melbourne) attempted to comment upon a Bill in the same way, he was told that it was a matter to be dealt with in committee.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said that, with the permission of the House, he would like to say that when he took exception to the Hon. Mr. Melbourne's speech on the Railway Companies Preliminary Bill he did not wish to convey to him that it was contrary to rule to refer to any number of clauses in a Bill on the second reading. What he wished to convey was that it was not usual to discuss them in such detail as the hon. member attempted. His (Mr. Buzacott's) explanation of the Bill now before the House took five minutes; had it taken an hour and a-half there might be some reason to object.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he was not going to oppose the measure, although he did feel that when giving their sanction to a private railway they should only do so after the fullest and fairest inquiry, and after the public had received every information of the proceedings before Parliament, and had every opportunity of being heard. In no way should these matters be so conducted that persons interested would be deprived of having their say in a constitutional manner. He had no doubt that this would be a useful line to the gentleman intimately connected with it, and probably it would do no harm to the public. Still, he did not think that Parliament had taken all the precautions in order to protect the public against the possible evil effects which might arise from the making of the line. He did not know that those effects existed, but at any rate the precaution had not been observed by Parliament which should be in the passage of a private railway. He would like to call hon. members' attention to what was said on the subject by May in a treatise which he had published, and which was referred to by no less an authority than Cushing, in the following words:—

"Whenever it is cited in the following treatise, without an indication of the edition, the second is always referred to. His smaller work, on the rules and orders of the House of Commons, is one of the best summaries that I have ever seen."

In consequence of reading those remarks he (Mr. Walsh took the trouble to send home for this smaller work, and it was from that work that he was about to quote. This was what May said with respect to private Bills, and, although it was too late to operate with such measures this session, he still hoped that it might be taken advantage of in future sessions.

"Private Bills.—In deliberating upon private Bills Parliament may be considered as acting judicially. The conflicting interests of private parties, the rights of individuals, and the protection of the public have to be reconciled. Care must be taken in furthering an apparently useful object that injustice be not done to individuals, although the public may derive advantage from it. Vigilance and caution should be exercised lest parties professing to have the public interests in view should be establishing, under the protection of a statute,

an injurious monopoly. The rights of land-owners among themselves, and of the poor, must be scrutinised in passing an inclosure Bill. Every description of interest is affected by the making of a railway. Lands, houses, parks, and pleasure-grounds are sacrificed to the superior claim of public utility over private rights. The repugnance of some proprietors to permit the line to approach their estates—the eagerness of others to share in the bounty of the company and to receive treble the value of their land—embarrass the decision of Parliament as to the real merits of the undertaking, which would be sufficiently difficult without such contentions. If a company receive authority to disturb the rights of persons not interested in their works, it is indispensable that ample security be taken that they are able to complete them so as to attain that public utility which alone justified the powers being entrusted to them."

Had Parliament done that in this instance? Had they taken such care that they had obtained ample security that the constructor of this private railway would be able to complete it so as to attain the public utility as well as his private interests. May went on to say—

"The imprudence of speculators is to be restrained, and unprofitable adventures discouraged or directed into channels of usefulness and profit. In short, Parliament must be the umpire between all parties and endeavour to reconcile all interests."

Well, here was a private undertaking. It was within the bounds of possibility, it was probable that no one would be injured by it and that the public would be benefited, but had hon. members done their duty? That useful Standing Order which was introduced by the Hon. Mr. Gregory would have been of avail to protect public and private interests, but it was suspended last week. Hon. members had no evidence before them to justify them in passing the Bill. He freely confessed that he was not aware that any private interests would suffer, but they were rushing into the thing without that amount of information which should have been obtained, and hence he doubted that even in this comparatively trivial matter they were doing their duty.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said he fully agreed with the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Walsh. If any hon. member present could bring forward any substantial ground why that railway should not be proceeded with, he would be one of those to support the rejection of the Bill, because they had not sufficient information before them. But seeing that the line had been advertised properly in the *Gazette* according to Act of Parliament, and that several members had made careful inquiry to see whether there was any objection to the measure, he thought they would be justified, on the present occasion, in allowing the Bill to pass; at the same time he thought they were not adopting a course which it would be wise and prudent to adopt in general cases, and they would to a certain extent be stultifying themselves by departing from the rule. As, however, no substantial ground had been shown for rejecting the measure, he would be sorry to stop the construction of a line which, as far as he could see, would benefit the community.

Question put and passed.

MARYBOROUGH AND BURRUM RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the Plans, Sections, and Book of Reference of the Railway from Maryborough to Burrum, as received by Message from the Legislative Assembly on 4th November.
2. That such approval be notified to the Legislative Assembly by Message in the usual form.

Hon. members would have observed that there had been a Bill before the House of Assembly authorising Mr. Hurley and a company to construct this railway. It was intended, if Parliament had approved of that measure,

to hand over the plans and sections then before the House to the company with which Mr. Hurley was connected, in order that they might carry out the railway in accordance with them; but discussions had taken place in the other House in which it was said to be undesirable to agree to the proposal of Mr. Hurley's company. The alternative, therefore, was forced upon the Government of asking the House to adopt the plans and sections in order that the Government might itself carry out the line in accordance with the provision made in the Loan Estimates of last year. When the Loan Bill was under discussion last year the question of the construction of the Burrum line was raised, and he believed both Houses were informed that the line was placed upon the Estimates because the Government were not satisfied that Mr. Hurley would be prepared to undertake the construction of the line upon satisfactory terms. It was also stated that, should Mr. Hurley ultimately propose satisfactory terms upon which the line could be constructed, the amount appropriated upon the Estimates would not be required. The plans before the House provided for the construction of a railway across the Burrum River to the coal-mines. The line was connected with the Maryborough and Gympie line at a point three or four miles from Maryborough. He believed the plans and sections were not quite complete, but in the form in which they were before the House they were sufficient to comply with the requirements generally exacted. There was great anxiety at Maryborough that the line should be commenced: it had been talked about a long time, and the coal-mining interest appeared to be dependent upon the construction of the line. The Burrum was not easily navigable except for very small crafts, and it was believed that if a railway were constructed it would have a very great effect in encouraging and stimulating the opening up of the mines in the Burrum coal district. It was acknowledged at all hands that the Burrum coal was equal to any in Queensland—in fact, superior to any coal which had been procured in exportable quantities. If these mines were developed there would result not only great advantage to the Maryborough district in the fact that coal was provided for the various manufactories which were being profitably carried on there, but there would also result an advantage to the colony in the establishment of an export trade in coal. He had been informed that the Hon. Mr. Walsh was not exactly satisfied that the motion should be proceeded with that day. If the hon. member thought that the matter should be postponed for further consideration, he was willing to move that the Order of the Day should be postponed until to-morrow.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he had not intended to say a word upon the subject, but the Postmaster-General had introduced his name prominently, and he would therefore say a few words. He thought that there was no railway in the colony which offered such inducements for construction as this particular line. He did not know any line which could possibly make such a return for the outlay as this line was likely to do, and it was because he held that conviction that he had deprecated the Government playing, as they had unquestionably done, with Mr. Hurley, in order to prevent themselves from carrying out a work which was incumbent upon them from the moment a loan vote was provided for it. The Government knew his feelings on the subject; they knew that for years he had advocated that line as far as he possibly could. Owing, however, to his being pecuniarily interested in it, he could not take any very active part in agitating

for the commencement of the work. But for that pecuniary interest, however, he did not hesitate to say that he would have been able to accomplish the construction of the line before that time. The people of Maryborough had been trifled with by schemers and others, and the Government had taken advantage of this position to procure delay. He was deeply interested in the line, but for the reason he had already given he would not vote for it. He must, however, take exception to a remark of the Postmaster-General, who appeared to be about as ignorant as his colleagues on the subject, that the Burrum River was not navigable. He knew that it was a navigable river, and to his own cost. He had chartered large vessels and had shipped coal, but owing to the peculiar dilemma in which he was placed from his political position, with his reputed partners, he was unable to carry on the business which he had initiated. He maintained, however, that the river was a good navigable stream, and that, if it had received anything like the attention which had been received by the Albert and the Logan, it would have been, if not a first-rate stream, a stream upon which vessels of the capacity of 150 tons could easily have gone up and down. The schooners he had chartered himself, he believed, were 120 tons. If the Government carried out the railway to the extremity now indicated, taking it uselessly across the Burrum River, it would, of course, prevent the navigation of the stream beyond that point. He had no hesitation in saying that if that plan were persisted in it would be to the serious detriment of many coal proprietors in the neighbourhood. He had no doubt that it was part of the scheme of the projectors of the railway to block up the river, in order to compel all coal to be carried upon the railway. This was a matter to which he believed the Government were not very seriously committed. He believed that so far as that was concerned they would see the error of their ways. He did not apprehend that they would persist, from any motive, in carrying out the line so as to seriously impede the navigation of the river. There were one or two sharp bends that required a great deal of care in navigation. These would not affect steamers, but would materially affect long schooners. It was not through want of water that the river was not as navigable as it might be: it was because it had not been attended to. Maryborough had been played fast and loose with in years past, not only by this Government but by former Governments, and it was high time the place was rescued from the humbug and treachery of some of its representatives.

The HON. W. D. BOX said the conflict of opinion which appeared to exist in the minds of two hon. gentlemen with regard to the navigation of the Burrum should convince the House of the wisdom of the Standing Order which they had adopted with reference to railways. The first railway which had come before them since the suspension of the Standing Order afforded the greatest proof of the desirableness of retaining the Standing Order, and he hoped that the House would not repeat the course which had been taken that session. There was not such a crying necessity for this or the other lines before them as to warrant the suspension of the Standing Order.

The HON. F. J. IVORY said the railway had been so long before the public, and had been looked at from so many points of view, that had it been referred to a select committee he doubted whether any further information than that which they already possessed would have been elicited. He thoroughly agreed with the Hon. Mr. Walsh that this line ought to have been constructed long ago. He believed that if any railway would pay the cost of construction that line

would pay it. The country traversed by the line was nearly all level, and the cost involved in construction would be comparatively small. He believed the Burrum River was only navigable for very small crafts. If the river were to be made navigable for larger vessels, it would require the expenditure of quite as large a sum as, if not a larger sum than, would be required for the construction of the railway. He had always anxiously looked forward to the construction of that line, which would not only do an immense deal of good to the district through which it would be made, but would do good to the whole of the colony. Burrum coal had been shown to be of an admirable quality for export purposes. He had great pleasure in supporting the motion before the House.

The HON. W. PETTIGREW said that railway had been talked about quite long enough. Nearly all that could be said in its favour had already been said. With regard to the country which would be traversed, he thought "desert" was the best word to apply to it. The navigation of the Burrum was a matter of some difficulty owing to the sharp points and the shifting of the banks by the currents. As far as the railway was concerned, however, he believed that if any railway would pay that could not fail to do so.

Question put and passed.

OXLEY AND SOUTH BRISBANE RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the Plans, Sections, and Book of Reference of the Railway from Oxley to South Brisbane, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on 4th November.

2. That such approval be notified to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

Although the consideration of that line was not referred to a select committee in the exact terms of the Standing Order, a certain investigation had been made. He regretted that the time at the disposal of the committee did not permit of a more thorough and searching investigation, because he was satisfied that the more inquiry was made the more palpable would it become that Parliament ought to authorise the construction of the line without delay. The report of the select committee had been laid before the House. He regretted to say that it did not set forth as it ought to do the advantages of the line and the intentions of the Government with regard to it. He believed, however, that the want of information in the report and evidence as to this line could be supplied that afternoon by the House examining the Engineer-in-Chief at the bar. It appeared that when Mr. Stanley was examined by the committee he had not given that attention to the question of carrying a line from the Woollongabba Reserve to navigable water which was desirable. He believed Mr. Stanley was now prepared to place the House in possession of very important information with regard to that line. He was in attendance, and he would presently ask the House to call him to the bar and examine him. While on this point he would read some remarks made by the Minister for Works when this line was before the Legislative Assembly, and which he had not seen when the report was presented. The Minister for Works said—

"When the surveyor commenced the survey of the line some few months ago he started from Oxley, but he subsequently found that he could make a shorter and cheaper line by starting at a point between Oxley and Sherwood. The line was surveyed from that point to the Oxley Creek, which it crossed at some little distance below the Oxley Creek Bridge, and then struck the old line surveyed by Mr. Fitzgibbon many years ago at a point about 10 chains below the bridge, on the road from the Rocky Waterholes. The line was very favour-

able for construction until it got to the range on this side of Boggo, where the South Brisbane cemetery was situated. It traversed a very large quantity of agricultural land in the parish of Moggill, and ran at intervals for a considerable distance along the road. The Chief Engineer expected to be able to still further avail himself of the road; and he had used just outside Woollongabba 30 chains of the road more than the original survey showed. Hon. members, of course, were well aware that this line was chiefly intended to accommodate mineral traffic and to develop the coal mines of East and West Moreton. It had been found necessary by the Government, in the face of the extensive development which must necessarily result from the fact of a line of steamers of large carrying capacity making Moreton Bay their terminus, that facilities should be given to the coal-owners for the shipment of coal with the greatest care and at the cheapest rate. The line as originally surveyed was eight and a-quarter miles in length, but the distance had been reduced to five and a-half miles, and the line would be carried to the same point—namely, the Woollongabba Reserve, opposite the Woollongabba Hotel. The cost as estimated by the Chief Engineer was £26,000, or £3,000 per mile, including a couple of wayside stations. A terminal station was not included, because the line where the present survey ended was not intended to be the terminus of the line. The Chief Engineer found some difficulty in determining whether he should take the line to the bank opposite Government House and near the English Church, and erect wharves there for the shipment of coal; or whether he should take the line to a point below Kangaroo Point called Shafston. He therefore asked to be allowed to terminate the line until he should have satisfied himself by a survey of both lines. Since then he (Mr. Macrossan), from a personal survey, had come to the conclusion that a line as good as either could be brought further into South Brisbane where a better spot could be found for the shipment of coals, at a point opposite the Gardens, and for the accommodation of the South Brisbane traffic. The line at present terminated at Woollongabba. On the left-hand side of the river near Woollongabba was a large water reserve, and by constructing the line through that easy gradients could be obtained until the road was struck. The gradients would be very easy until the line reached the junction of Stanley street, Vulture street, and Dock street, where the line would be carried round on to a very large flat extending back from the river and sufficiently large for a coal terminus. A curve of not more than 1 in 4 chains with a good line would be sufficient here, as the train could not travel at more than 10 miles an hour, the line being on the main road. A passenger station, which would be a real convenience to the people of South Brisbane, could be created at this point. The line would then have been brought further into South Brisbane than the Southern and Western line was brought into Brisbane. There would be, he thought, no objection to the passing of these plans."

It would be observed from a perusal of the report that the committee were not in any way unanimous with respect to it. The report, as originally drafted, contained the following:—

"It appears to be undeniable that deep navigable water may be reached in a less distance by way of South Brisbane than by an extension of the line from the North Brisbane terminus, and this is an important consideration in dealing with mineral exports, which will not bear the cost of much land carriage."

The feeling of the majority of the committee was that it would be well not to insert that sentence in the report, and it was accordingly expunged; but there was no doubt but that it was perfectly true, and that the report would have been more complete and accurate had that passage been permitted to remain. It was undeniable that the nearest deep water would be opposite the House. If the line were taken on the north side to the Powder Magazine it would add ten miles to the land carriage, adding 3s. 4d. to every ton of coal. That was a very important consideration. It was universally acknowledged that the expense of water carriage was a mere fragment in comparison with the cost of carriage on land. There was another circumstance to be considered. As far as he had been able to ascertain, the whole of the coal-mining interest was in favour of the extension to the South Brisbane site. They knew perfectly well that the wharves at that point would be just

as advantageous to them as if they were constructed further down the river. He had not found a single dissident. They all seemed to agree that the best site for coal wharves was at South Brisbane. It was desirable that they should endeavour to concentrate their traffic. It would be a great mistake to endeavour to spread their wharf accommodation over the long distance some people had suggested. The city and port of Brisbane would be found more accessible, and business would be carried on with much greater facility, if the traffic were as far as possible kept within the neighbourhood of the city. While upon this subject he might refer to the statement that the Government had been only recently converted to the expediency of making this line. It was well known that the Premier, a long time since, believed and contended that the proper route by which to bring a railway from Ipswich was by way of South Brisbane. It would be remembered that twelve months ago, when a deputation waited on the Premier with respect to the carrying out of the South Brisbane railway, he expressed himself strongly in favour of it, and assured the deputation that he believed the South Brisbane line would be constructed before several others which had been provided for on the Estimates. In accordance with that opinion, measures had been taken to get the line surveyed. A very easy line had been laid out, extending over a distance of five and a-half miles, which would bring navigable water within a less distance of the coal country than any line which could be made on the north side. The entire expense to the Woollongabba Reserve was estimated by the Chief Engineer at £26,000 for construction, and the Commissioner stated that the valuation of the land required to be resumed was something over £5,000, making altogether about £30,000 for five and a-half miles of the line. Then to carry out on the Woollongabba Reserve to the Dry Dock—another half or three-quarters of a mile—was estimated to cost about £3,000 or £4,000 more, making the total cost of the line and the resumption of land something like £33,000 or £34,000. There was no doubt that at that cost Parliament was quite authorised in sanctioning the construction of the line. He hoped, therefore, that no serious opposition would be offered to the adoption of the plans now before the House. He might state that a complete plan for the extension of the line to navigable water had not been prepared, owing to the difficulty of arriving at a decision where navigable water should be touched; but that by next session those plans would be prepared in ample time for the carrying on of the work and bringing it to a speedy completion.

The HON. C. S. D. MELBOURNE said that in speaking to the question before the House he should like to have some more information than that which had been afforded by the Postmaster-General. He had some doubts as to the advisability of constructing this line, and, unless there was some more evidence of a different nature to what had been given before the select committee, he thought they should pause before assenting to the resolution this session. At present he was inclined to support the Government, if he could possibly do so, in passing the resolution, but he had some difficulty in agreeing to it without further information. He found that the mileage of this line was $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and it was to cost about £4,500 per mile for construction, while the cost of resumptions was calculated at about £6,000, and it was not certain that £6,000 would be the exact amount. If the Postmaster-General could give the Chamber any information as to where the line was intended to be carried to from Woollongabba he thought the progress of the resolution would be very much simplified,

because in referring to the evidence it would be found that, if it stopped at Woollongabba, it would be perfectly useless and that it must be taken to deep-water. It was also clear from the evidence that the line was intended almost exclusively for the coal traffic: it was not intended for passenger traffic. If they turned to the evidence of the Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Herbert—

“And it is presumed that more mineral traffic will come by the South Brisbane line when constructed? Yes; from the information that I have received from various persons. The coal-owners appear to be waiting until the Government have constructed a line to water frontage, in order to send their coal by railway. At present the cost of carting from the terminal station to the wharves is an item which they do not wish to incur, inasmuch as they can get the coal down by punts to the ship's side at a cheaper rate and more conveniently.”

“Is that coal traffic likely to be profitable, if it extends? I think it would be, if it develops to any very large extent.”

“It would, however, be absolutely necessary, in order to develop the mineral traffic, that this line should be extended to the wharf somewhere? It must be extended to deep-water frontage somewhere—to wharf frontage.”

Then when they came to question 192, it would be seen that their present railway was sufficient to carry double the amount of passenger traffic between Brisbane and Oxley; so that it was a question of coal traffic they had to refer to—

“Is not the present single line, between North Brisbane and Oxley, at times somewhat crowded?—I mean, is not the business sometimes so large as to cause some inconvenience? No; I have not found any at all. It is capable of working a much larger traffic.”

Now, it appeared from the evidence adduced by the Hon. Mr. Lambert, who asked a number of very pertinent questions, that the continuation of the Woollongabba line was undecided. At questions 10, 11, and 12, the Hon. Mr. Lambert asked—

“Will there be any difficulty in taking the line to the river bank? No difficulty at all, but the route is not yet determined on.”

“By Mr. J. Cowlishaw: How are you going to get from Woollongabba to deep-water? There are two routes proposed, one to River Terrace, and the other turning to the right to a point on the river bank below Shafston.”

“Neither of them goes to South Brisbane? No.”

In question 19, bearing on the evidence given by the Commissioner for Railways with reference to the estimated cost of the line, he thought there must be some discrepancy, because it was stated in question 21 that the cost per mile would be about £4,000; but taking the whole of the amount and calculating the line at about five miles, the cost would be over £5,000 per mile. Then again, at question 34 the Hon. Mr. Lambert asked—

“Which are the two routes which you state would be practicable for the extension of the line from Woollongabba to deep water? One to the river frontage below River Terrace, near Overend's quarry, and the other terminating at a point on the river bank below Shafston.”

“What would be a reasonable rate per mile at which the Government might accept tenders for the construction of the line, the Government supplying rails as they do in the case of Northern contracts? I will prepare an estimate. About £3,300 per mile.”

“How do you propose to get to the water's edge at River Terrace? The line would pass through the ridge by an open cutting, and sufficient space would have to be excavated from the face of the cliff to form sidings and so forth.”

“Do you think passengers would be likely to come from Oxley to be landed at the quarries on the other side of the river, and have to walk across the river to Brisbane? I could hardly give an opinion about that yet. The terminus of the line has yet to be decided upon.”

“You have mentioned two routes; is it likely that passenger traffic will be promoted by either? When I said there were two alternative proposals for termini, I had in view the chief traffic which this line is likely to accommodate—namely, the coal traffic. The question

of passenger traffic I did not consider at the moment. That may be accommodated by a tramway from Woollongabba to South Brisbane; but that is no part of the present scheme.

"Then, as laid down, the scheme ignores passenger traffic almost entirely? I should not say it ignores it. I think it will secure a pretty fair share of passenger traffic, if proper provision is made for it.

"By Mr. W. F. Lambert: When the line is completed according to the plan, can coal be shipped by it? Not according to the present plan, because it is incomplete."

And then, if hon. gentlemen would look at questions 51 and 61, it would be seen that there would be a further expense in the construction of streets, and also that the height of the siding at River Terrace above water would be a serious objection as to shipping coal. He should be glad for some further information as to where the terminus of the line was to be taken; as to what the expense would be to take it to deep water; and, as he had already said, if he had that information, as far as he individually was concerned, he should be glad to support the motion. He should be sorry to take any part in throwing out any railway of this description; but when he knew that the strongest argument in favour of it was that, if the line was taken to the proper place at deep water, a large trade would spring up to benefit the whole community—if the traffic was to be compelled to go down the Sandgate line and branch off at deep-water at a point known as the Powder Magazine—the difference in question in the extra haulage power would be so great that the traffic could not be carried on with advantage. Understanding that to be the case, he should be glad if the Postmaster-General could see his way clear to satisfy the House as to the advisability of constructing the line; and in that case he should support it.

The Hon. C. S. MEIN said that the speech of the Postmaster-General in moving this resolution was composed almost entirely of two apologies. The first was an apology for the character of the evidence which had been elicited on the inquiry into the advisability of constructing this line, before the committee of that House; the second apology was an excuse on behalf of the Government for their suddenly coming down to the House at that late period of the session and asking it to construct this line. It would be convenient, perhaps, to briefly refer to the second apology first. The only excuse the Postmaster-General appeared to offer for the present position taken up by the Government was, that some twelve months ago the Prime Minister mentioned to a deputation that he was always of opinion that the railway to Brisbane should have come down to the south side of the river, and that in all probability a line to South Brisbane would be constructed before certain other lines then on the Estimates would be carried into effect. He thought the question of the construction of the line to Brisbane from Ipswich had nothing to do with the matter before the House that day. It was a fact they could not get over that the line did not come down to South Brisbane—that it terminated in North Brisbane. They had to deal with matters as they found them, and he did not think that the mere fact that the railway had been improperly brought to Brisbane should induce them to go out of their way now to construct a line to South Brisbane, unless circumstances conclusively proved that the construction of that line would be beneficial to the country. The apology given with regard to the evidence given before the select committee did not meet the case in the slightest degree. If that evidence was imperfect, whose fault was it? Was it not the fault of the Postmaster-General? The committee was under his charge, and he could have adduced whatever evidence he

liked; and, in point of fact, it was a desire of the members of the committee, as well as the express desire of the House, that the fullest inquiry and investigation should be made in this matter, as well as with regard to all other lines. He took considerable interest in the investigation before the committee, and he could say without hesitation or fear of being contradicted that the utmost desire was manifested on part of the committee to the Postmaster-General that the fullest information should be obtained from all available sources. The only extra evidence the Postmaster-General had at his command at the present time was the report of the speech delivered by the Minister for Works in the Assembly, from which it appeared that that gentleman made a survey of his own entirely independent of the two surveys that were before the committee, and the Postmaster-General thought the survey made by the Minister for Works, gathered during a pedestrian tour over the country, was sufficient to settle the question. He (Mr. Mein) did not think that should be sufficient to induce the Committee in coming to a decision to disregard the very decided and clear evidence given by the Engineer-in-Chief and the Commissioner for Railways on the question. The Government had been exceedingly lavish during this session in the votes they had given with regard to the construction of railways, and he thought it was about time that they hesitated before they committed the country to further construction without having absolute proof that the lines were likely to be useful in the future. The only justification that had been urged for the sudden construction of this line to South Brisbane was that it was intended to meet the traffic which would spring up and result in the development of a hitherto well-known but undeveloped industry in the colony. The whole of the testimony bearing upon that point before the committee was that it was perfectly clear that the only object of any value that there could possibly be gained by the construction of this proposed line was the development of the coal traffic. All doubt on that point would be set at rest by referring to the evidence given before the select committee. If hon. gentlemen would turn to question 48 they would find that Mr. Stanley was asked—

"Do you think passenger traffic has been taken into consideration in connection with the line laid on the table, with the extension to deep-water, as stated? I think passenger traffic is a secondary consideration. I understand the line is intended chiefly for coal traffic."

Proceeding further, at questions 185, 186, 187, and 190, Mr. Herbert, Commissioner for Railways, was asked—

"The line generally first. Will it not relieve the traffic on the northern side, between Oxley and North Brisbane, if a line on the southern side of the river is carried to navigable water? As I understand, the branch to South Brisbane is intended as a mineral line chiefly. At present we have not a very large mineral traffic at the general station, North Brisbane. Most of the mineral traffic in coal has hitherto been sent by water. There is only a small portion that comes by the line, chiefly for household purposes.

"And is it presumed that more mineral traffic will come by the South Brisbane line when constructed? Yes; from the information that I have received from various persons. The coal-owners appear to be waiting until the Government have constructed a line to water frontage, in order to send their coal by railway. At present the cost of carting from the terminal station to the wharves is an item which they do not wish to incur, inasmuch as they can get the coal down by punts to the ship's side at a cheaper rate and more conveniently.

"Is that coal traffic likely to be profitable, if it extends? I think it would be, if it develops to any very large extent.

"Would there be any suburban traffic on the line? I do not think there would be much on the South Brisbane line."

These answers by the Commissioner for Railways, who professed to be and doubtless was

entirely in the confidence of the Minister for Works with regard to this line, afforded conclusive evidence that the line was intended to meet the requirements of the coal traffic alone. The other questions referred to by the Hon. Mr. Melbourne pointed, without doubt, to the conclusion that if the line were constructed in any route suggested it would not be used for any requirements of the district it would traverse, if there were any requirements—which he very much doubted; with regard to passenger traffic, it would be simply used for the purpose of development of the coal trade. There were some questions pointedly put to that gentleman with regard to the demand that existed for the traffic. Before he came to this question he would refer to another phase of the question. They had a line in existence, and the point he was about to bring under the notice of the House was the necessity or otherwise of constructing another line for the purpose of developing this traffic. The evidence conclusively showed that the present line was sufficient to meet considerably more than the demand at present made upon it; so that for the pure purpose of traffic there was no necessity to construct another line. At questions 163, 164, 165, and 166, Mr. Stanley was asked—

“If we determine that the line were suitable for the coal traffic, would it not relieve the line on the north side? I can hardly say that it would, because, at the present time the coal traffic on the existing line is very little, indeed.

“The prospective coal traffic, I mean, of course—I do not mean now;—presuming that a large coal traffic springs up, would not the South Brisbane line relieve the North Brisbane line from Oxley? Yes; between Oxley and North Brisbane, of course, it would relieve the traffic.

“To deep-water?—Will it be necessary, soon, to put down another line of rails between Oxley and North Brisbane, in any case? I do not see any immediate probability of its being required. At present our line could carry three or four times the traffic that it does, without any difficulty.

“Without any inconvenience? Yes; it is not worked to anything like its capacity.”

Mr. Herbert was even more decided than Mr. Stanley, and was probably more competent to express an opinion on the subject, because he had the whole of the supervision and regulation of the traffic. At questions 192 and 193 he was asked—

“Is not the present single line, between North Brisbane and Oxley, at times somewhat crowded?—I mean, is not the business sometimes so large as to cause some inconvenience? No; I have not found any at all. It is capable of working a much larger traffic.

“Do you think it is capable of working double the traffic without inconvenience at any time? Decidedly.”

At question 205 and the following questions they had some further very important evidence:—

“But you believe, if a port was provided on either side of the river, the coal-miners could raise a much larger amount of coal? There would be a much larger traffic;—no doubt about that.

“And would you be able to carry that increased amount of traffic on the present line, suppose the shipping port was found on the north side? It would depend a good deal upon the quantity, and whether it came down regularly. Say, if we could get a regular trade, day by day, we could bring a very large quantity down by increasing our rolling-stock. Supposing it was coming down from Ipswich; by running several trains, after twelve o'clock at night, one following close upon the other, it could be done. Of course that would necessitate a large amount of rolling-stock and engine-power, too.

“Is it your experience on railways, that coal traffic interferes very considerably with ordinary traffic? I have no personal experience myself of a large coal traffic; but, some two or three years ago, I went to Newcastle to make some inquiries about the coal traffic, and I found, there, that, although they had a single line, yet they did not find it inconvenient at all. The trains were arriving constantly, running in the way I say—one after

another. The different collieries have their own rolling stock. There the Government do not supply rolling-stock.

“Only the engines? Only engine-power. The Government supply, also, the hydraulic cranes for lifting the coal.”

This showed what could be done in a country where there was enterprise amongst the owners of coal properties and energy amongst Government officials. With respect to the evidence as to the work at Newcastle, he would mention that the coalfields in that district extended to the other side of Maitland—a much larger distance into the interior than any of our coalfields were from the Powder Magazine. The traffic over the line between Newcastle and Maitland was far more extensive than anything between Brisbane and the interior of the colony. It took the whole of the traffic of the northern and north-western portion of New South Wales, and a very large portion of the traffic of the south-western districts of Queensland; and there it was found that with the immense coal traffic there was no inconvenience to the ordinary traffic carried on by the Government themselves. The evidence on that point was decided that, so far as present requirements were concerned, and so far as it was possible to see the requirements of the future, there was no necessity in the present mode of working their railways that would prevent the whole of the coal traffic coming over the existing line, assuming, of course, that they had a proper outlet for the coal after it reached Brisbane at some point on this side of the river. He thought he had satisfactorily disposed of the question, which was the sole object of the line, and whether or not the traffic was such that the present line could not be utilised for the purpose. He should now compare the relative merits of the different routes that had been suggested for the purpose of developing this coal traffic. The Postmaster-General complained about the committee not adopting a suggestion of his own contained in his original draft report, which would be found at page 7—

“It appears to be undeniable that deep navigable water may be reached in a less distance by way of South Brisbane than by an extension of the line from the North Brisbane terminus, and this is an important consideration in dealing with mineral exports, which will not bear the cost of much land carriage.”

There was no evidence on that subject, but he thought they might take it for granted that the longer the distance, in all probability the greater would be the cost of conveyance over the line. It was not to be supposed that the Government would carry traffic for nothing; but in connection with that there arose this important question—were they to consider only a few proprietors of coal-mines or the general body of the community? That was the question they had to discuss on this occasion. If the question narrowed itself down to whether they were to conduct three, six, or ten extra lines of railway at a less cost to the country, both in construction and for working purposes, was that to be considered of no avail provided that by constructing another line they could entail less cost upon the proprietors of coal-mines? He said unquestionably the question for them to consider was what would be the ultimate gain or loss to the general public, and if it could be shown—and he flattered himself that he was in a position to show—that the ultimate gain to the public would be immensely greater by making use of the present line than to construct this line to South Brisbane for the sole benefit of a few persons, it was their bounden duty to reject this proposition. And in connection with this point another question arose. If they constructed a separate line of railway with a separate terminus, they must of necessity have a separate staff of officers; an additional

supply of rolling-stock to carry on the traffic; between Sherwood and South Brisbane there would be several railway stations and several crossings over roads—which would involve an extra number of guards, waiters, gatekeepers, and so forth; so that the question in that way would not be one of the first expense, but it would remain in all perpetuity, and unless the advantages in the future were to outweigh the continual expense that expense would be a matter which should make them hesitate with regard to their conduct. But, apart from that altogether, the evidence showed that the comparative expense was far greater against the South Brisbane line. The report said the estimated cost of the construction of 5½ miles from Sherwood to Woollongabba was £26,566, exclusive of the cost of resumptions. But hon. gentlemen would recollect that the line did not terminate there; the Government did not know where they were going to take it to. When Mr. Stanley and Mr. Herbert were examined, it was considered that one of two termini would be adopted—either the river-bank or Shafston; but since that evidence had been given it appeared that the Minister for Works had discovered a much better terminus than either of those, somewhere near the dock at South Brisbane. Whichever of these three termini was adopted now, he (Mr. Mein) had very grave doubts whether the line would be ultimately constructed to it. If the House affirmed the construction of this line, he would not be at all surprised—in fact, he thought it was self-evident—that if the coal traffic hoped for—he would not say anticipated—even in the remote future—were realised, neither the river-bank, nor South Brisbane, nor Shafston, would contain sufficient water room for carrying on a large coal traffic. The river was exceedingly narrow at all these places, and the expense of constructing wharves at either of them would be something enormous. That had not been taken into consideration in the slightest degree in the investigation or in the proposal now made by the Government. Mr. Stanley and Mr. Herbert emphatically condemned the construction of the line to River Terrace. Mr. Stanley said the extension to that point from Woollongabba would cost £16,169. £5,000 of that was for a railway station, so that the actual cost of the extension, about half-a-mile, or, at the very outside, less than three-quarters of a mile, would be £11,169; and then, when it was got there, Mr. Stanley said—as must be apparent to every man of common-sense—

“Assuming that the line was taken there, would there be facilities for a large export of coal? On River Terrace the space would be rather confined, and there are other objections to it. The height of the siding above the water would be a serious consideration when the coal was friable, and these considerations led me to suggest an alternative line to Shafston.”

So far as the coal that had been discovered in the Southern portion of the colony was concerned, it was well known that it was of an exceedingly friable character, and all attempts at establishing a successful export trade in coal in that portion of the colony had failed. The coal could not stand a large amount of exposure to the atmosphere or much knocking about in carriage; it crumbled almost to dust. Whether they would discover coal of a harder nature at a greater depth remained to be proved, but at present it was so exceedingly friable that to lower it down from such an elevation as the river bank was over the water would be a very dangerous expedient to adopt; and if the expense was so much greater he thought hon. gentlemen might at once set their minds at rest on the subject—that the line would never go to the river side. The other alternative was an

extension to Shafston. The banks there were certainly not so steep, but the river was very little wider, and would by no means accommodate a large coal traffic. The expense of the extension from the 5½-mile point at Woollongabba to Shafston, a distance of about 1 mile, was estimated at £6,000; so that, assuming that the line terminated at Shafston, they would have 6½ miles of line constructed at a cost of £32,566, exclusive altogether of the amount to be paid for land resumptions, or wharfage accommodation, or any appliances for shipping coal. All these things had to be provided in addition to the cost of construction; and judging from their expenses in the past with regard to railway estimates and from the cost of proper wharves and appliances in the other colonies, the cost would not be far short of £60,000. In connection with this matter questions were asked the different witnesses bearing upon the surveys that had been made of a line to develop the coal traffic, and it appeared that three routes had been suggested. The first was by a short branch line from Bowen Hills, somewhere near the Acclimatisation Society's grounds to Bulimba, the length of which—from the Brisbane station—would be about 3 miles, and the cost, exclusive of resumptions, would be £14,561. These figures would be found at a note to question 77; and in answer to question 78, Mr. Stanley said—

“Are the water facilities for the export of coal and other goods, at Bulimba, as great as, or greater than, the facilities at either Shafston or River Terrace? I should say that Bulimba was a more suitable place than River Terrace.”

The distance from Sherwood to Shafston was six and a-half miles. According to the figures given it would cost £32,566, exclusive of resumptions, to construct that line. The distance from Sherwood to Bulimba was 8½ miles, a difference of only 2½ miles; so that if that route were adopted the owners of coal mines would simply have to pay the extra cost of carriage—if there were any at all—over only 2½ miles, which would be very trifling indeed. That line could be constructed for £14,561, as against £32,566, exclusive of compensation in both cases. In the one case, however, they had to pay compensation for a mile of ground, and in the other for 6½ miles; so that the less that was said about compensation the better—in fact, there would be no heavy compensation on the line from Bowen Hills to Bulimba. A large portion of the line would run through Government ground, and the larger proportion of the remainder would have to go through Childs' paddock, which was of comparatively little value; whereas the cost of resumption between Woollongabba and Shafston would be considerably in excess of the short distance between Bowen Hills and Bulimba, owing to the villas and other valuable buildings interfered with. If the comparison respecting the matter of compensation was at all favourable to one line it was decidedly in favour of the Bulimba one. And the gain to the country in the cost of construction as between the two lines would be £18,000, and the only extra cost that would be thrown upon coal proprietors would be the cost of going over 2½ extra miles. Now, the Postmaster-General had committed a very grave error when he mentioned that there was the probability of the cost of carriage being so heavy by the extra mileage that it would put coal-owners out of the market. He mentioned that the lowest rate per ton would probably be the amount fixed in the Railway Companies Preliminary Bill—namely, 4d. per ton per mile. During the interval he had referred to the goods rates now in force on our railway lines, and the statement of the Postmaster-General was not borne out in the slightest degree. According to the tariff it was pro-

vided that when coal was carried in the Government trucks over any distance under 50 miles the rate should be 1d. per ton per mile, and over 50 miles $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton per mile. When coal was carried in the owners' trucks, which would almost invariably be the case if a large traffic sprung up, the rate was to be $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per ton per mile under 50 miles, and over 50 miles $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton per mile. Assuming that in the large majority of instances the coal would be carried under 50 miles, the total extra cost that would be thrown upon the owners by taking the line to Bulimba would be 2d. per ton; but he felt quite confident that it would pay the Government much better to extend the line to Bulimba and charge the coal proprietors a less rate for the whole journey than they would have to do to make it anything like remunerative for the carriage between Sherwood and Shafston. In consequence of the extra number of hands that must be employed on the latter line, it would practically be another railway, so that for the present they might assume that the cost to the owners on either line would be so trifling as compared with the original cost to the country, that the Government would not be warranted, for the purpose of saving the coal-owners 2d. per ton, to go to the extra expense of £18,000 in the cost of construction. He had already pointed out that Shafston and neither of the other two suggested termini on the south side were appropriate for anything like a large traffic. This statement was borne out by the evidence given before the select committee. Referring to the question of the relative merits of the two places for the purpose of an export trade, he would quote questions 78 and 79 of Mr. Stanley's evidence:—

"Are the water facilities for the export of coal and other goods, at Bulimba, as great as, or greater than, the facilities at either Shafston or River Terrace? I should say that Bulimba was a more suitable place than River Terrace.

"Is not the river wider there? Yes, and the natural formation of the bank makes it more suitable for coal traffic."

They did not want to have evidence on this point, because they had the evidence of their own senses to guide them. But, at anyrate, here was the evidence of independent gentlemen. He took it that on this point the evidence must be conclusive that none of the sites on the South side would bear anything like favourable comparison with Bulimba. And with regard to the question of the cost to the Government and coal-owners, that to his mind was satisfactorily decided in favour of the Bulimba route. In connection with that line they should not, after all, overlook the fact that it would supply what must ultimately be of great value—namely, an extension to deep water. He firmly believed that it was in the interests of the southern portion of the colony that the Southern and Western line should be extended to deep water, not only for the purpose of coal traffic, but for all kinds of traffic, whether export or import. The railway would not be completed unless it was extended to deep water, and with regard to our other main lines they would not be completed until they were extended to deep water. In connection with this extension to deep water it should be the fundamental object to arrive at a point which would suit the requirements of all classes of traffic; and unquestionably the extension to Shafston would not do that. It could not meet the requirements of an import trade. Ships could not go and land their cargoes at Shafston, for if they did the goods would have to be brought round about $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Sherwood and back again; nor could Shafston be used for export purposes—it would involve an extra journey by the officers of the merchants, and, if worked in connection with the coal traffic, it would be in-

practicable. Wharfage accommodation could not be found, and there was no room for the ships. Bulimba was far superior, and yet it had important defects. Between Bulimba and the mouth of the river they had to travel over two flats, which would involve a considerable annual expenditure for cuttings. He thought the proper actual termination of the line to deep water would be found at a point much lower down the river. Attention had been directed to this, and so far as he could learn no good point on the shores of the Bay had been discovered, and the evidence pointed conclusively to a site near the Powder Magazine as best adapted for the extension to deep water. There the necessity of going over the two upper flats would be avoided, and the only portion of the river that had to be provided for in the shape of cuttings was at the Bar. Once over the Bar there was deep water for all classes of ships to the Powder Magazine. At the Powder Magazine there was a large expanse of water, and the evidence showed that it was suitable for all classes of shipping and for every description of export and import traffic. Mr. Nisbet's evidence, although not taken directly, had been repeated second-hand by one of the witnesses, and the comparative merits of this line, apart altogether from the cost of construction and maintenance, would be found discussed in several parts of the evidence taken by the select committee. He would refer hon. members to questions 169, 170, 183, and 184 of Mr. Stanley's evidence—

"Would not a deep-water terminus near the city be more convenient for shipping than one at the Powder Magazine?—that is, for coal purposes? That is a question which I hardly feel competent to answer, Mr. Buza-cott. My own impression is that some point lower down the river would be probably more convenient for shipping.

"Lower than there? Lower than the city.

"What sort of facilities have you down by the Powder Magazine in providing for the loading and unloading of vessels? Do you mean as regards site?

"As to site of shore and water room in front? I believe it is a very suitable site. There is a considerable depth of water. I have been told by Mr. Nisbet, Engineer of Harbours and Rivers, that there is a depth of 20 to 26 feet within a very short distance of the bank. The land itself is very flat, and rather low, being nearly awash at high spring tides. I apprehend there would be very little difficulty on that score, because it would be easy to raise the ground."

They had therefore evidence that nearly up to the river-bank there was a depth of 20ft. to 26ft. of water. They got over the disadvantage of having to make and maintain two difficult cuttings; there was plenty of room to manœuvre a fleet; and the extension would meet all possible requirements. Now, to come to the question of cost, and on that point he must refer to the fact that the policy of the Government, as indicated by the resolutions on the table that day, was to extend the present Southern and Western line to Sandgate by way of German Station, with a loop branch to the racecourse; and, in discussing the relative question of cost he should assume that the Government were warranted in placing upon the table the proposals for the construction of those lines. There were two surveys made in connection with the extension of the railway to the Powder Magazine. One was based upon the assumption that the line to Sandgate would go along the river bank as far as the Hamilton; but that had been abandoned on the ground of expense—unwisely, he thought. However, owing to its abandonment, it was unnecessary to further allude to it. He should confine himself to the alternative line to the Powder Magazine, which was to be an extension of the loop-line from the racecourse to the river bank. The extra mileage of this extension would be about four miles, which would be along, comparatively speaking, unpopulated country not very valuable; and, cer-

tainly, the cost of resumption would be nothing like the thousands of pounds which would have to be paid for resumption for a line to Shafston or any other point on the south side of the river. The cost of the extension of these four miles would be £12,732, and that, compared with the cost of the South Brisbane line, would show an advantage in favour of the Government, on the score of construction, of £20,000. So that, looking at it purely as a commercial matter, it would be unwise to go in for this extra expenditure. There could be no doubt, further, that for the purposes of general traffic the line to the Powder Magazine would be the better one. They then fell back upon the demand which was proposed to be met by this line—namely, the coal trade. What would be the extra expense which would be imposed upon coal-owners by the adoption of a line to the Powder Magazine? The extra distance occasioned by its adoption would be 10 miles, and, according to the ruling rates at present, that would involve the extra expenditure to coal-owners of something like 7½d. per ton. If coal-owners could not afford to raise coal at this slightly extra cost the coal industry was not worth developing; and, with all the advantages in its favour, his opinion decidedly supported the construction of a line to the Powder Magazine. It unquestionably was the point to which the Southern and Western line should be extended for the purpose of reaching deep water and meeting all the requirements of an export and import traffic. To summarise, the only proposed justification for the extension of the line before the House was that it would develop the coal industries. He was within the mark when he estimated that nothing short of £60,000 would be the cost of establishing this line. Before they rushed into such an expenditure with the sole avowed object of developing this industry, he maintained it was their bounden duty to have before them conclusive evidence that such an industry could be developed to an appreciable and advantageous extent. No evidence whatever had been produced before the committee indicating to what extent the coal industry was capable of development—in fact, there was no evidence before the committee. It was entirely problematical that the industry was capable of development. The coal proprietors, with the solitary exception of Mr. Gulland, to whom all honour was due for his enterprise, had shown no enterprise whatever in developing their coal properties. Hon. members had heard a great deal about the quantity of coal that could be exported, but not one man had had the enterprise to show what the capacity of the country was to develop an export trade. All had been waiting upon the Government to do the whole work for them. A full inquiry was decided upon regarding this line, and several members of committee, the Hon. Mr. Graham and the Hon. Mr. Lambert in particular, had endeavoured to elicit information upon this subject; but none was forthcoming. Mr. Herbert was pressed more than once by the Postmaster-General with regard to this coal industry; but he could give no evidence. He had to admit that he could get no evidence—all that he could say was that if the line was constructed and the coal traffic turned out to be very large it would be remunerative. Let hon. members look at questions 187 and 204—

"Is that coal traffic likely to be profitable if it extends? I think it would be if it develops to any large extent.

"Have you formed any opinion, Mr. Herbert, of what the probable coal traffic would be—the tonnage of it—if a deep-water port was provided on either side of the river? No, I have not; because it is difficult to get information of that kind from the coal-owners. I do not think they can form one themselves."

That was the style of evidence upon which they were requested to construct this line at a cost which could not be less than £60,000. He for one could not reconcile giving a vote for such a proposition. Before they should be warranted in constructing a line for the purpose of developing the coal industry they must be satisfied that there were coals in the bowels of the earth capable of being properly worked and satisfactorily developed. They must be satisfied that there was a reasonable probability of such a large traffic in coal being developed as would compare with the industry at Newcastle and other places in New South Wales; but they had no such evidence. Assuming, however, that they had this wealth of coal within a short distance of the city, would they be justified in constructing a line which the evidence of their senses showed would be incapable of meeting the requirements of such a traffic? At no point suggested for the terminus of the line on the South side of the river either at the South Brisbane wharves, the River Terrace, or Shafston, was there the capacity for the development of such a trade as would of necessity spring up if the industry was capable of being worked to the profit of the colony. The evidence of their own senses would satisfy them on that point; the independent testimony of the professional gentlemen pointed to the same conclusion; and in the face of this fact how could they reconcile going in for the construction of a work, involving such an expenditure of money, which could not bring in a profitable return to the community.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said that, as he stated when moving the motion, he thought it would be very desirable that they should obtain the further evidence which he believed the Chief Engineer of Railways, Mr. Stanley, was now able to supply. He therefore begged to move that Mr. Stanley be called to the bar of the House to give evidence.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM said that while he should be glad to hear any further evidence that Mr. Stanley might give, he very much doubted whether this was the proper time to call him. The proper time would have been before the Postmaster-General made his speech, or immediately after it. As he understood it, a member could only speak once, unless a motion for adjournment was moved, and already two prominent members on the other side had made speeches which, in all probability, might have been modified by the evidence that Mr. Stanley might give the House. He should not object to Mr. Stanley being called, but he did not think it was in order to call him after two members opposite had spoken, unless the opportunity was given them of expressing their opinion upon the fresh views that they might get from Mr. Stanley's evidence.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said that the suggestion to call Mr. Stanley should have been made before the Postmaster-General delivered his speech, or immediately after. The Postmaster-General was clearly out of order in moving that Mr. Stanley should be called to the bar, he having already spoken. What struck him (Mr. Walsh), in reading over the evidence, was the one fact that none of the persons actually interested in the construction or non-construction of the line were examined by the select committee. It was a most extraordinary fact that the Postmaster-General, who had command of the committee, took care that nobody but persons who were subordinate to the Government were examined as witnesses—that the persons examined were those whom they might coerce or propitiate, as the case might be. In an important matter like this, affecting the vital interests of the metropolis of the colony—that was to say, North Brisbane—no person in connection with the

trade of North Brisbane, or its prosperity, or its well being, or its future, was invited to give a single opinion. The persons examined were simply two officers whom the Government could catechise, not only in the committee, but before and afterwards. These were the sole persons who were to afford a sufficient *pabulum* of information upon which that House would act. He wished to point out the singularity of these circumstances. In a matter like that connected with the coal trade of the colony, and with the greatest city in the colony—a question which materially affected their future prosperity—it was very strange that not one of the coal proprietors of Brisbane, not one of the merchants, not one of the shippers, not one of the large landed proprietors of Brisbane, not one of the large officials, such as the Collector of Customs—who possessed a great deal of knowledge connected with the export trade of the colony—or any other official who had a great deal of knowledge in connection with the general trade of the colony, was examined. The only witnesses were subordinates of the Government whom the Postmaster-General had more or less under control. Was that satisfactory? He said it was not. It was not the Engineer-in-Chief whom they should have at the bar of the House from whom to elicit information. They ought to have their principal merchants and coal-owners, and the principal residents of North and South Brisbane. It seemed to be almost a perfect farce to summon to the bar of the House a person who had already given the only information which he could probably officially or professionally give upon the subject. In connection with this matter he would like to point out to hon. members that there was something which they should endeavour to guard against in future. He had already borne his testimony to what he considered the value of select committees respecting these railway questions. He believed that even with all their shortcomings in that Chamber these committees had been of inestimable value, but he maintained that, for the future, in these matters they must, for the benefit of the public, guard against the evil which he thought had existed in those committees of which they had already had experience. He had come to the conclusion that a Minister of the Crown had no business to act as chairman of the committees. He would ask hon. members to bear with him for a time while he endeavoured to impress upon them his reasons for arriving at that conclusion. It appeared to him that a Minister of the Crown occupied an invidious and improper position as chairman of these committees, and the House itself should select these committees—possibly they might put a Minister upon them, but by no means should a Minister be allowed to be chairman. The question to be determined by these committees was a Government scheme. The Government had to make out their case, and in the case of this railway in particular the only witnesses examined were the subordinates of the Government. He maintained it was a most improper, as well as painful, position in which to put them. The result was that the investigations of the committee, as far as the requirements of that Chamber were concerned, were incomplete. It was painful for him to have to do so, but he felt bound to call attention to some of the questions which had been put in the case of the select committee upon the South Brisbane and Oxley Railway. The Postmaster-General seemed to be acting the part of a barrister who had a brief and who had to make out a good case for his client, the Minister for Works. He had put questions of a most leading kind, and endeavoured to elicit from the witnesses—who were the subordinates of the Government—the most subservient answers. He

was sorry to have to point this out; he had felt it acutely in the case of those committees of which he had had the honour to be a member; but he noticed that this sort of thing had occurred even more significantly in the examination of witnesses in the case of those committees of which he had not the honour to be a member. He would ask hon. members to refer to question 212. Mr. Herbert was examined by the chairman and endeavoured to give what he might call a dispassionate answer. The chairman asked—"Is it not a fact that you expect an increase in your coal traffic soon, from the circumstance that a private railway, or private railways, are proposed to be constructed to be connected with the Government railway?" Mr. Herbert answered—"Mr. Gulland's branch line I presume you refer to. But the coal would only run along our line for one mile and ten chains." That answer did not appear to satisfy the fishing question. He would ask hon. members to notice that the Postmaster-General talked of facts as though the matter were indisputable. The next question was—"Still, the fact that he is connecting a branch with our main line affords grounds to presume that he intends to transmit coal over our line." Poor Mr. Herbert answered—"Yes, he of course intends that. But until the line is formed to deep water we should only get traffic over one mile and ten chains of our line, which would bring us a very small revenue comparatively. As soon as the Government construct this line to deep water he will be bound to run his coal along our line, and then the Government will reap the advantage." That answer did not appear to suit the Postmaster-General. What followed? The Postmaster-General asked,—"But as a matter of fact, is he not going to put his branch on because he supposed the Government will extend their line to deep-water?" Let them notice Mr. Herbert's answer—"Yes, I think so; I think that must be his reason." He asked hon. members whether that was a sufficient reason why they should take that evidence as conclusive: why they should be satisfied with the evidence obtained by the committee, and why they should think that the railway was necessary? He put the question to hon. gentlemen as sensible men. But he had not yet finished with Mr. Herbert's examination. Those answers did not satisfy the Postmaster-General. He would refer them to the next question—"You stated before that the amount of coal traffic, now, was small; that it was only for the local consumption of the town?" Poor Mr. Herbert replied, "That is all, Mr. Buzacott." Then the Postmaster-General came out as a Minister of the Crown, rather than as chairman of a disinterested committee of the House. What was the next question?—"What I wish to point out is, that Mr. Gulland must intend to do more than to supply coal for household consumption, or he would not construct a branch line?" Here was the answer—"His intention is to send down coal in large quantities for steamers and for exportation." Even that answer did not satisfy the Postmaster-General, and Mr. Herbert was asked, "But he would not be able to do that unless the line was constructed with water frontage?" Mr. Herbert answered—"No; he must connect with water frontage." The whole thing at which the Postmaster-General seemed to be aiming when he was dragging this information out of Mr. Herbert was that it was necessary to connect Mr. Gulland's railway works with water frontage. Valuable as the labours of these committees had been, they would have been rendered still more valuable if they had taken care not to select as a chairman a person who had a case to prove. If hon. gentlemen would refer to question 220 they would see that the chairman again interrupted and

asked—"I suppose, without that branch line, he would be compelled to use punts in order to bring the coal down to the steamers?" The answer was—"Yes." He would ask hon. members to pay particular attention to the next question—"It is only a temporary expedient?" Then let them note the reply, which was almost a repetition of the question—"It is only a temporary expedient?" Question 222 was, "As compared with the proposed coal wharf—I might call it, perhaps—on the north side, would not deep water be reached in a much less distance on the south side?—the proposed coal wharf, is it not at the Powder Magazine?" To which poor Mr. Herbert said, "I do not know." He asked hon. members whether that dual question was a fair question to put to the head of a department? It was a question which compelled the witness to answer, in self-defence, "I do not know." But there was something further in the evidence, and he would remark, parenthetically, that he made these criticisms on the evidence when he had no idea of bringing the matter under the notice of the House. He would ask hon. members to notice the following three questions:—

"From the mines, would not the distance to either Bulimba Reach or the Powder Magazine be greater than to navigable water on the South side? Oh, yes! I should think so;—several miles, I should say. I do not know the exact distance.

"And, I suppose, that would mean an increase in the cost of carriage? Decidedly.

"If deep water were reached on the north side? Decidedly it would, Mr. Buzacott."

That was the reply of the facile Commissioner for Railways. He had quoted that evidence in order that hon. members might pause before they again acquiesced in the appointment of committees in this way, and consider whether it was desirable to put on select committees members of that House, who were implicated by policy in the construction of the line under consideration. He trusted that the value of those committees could be appreciated elsewhere, and that they would be introduced into another place, so that they might dispense with the necessity of spending so much time in that Chamber as had been spent this year upon these questions. One word as to the railway. He asked hon. members why they should oppose it? It appeared to be a part of the Government policy which met with the approval of a majority of the representatives of the colony. He presumed that the railway had been carried in another place by a large majority, or without dissent. Then why should they oppose it? Had the people of North Brisbane, who were so much interested in the question, raised their voices in opposition to the proposal? Was the demand for this line not one which had been made for years? He must confess that, although he believed it would be money thrown away—although he believed that this was a clumsy method composed by the Government for carrying coals to a water-frontage for purposes of export—yet, seeing that the inhabitants of the metropolis had not taken one step to oppose it, and that it had received the decided assent of the remainder of the colony, he did not see why they should put themselves to the inconvenience or trouble of opposing the Government policy and the wish of the people of South Brisbane. He had not made up his mind which way he should vote, but he certainly did think that if ever supineness deserved punishment, this supineness of the North Brisbane people, in attending to their own wants upon this subject, deserved that punishment. Before resuming his seat he desired to render his testimony to the very able speech which had been made by the Hon. Mr. Mein in connection with that subject.

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He only wished that the hon. gentleman had expended the same amount of eloquence and fervour on a few other Government questions which had, too rapidly, received the sanction of that Chamber.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said that on previous occasions when they had had officials called to the bar to give evidence the evidence given was comparatively useless. How was it possible for that House, sitting as a committee, to examine witnesses and to consider the subject of the examination in the same way as a select committee? He was satisfied that in this case the time of the House would be wasted if they attempted to examine the Engineer-in-Chief at the bar. He would not say that there were not exceptional cases where such a course could be pursued with advantage; but these cases were few and far between. He thought, too, that any evidence which Mr. Stanley might give would tend still more pointedly to show that it would be undesirable to construct the railway. There were signs in the evidence which the Engineer-in-Chief had already given, that he had strained every point he could consistently with the maintenance of his professional reputation to support the Government proposal. He believed that in so doing Mr. Stanley had gone further than many men would have cared to go. He would not oppose the motion for the examination, but he would warn the Postmaster-General that the evidence would almost inevitably tend against the railway.

The HON. F. H. HART said he would not detain the House long; but as that matter largely affected the mercantile community, he wished to express an opinion upon the subject. He looked upon the South Brisbane railway as a railway constructed purely for the export of coal. He separated it altogether from the question of passenger traffic; the question to be decided was whether, in the interest of the coal export trade, the direction chosen was the most suitable direction for the railway. Viewing the matter in this light he felt bound to support the line. Many years ago, when the question arose as to whether the line should be continued to South Brisbane or North Brisbane, he had expressed an opinion that the line should be taken to the Buffalo Inn, thence skirting Kangaroo Point, and thence to Shafston. His opinion at the present time was in no way altered. He also suggested a loop line from the Buffalo Inn to some place near the bridge, to accommodate the Ipswich passengers. Anyone interested in the welfare of the colony, however, must regard the coal export trade as an entirely separate matter. He had no direct interest in the trade, but as a citizen he desired to see it receive every support. He believed the Hon. Mr. Mein stated that the coals of this colony were not a success. It was true that the coal compared unfavourably with some of the coal produced in New South Wales; but coal had been sent from Brisbane to other parts of the world besides the southern colonies. He had had one cargo of about 900 tons sent to San Francisco, which sold at a small profit after paying all expenses. He had also sent two cargoes to Shanghai, one of which was sold by a large firm there—Russell and Company; and the result, after paying all expenses, was to leave a net freight of 26s. a-ton, which was a very handsome profit. If the captain of that ship had gone away in ballast he would have had to pay 4s. 6d. a-ton for stone ballast, and would have had no return. In the other case the cargo would have realised about the same price; but, owing to the indifferent quality of the coal—to its friability—instead of making a net freight of 26s. a-ton, the result was only 16s. or 18s. a-ton. The captain of the ship who realised 26s. a-ton

told him (Mr. Hart) that he could inform his brother shipmasters that they were perfectly safe in taking a cargo of Thomas' coal to Shanghai; that it would always fetch the same price, or within sixpence a ton, of Newcastle coal. That was very encouraging to shipmasters to take coal from here. Only the other day a large ship, the "Tiverton," which could not go about seeking cargo, was here, and he got instructions by cable from home to give her 800 tons of Brisbane coal and send her to San Francisco. It was all to be got by October 1st, but the time was too short, because they had not got facilities to get coal so rapidly. However, on October 5th, he got a telegram asking if the "Tiverton" had sailed, and stating that if the coal was delayed to give her stone ballast and send her to San Francisco. That showed that shipowners looked more to time than to direct profit. So much with regard to the development of this industry. The next question was, which was the most suitable site for the railway to go to? His opinion of bringing the line to River Terrace was that it would be a mistake. In the first place there would be a great expense in cutting down the hill and forming a wharf frontage, and if the shoals were very high the friable coal would be broken into dust. He did not know the place referred to near the Dock, and, therefore, could not form an opinion upon it; but, on the question of bringing the line from Woollongabba to River Terrace, he was entirely of opinion that it should be taken to Shafston. He knew from his own personal knowledge, by inspection, that there was any amount of deep water on the south bank of the river about Shafston; and although the Hon. Mr. Mein took exception to the river not having sufficient breadth in that reach, he (Mr. Hart) thought if it were actually measured it would be found they had almost as much room as in any other part of it. There could be very little difference between that and the Bulimba Reach, and although the river might be wider at the Powder Magazine, there was a shoal there on the opposite side. What he wanted to dwell upon was which was the place that afforded the greatest facilities for shipping coal. Coal that would be exported from here would be first of all the coal supplied to the coasting steamers. The A.S.N. Company and Howard Smith's Company were very large consumers of our coal; and if the line were taken to Bulimba, or the Powder Magazine, their steamers would never go down there to coal; they would simply make arrangements to have the coal brought down by punts. If they were going to trust to the coasting vessels that came here with flour and other produce, and as a rule went away with stone ballast to Newcastle, taking coal instead of stone ballast, they must be supplied in the reach near Brisbane; they would never go down the river to take in coal. Then, as they had a right to expect, a large quantity of coal would be taken by foreign ships instead of going away in ballast. It must be remembered that they would not shift from their wharves and go five or six miles down the river to get cargo. Vessels, and especially a large vessel, when discharging cargo would rarely take out the whole of her cargo until she took in a certain amount of stiffening to keep her upright. There were few vessels that could stand upright with a clean swept hold; and even in the large docks at home ships did not like to shift from one side to the other without stiffening. But a vessel could easily shift across the river, or by paying a pound or so get taken around the point to Shafston, where she could take in a ballast of coal, which would vary from 250 to 800 and 1,000 tons. If they asked a big ship, after she had her stiffening in, to go miles down the river to take in coal, the master would say it was lost time, and that rather

than that he would take in stone ballast and go to sea; and the country would lose the whole of that trade. The Hon. Mr. Walsh had referred to the supineness of the people of North Brisbane in not moving in this matter; but he thought they had studied the question, and had made up their minds that if the coal trade was to be fostered it must be fostered somewhere else than in North Brisbane, because there was no available ground there where they could erect large export coal wharves. But such wharves could easily be erected at Shafston, and the trade would bring increase of population, and would increase itself day by day and year by year. It was a trade that must be carried on by itself; it could not be worked with the wool trade, or timber trade; and it was a trade that could be worked up to such an extent that it should undoubtedly be worked by itself. He thought that, looking at the matter as to the best way they could foster the coal export trade in this colony, he thought they should be doing so by supporting a line to the Woollongabba; and he was prepared to do so on the distinct hope that it would be carried to the most suitable point at deep water, which, in his opinion, could not be elsewhere than at Shafston.

The Hon. W. D. BOX said this was a most important question, and, as far as he could understand, thought the figures given by the Hon. Mr. Mein would bear inspection. The question in his mind resolved itself in this. He believed that within the next few days they would consent to the construction of a line to the Brisbane Racecourse. That railway would be in a direct line with the Powder Magazine, which was about five miles distant, and by constructing a line there they would get to deep water, where there was plenty of room, and export wharves could be erected without difficulty. They would have no fresh staff or workshops, which would be consequent on a second railway, but simply a terminal station. On the other hand, the proposal of the Government was to construct a railway from Oxley to Woollongabba, and from there to somewhere, but nobody knew where, and which would involve an expenditure of about £60,000, according to the figures of the Hon. Mr. Mein, which he thought were rather under the mark. As regarded the possibility of ships taking in cargo here, the Hon. Mr. Hart stated that vessels would move from the wharves in North Brisbane to South Brisbane to take in coal; but that they would not move across the docks at home without a certain amount of stiffening. Well, he (Mr. Box) was satisfied that if they moved across the river, they would move down the river on their way out of port; they would take in sufficient stiffening and go down the river and take cargo in at once. On the whole, he contended there was no comparison between the two proposals. If they took the line to Shafston they must take the vessels there for cargo, because no member of the House would imagine that cargo arriving here would be put on the railway at Shafston, taken to Oxley, and then back to Brisbane. He trusted hon. members would see this thing in its proper light, and they would never consent to the construction of this small railway, which was to start from nowhere and to go nobody knew where.

The Hon. K. I. O'DOHERTY said he was very anxious to be able to give an intelligent vote on this matter, but it seemed that it would be quite impossible that they could so until they heard what further evidence the engineer had to give them, which he presumed would be in reference to the extension of this line—as to what point it was intended by the Government it should be taken to. On that ground he held that

the Engineer-in-Chief should be called in so that they might hear his evidence.

The HON. C. S. MEIN said he did not intend to offer any strong objection to the House taking the evidence of Mr. Stanley if it was desired by the Postmaster-General, because he (Mr. Mein) was prepared to listen to any evidence that could be given; but he did not think it was possible for Mr. Stanley to throw any more light on the subject than he gave when examined before the committee. A suggestion was made before the committee as to the possibility of Mr. Stanley having a survey of the line to Shafston. In question 55 he was asked—

“By Mr. J. Cowlshaw: Is it possible, except at great expense, to bring the line from the terminus at Woollongabba to the wharves at South Brisbane? That depends on the purposes for which the extension is required. I think passenger traffic would be accommodated at a very reasonable cost by the construction of a tramway; but if a goods line were required the cost would be considerable.

“By the Chairman: Is it intended to carry the proposed line to the existing wharves? I think not.

“By Mr. Cowlshaw: Is it in contemplation by you, or by the Minister for Works, to carry the line to Shafston? I think the Minister for Works left the matter undecided. At the present moment there is not sufficient information to enable him to arrive at a decision. My own idea is that for the purposes of coal traffic the line should terminate at near Shafston.”

That was evidence given on the 2nd November, 1880, less than two weeks ago; and it appeared that since that time the ideas of the Government on this subject had altered. There was one point he (Mr. Mein) omitted to mention when speaking on the main question, and he should refer to it now. He thought they were all agreed upon one point—that if they were going in for the construction of a line to any point on the South side it was desirable, if possible, to have the whole scheme before them before they expressed an opinion on the subject. Unless it could be shown that the country would gain a decided advantage by commencing the line in a fragmentary way they should hesitate before giving consent to such a motion as this. By delaying the matter until next year no possible injury could arise; and he would point out that even if they affirmed the desirability of constructing this line there was no money available for that purpose, and the result would be that they would merely affirm the desirability of constructing it, and there it would remain until the money was voted to carry it out. He thought their obvious duty, under the circumstances, was not to embarrass the Government at all, but merely to say they declined to deal with the question until the Government came down with a fully completed scheme saying where the terminus was to be. By postponing the matter the Government would be able to settle the question absolutely as to that point, and the House should not have to make a leap in the dark, for, after all, it was a leap in the dark they were asked to take in approving of this motion. With regard to the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Hart in arguing in favour of an extension to Shafston, he stated that some of the largest consumers of local coals were the coasting steamers; and he (Mr. Mein) could assure the House that whether the line was extended to Shafston or any other part on the river the coal-owners who were in the habit of supplying coal to those steamers would not make use of the line on the South side—they would have to stow their coal in trucks and then transfer it into punts and convey it to the steamers, which would involve far greater cost than putting it into punts near Ipswich and bring it down direct to the steamers. He had been assured by the conveyers of coal to these vessels that that was the course of procedure they would adopt, no matter where the

terminus of the coal line might be. As to ships not going down the river to take cargo, he maintained that if they would go to Shafston, round Kangaroo Point, which was the sharpest point in the river, and where they would be in most danger of upsetting, they would not object to go a little further down the river. If it was necessary to put stiffening in to go to Shafston, they might as well go a few miles further, and the cost would be very small indeed.

Question—That Mr. Stanley, Chief Engineer of Railways, be called to the bar for the purpose of being examined—put and passed.

Mr. STANLEY was accordingly called to the bar and examined:—

By the POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I believe you have been already examined before the select committee with respect to the proposed railway from the Southern and Western line to South Brisbane? Yes; I have.

I believe you then told the committee that there were two proposed termini, one at Shafston, the other at the River Terrace? Yes; those were the two termini proposed up to that time.

Have you taken further steps since you were under examination in order to ascertain which would be the most desirable terminus? By the request of the Secretary for Public Works, I have made a further examination since that time in connection with an alternate route that was proposed by Mr. Macrossan to bring the line to a point on the Terrace, a little higher up than the original site.

When you say higher up do you mean towards Stanley street? Higher up the river.

Will you be good enough to state to the Committee what you conceive would be the direction the line would take? The alternative line I refer to was intended to pass down Stanley street from the Woollongabba Reserve to a point near the Dry Dock. It would then curve round to the right by a short street called Dock street, and gain the river bank at a point between the Dry Dock and the site originally proposed.

Do I understand you to say that it would go the whole distance along Stanley street? It would pass along Stanley street to a point near the Dry Dock, when the line would curve to the right.

But I mean, starting from the Woollongabba Reserve, would it go any considerable distance along the reserve? It would pass through the reserve as far as the western point of the reserve. It would then pass on to Stanley street to the vicinity of the Dry Dock.

Can you inform the Committee what the distance is from the temporary terminus on the Reserve to the proposed terminus on the River Terrace? No survey has yet been made, but I think the distance would be about a mile, perhaps a little under, from the present point to which the line is surveyed to the point on the river bank that I refer to.

Would the line run along that route without much earthwork excavation having to be done? I can hardly give an opinion in reference to that point until the survey has been made. As far as the portion of the line is concerned which would pass along Stanley street, there would be very little, if any, excavation. It is proposed to carry the line on a level with Stanley street.

Would the curve from Stanley street into Dock street be a sharp one? Yes, it would be rather sharp; it would be either three or four chains radius.

Would there be any practical inconvenience in working the traffic? I do not think there would be serious inconvenience where there was coal traffic and the speed slow.

With that reserve and in Dock street, would you have room for the railway and the necessary buildings on the Terrace? Do I understand you to refer to the terminus on the river bank?

Yes? The road which runs along the river bank there is a chain wide, and the full width available between the present fence along the frontage of the property and the river bank would be from a chain and a-quarter to a chain and a-half; so that by utilizing the road, or a portion of the road, I think sufficient space might be obtained for the necessary sidings for a limited coal traffic.

Have you ascertained the distance from the river just at the Dock Reserve to the south-east side of Dock street? Dock street forms one boundary of the Dock Reserve.

I mean what is the distance from the river at that point to the other side of Dock street? I do not quite understand you.

What I want to ascertain is, how much room would you have for the railway from the river frontage just below the Dry Dock to the rise in the hill. I will put it another way. How many lines of railway could you lay down there? Along the river bank?

Yes? Without encroaching upon the road, you might obtain room for two or three parallel lines of railway. In order to do that, I may state that it would probably be necessary to form some kind of wharf along the river bank on which to carry the railway. It could not be banked up with earth, as that would be liable to be washed away.

Is the frontage there suited for wharves—would vessels be able to come alongside? I believe there would be ample depth.

Would there be any great difficulty in constructing wharves there? I think not.

When you inform the House that there would be room for a limited coal traffic, can you give us any idea of the quantity of coal that could be delivered there in an ordinary working day? It would take some consideration to do so. I cannot say at a moment.

You cannot say whether 100 or 1,000 tons? Well, I should think there was ample space for 100 tons a-day; without consideration, I should not like to say how much more could be accommodated.

If the line were brought to this point, would it be of any value to our passenger traffic? I think it might, providing there was a passenger platform where the line turns round towards the river bank. That would be the nearest available point to South Brisbane.

Are there not omnibuses passing there which run into town? Yes, I believe omnibuses pass there frequently.

Is this point as near the centre of traffic on the South side as the North Brisbane terminus is to the centre on the North side? I think it is as near the centre of South Brisbane as the present station is to the centre of North Brisbane.

Would there be any expense incurred in any compensation for resumed lands on this branch or extension to the wharves? I think there would to some extent. My opinion is that it would not be practicable to gain the point on the river bank that I have described without resuming some private land.

That would be after you turn round Stanley street? Yes.

Would you need to resume land anywhere else? Only between Stanley street and the river bank.

Could you inform the House as to the probable cost of this extension? I could hardly do so without a section; no survey has been made of this line.

Would it be as expensive as the line to River Terrace by the other way under the hill? I should say it would not be so expensive.

You informed the select committee, I think, that a terminal station costing £5,000 or £6,000 would be necessary at Woollongabba Reserve? I don't think I stated that it would be necessary. I gave the committee the estimated cost of the line to the River Terrace from an estimate prepared two or three years ago. At that time it was contemplated having a station at Woollongabba, and provision was made in the estimate for the usual terminal station and works, such as engine-shed, tank, and turntable, goods-shed, and passenger station; and when I gave the estimate to the committee I stated that it included that £5,000, so that there should be no mistake as to the actual cost of the construction of the line which would be, deducting the £5,000, about £11,000. I do not wish the committee to infer that I considered a station there necessary.

Do you know whether the Minister for Works intends to erect a station of that expensive character? I understand the Minister for Works does not intend to erect station accommodation of that kind at Woollongabba.

Would an expensive station of the character first contemplated be required unless the traffic was large? It might not be required until the traffic became fully developed. Some provision would, I think, be required for the accommodation of engines, water supply, and so forth, but probably a very much less sum than I have mentioned would suffice at first.

In your former evidence you mentioned that the stations required would cost £1,460—you referred then to the way-side station? Only the way-side station. I think I stated in my evidence that no provision was made in that estimate for a station at Woollongabba.

How many vessels do you suppose could lie alongside on the frontage there, starting from the dock and going as far down as space would be available? That would depend entirely upon the frontage taken. You might go down a considerable distance along the river bank by excavating.

I mean without excavation? I think you might get a frontage of 12 or 14 chains in length.

You have stated in your evidence to the select committee that the total cost of the line as far as Woollongabba would be £26,000? Yes, that was my estimate.

You can't give the House a rough estimate of what it would cost to complete the line to the river frontage? I should not like to give a definite opinion regarding the probable cost without having a section taken, because I am disposed to think there would be some considerable amount of earthwork where the curve occurs. Speaking roughly, I think that probably the line might be extended to the point on the river bank for about £6,000 or £7,000.

That would make the total cost £32,000 or £33,000? Yes, somewhere about that—it might be less.

Do you think, including compensation, the expense would be likely to run up to £60,000? I should not think so.

I believe there is some misapprehension in the House as to the amount of available frontage without excavation? I think you might utilise about 12 or 14 chains—that is, without any considerable excavation. Some would probably be required, but nothing at all like what would be required at the first site proposed along the cliffs. It would be all excavation there.

The expense of utilising this site would be comparatively small? It would be considerably less than the site previously proposed, as far as the construction of the line is concerned.

By the HON. C. S. MEIN: How long is it since your attention was first directed to this

line? Within the last two or three weeks—since I was examined by the select committee.

How many times have you been over the ground? Only once, on the occasion I refer to.

Are you in a position to give any authoritative expression of opinion as to the cost of this line? I think I have already stated that I should not like to give an opinion.

Would any engineer of any repute hazard an estimate of the cost without a survey? Only as an approximation.

Is it usual to ask the engineer to give an estimate of cost without an investigation of that description? Certainly not, if it is to be a binding one that he would be required to be professionally responsible for.

From the cursory examination that you have made, can you, as an engineer, express an opinion favourable to the construction of a line of the description indicated for the purpose of meeting a coal traffic? With the information at present at my disposal I should not like to hazard a definite opinion as to the advisability of adopting it, though I believe it would be practicable.

Had it been ever suggested to you by a Minister or any officer under the Government, before you gave your evidence before the select committee, that it was in contemplation to construct a line in the direction now indicated? No; that particular site was never suggested before to my knowledge.

Assuming that a line were adopted on the river's bank, what, roughly, would be the actual cost of the construction of the line—laying down the permanent-way, providing all the stations, wharfage accommodation, and appliances for the purpose of an export trade in coal?—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I think I ought to intervene. Mr. Stanley has already stated that he is unable to give even an approximate estimate.

The HON. C. S. MEIN: I never heard such an objection in my life. Does the hon. member anticipate an unsatisfactory answer? We have been listening for a long time to the hon. gentleman trying to put answers into the witness's mouth. I ask the witness for an expression of opinion as a professional man. Surely the Government do not wish to burk the inquiry!

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: The witness is here to answer any questions which may be put to him.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I have no desire to burk inquiry; but when I put a question almost in the same form to the witness he informed the House that he was unable to give even an approximate estimate.

The HON. C. S. MEIN: He did nothing of the sort.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: What I have said being the case, I do not think it is right for another hon. member to put almost the same question.

Examination continued—

By the HON. C. S. MEIN: We want to get the whole truth, and Mr. Stanley wishes to give it. The Postmaster-General asked you, Mr. Stanley, whether the construction of this line would cost £60,000, and you said "No." I ask you what, in your opinion, giving a rough estimate—for you have admitted that you cannot give an accurate estimate—what would be the total cost of constructing this line, including the permanent-way, stations for the accommodation of traffic, and wharves and sidings to meet an export trade in coal? I am not in a position to give a more definite estimate than I have already given—which was that I believed a line could be constructed for about £6,000 or £7,000. That would

be for the construction of the line itself, and would not include any wharfage accommodation.

Your estimate, then, does not take into consideration any compensation for injury to property by resumption or otherwise? No; I am unable to give an opinion upon that point.

You cannot give the House a total estimate? No; not a definite estimate.

Have you had an opportunity of making such inquiries up to the present time as would enable you to give an estimate? I have not had an opportunity of obtaining information upon which to base such an estimate as you require.

You said the curves would be 3 or 4 chains. What is the sharpest curve you have at present on the main line? 5 chains is the maximum curve; but there are places where we have curves as small as 4 chains.

Where are they? In the station-yard.

Is 4 chains the smallest in the station-yard? I think we even have them as small as $3\frac{1}{2}$ in exceptional cases. I think I can recollect one curve in the North Ipswich station-yard which is only $3\frac{1}{2}$ chains.

By the HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY: What is the curve of the deviation at Toowoomba? $4\frac{1}{2}$ chains.

By the HON. C. S. MEIN: In your estimate, when you talked about a siding for passengers at the Dock, what accommodation did you propose to give there for passengers? I referred to a platform only being placed on one side of Stanley street, just before the line passes to the river bank.

Would there be room there to put up a terminal station? Not in the street itself.

Would there be room to put up a terminal station in connection with the wharves for export purposes in Dock street, anywhere? I hardly think there would be room there for accommodation for general export purposes. I have already stated that I believe there would be sufficient room for a limited coal traffic.

By the HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY: As far as I understand the tracing you have presented to us, this latest arrangement of yours contemplates that there shall be no land resumed between Woollongabba and this terminus at the river side, except on those portions extending from Stanley street round by Dock street? We utilise the main street. The only point at which you would require to resume private land would be between Stanley street and the river bank.

Do you anticipate that the railway running along the street will interfere with the traffic? Not to any serious extent, I believe.

By the HON. C. S. MEIN: Can accommodation for coal traffic be made at this spot at anything like so small an expense as would be incurred for accommodation at Shafston, Bulimba, or the Powder Magazine? In comparison with the space available, I think the accommodation for coal traffic would probably be given with least expense at the Powder Magazine.

And at what place at the greatest expense?—

The HON. W. H. WALSH: I think it is hardly fair to ask the witness questions which he has not been called upon, as a professional man, to investigate.

The HON. C. S. MEIN: I take it that the witness is in attendance to enlighten the Committee.

Examination continued—

By the HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY: From your experience of the working of railways in a neighbouring colony, would it be an advantage to have the coal traffic worked on a separate line from the general traffic? It would depend to a great extent upon the amount of the coal traffic. I think the probability is that for many years to

come we could work it on the existing lines without any inconvenience to the general traffic.

By the HON. F. T. GREGORY: You stated that there would be a considerable curve in reaching the wharf. What would the curve be? Three or four chains.

Can you tell the House what is the elevation from the crest of the ridge to the waterside? The difference in elevation is 32 feet.

And what ruling gradient will that give? That would depend upon the distance taken to fall. By adopting a 4-chain curve, and falling a distance of 12 chains, the gradient would be, approximately, 1 in 25; with a 3-chain curve, and keeping higher up the bank at the back of some of the houses near the river bank, I think you might obtain a gradient of about 1 in 33.

Do you consider that a gradient so high as 1-in-25 would be at all objectionable for coal-traffic? It is undoubtedly a severe gradient, especially as it would, in this case, be combined with a sharp curve, but I think that it would not be a fatal objection to the site as the gradient would be in the direction of the load. It would be only empty waggons that would be brought up against the gradient.

I think you have already stated that a considerable portion of the cutting for the wharves would not be from solid rock? There would be very little excavation necessary at this site from the solid rock, along the river bank. There would be some cutting necessary round the curves in approaching it.

Would there be any serious risk of the current in the river damaging the wharves? I think it would be necessary to construct the wharves in a substantial manner to resist any strain which might be produced from the current.

That would enhance the cost of construction? To some extent.

You are aware that there are considerable currents in that part of the river;—are they sufficiently strong to make it a matter of serious objection in the construction of the wharves or for shipping lying there? It might be an objection to shipping lying alongside the wharves, but I do not think there would be any difficulty in constructing the wharves sufficiently strong to resist the current.

Some years ago I think you made a survey and a report upon the proposed deviation from the railway line from somewhere about the Milton distillery, going round by the North Quay as far as the Queen's Wharf? Yes; several lines were surveyed in connection with the line you speak of.

Have you any recollection of what the cost of it was to have been to any fixed point you can name? If I remember right, I think the estimated cost of the line as far as the Queen's Wharf was a little over £20,000.

Did you extend the survey and estimate to carry the line from the Queen's Wharf by way of the Alice-street ferry? I do not remember what the figures were for that route.

I believe one route went round the Government House domain. I am speaking now of the short cut by the Parliamentary buildings down by Alice street? I believe that line was surveyed; several alternative lines were surveyed at the same time, but I do not recollect the particulars of each of them.

Do you think it would cost more or less to carry out the line to a coal wharf where the battery used to lie in Alice street?—Would the cost be more or less than that of the proposed line from Oxley to South Brisbane? I think it would probably cost more.

Are you aware that there is a very small amount of private property on that route?—Have you any recollection as to whether an amount was set down for compensation? I believe a valuation was made, but I cannot recollect what the amount was.

Are you aware of the average depth of water at the point from where the line would encroach upon the North Quay to where it could meet the river by Alice street? I cannot recollect.

Have you any reason to suppose that that place is at all suitable for coal wharves? I believe there is a sufficient depth of water there for vessels.

Supposing such a line were carried out, can you give the Committee an opinion whether suitable wharves could be made near the Alice-street Ferry without doing any serious injury to the Government Gardens? I think that point was considered at the time when these extensions to wharves were under consideration; to the best of my recollection I believe it was shown that there was sufficient depth for vessels.

Do you conceive, from an engineering point of view, that there are any serious objections to carrying out that line? I see no objection from an engineering point of view.

By the HON. C. S. D. MELBOURNE: You are an engineer of many years' experience, I believe? Yes.

Do you give your evidence this evening as an engineer, from a survey of the line, or simply from a rough guess, from going over the projected line once or twice? The information I have given the Committee with reference to the cost of this line is approximate.

As a professional engineer, in giving your answers to the questions that have been put to you this evening, you wish the Committee to understand that you are giving an approximate, and not a professional opinion, upon which the Committee could rely? Certainly; that is all I am in a position, at the present time, to give.

[Mr. Stanley then withdrew.]

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he would take that opportunity to complain of the inaudible manner in which the questions were put from the Chair. He did not believe that more than one member out of ten knew that Mr. Stanley had been dismissed. He believed the Hon. Mr. Mein and several other hon. members desired to ask further questions.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: I put the question distinctly; but if hon. members do not listen to what is going on, I cannot help it.

The HON. G. EDMONSTONE said he heard the Chairman put the question distinctly, and afterwards tell Mr. Stanley that his examination was over.

The HON. F. H. HART said he would endorse what had been said by the Hon. Mr. Edmonstone. He also heard the Presiding Chairman ask if any hon. gentlemen had any further question to put. Unfortunately, however, it had become too common in that Chamber for hon. members to sit chatting together in tones so loud that it was difficult to hear what the Chairman said.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said it was just possible that hon. members might be perfectly right in those remarks; but somehow they were going through the business of the House in a way in which they had never got through it before. Business was over before they knew they had reached the middle of it.

The HON. J. C. FOOTE said there were one or two important points which had been overlooked in this matter. Their ideas seemed to get rather localised. He believed it was their business to study the interest of all parts of the community. As far as his experience went, it would be a great mistake to study the interests of one locality in the matter of public works in opposition to the interests

of another portion of the community. He believed that a railway to South Brisbane or Burrum or any other railway, if it had a tendency to locate population and provide work for the industrious labourer, any Government was fully justified in expending the amount of money that had been referred to, especially if they were very sure that it would be reproductive. He was very certain that this railway would be reproductive—that it would pay handsome interest on the money expended, especially if a little more economy was exercised by the Government, and more discretion was manifested in the construction of the railway. There had been a great many mistakes in the construction of their railways, which had been painful to many observers besides himself; and he thought the Government should be very much more careful than they had been in the past. With regard to the coal trade, some hon. members seemed to think that it was to a great extent a matter of imagination: but he (Mr. Foote) went into calculations on the question three or four years ago, and he found from the number of ships that were willing to take coals, and would have taken them if the coal-miners could have executed their orders, that if the export trade could have been established they should have about 1,500 miners perpetually at work. Some members had referred to coals that were sent to Shanghai and other places turning out mere dust, and he was aware that such was the case; but it arose from the circumstances under which the coal was shipped, and the fact that it was taken from a mine which was not now worked. It would not, perhaps, be wise to tell how it was put on board, but he might state that it was shipped in a very dirty condition, with stones and clay, and the consequence was that a bad opinion was formed of our coal-mines. It had been said that it would only cost about 7d. per ton to have coal conveyed by the railway, but he would point out that in the case of Mr. Thomas, who had a number of teams constantly at work, that even 7d. a-ton would mean to him about 21s. a-day, and if that was not handicapping the coal proprietor he did not know what was. In the same way, in the case of Mr. Gulland, it would give him £700 or £800 a-year extra at 7d. per ton; and therefore that matter should be very carefully considered. He was also of opinion, in respect to this railway, that the people of South Brisbane were worthy of some consideration. They had an idea that their property would be enhanced in value, and no doubt all classes of trade would be revived, and he should be very glad to see it. He was not arguing on the grounds of having a property or any interest in South Brisbane, for he had no interest whatever there. Nearly the whole of his property interest was in North Brisbane, where he held more property than he had in any other part of the colony; but he did not think that his interest or the interest of any other persons ought to influence faithful and honest and conscientious legislation for all parties in the community concerned. That was his aim and his motto. With regard to the traffic on the proposed line, some persons had an idea that it would be nothing but local traffic, but he could assure hon. gentlemen that there would be a great deal of farmer and passenger traffic—a great deal more traffic than on the present line when it was first established. Reference had been made to the Bulimba line, but upon inquiry he found that to make that place available for shipping purposes it would require considerable dredging, because there was not sufficient water there. He had a very wholesome dread of those dredges on account of the enormous amount of money that had been swallowed up by them on the Brisbane and Fitzroy rivers, for which there was no permanent im-

provement—in fact, they had spent enough money on those two rivers to make two or three railways to deep-water, and yet with the first flood down came a mass of sand and silt and the obstructions were as bad as ever. With regard to the inconvenience of vessels having to go down the river, each vessel must take a certain amount of stiffening or part of her cargo; and he did not know any greater objection the captain of a vessel had than loss of time. There would be no objection on the part of vessels to go across the river or a few hundred yards to get cargo, and he thought that if hon. gentlemen took all these points into consideration and remembered that they were responsible for all classes of the community, they would see their way clear to decide which was the best point to take the railway to. He hoped they would not forget the alarming extent to which they were handicapping the coal-miners when they fancied that 6d. or 7d. a-ton extra amounted to a mere nothing. Referring again to the line to Bulimba, he had been informed that the mere cost of tunnelling to that place and the resumptions of land would cost as much as the whole line to South Brisbane, and from inquiry he was confident it was correct. There appeared to be some slight mistake about the quality of their coal. He had just hinted that the only coals he knew that had been complained of were those that had been shipped under improper conditions and improper circumstances, and he could say that nearly all their experiments in exporting coal, when properly shipped, had turned out very profitable. He believed that this line would promote commercial interests as well as others. A great complaint in both Liverpool and London was that the port of Brisbane was rather risky and difficult to enter, and also that there were no coals, and the consequence was that they had to pay higher freights for merchandise. He did not suppose that there was a merchant in Brisbane who had not paid hundreds of pounds extra for these very reasons, and chiefly because it was believed that there were no coals here, and consequently ships had to go away in ballast. As to their being no evidence that they had got coals, he could mention that he saw eleven teams carrying coals that day, and they were carrying the whole year round except when prevented by bad weather; he had also seen another team carrying from Redbank four or five miles and even then it paid. He thought he had given sufficient evidence as to the quality of their coals, and he could assure hon. members that what he had stated was without exaggeration. He did not see how the South Brisbane line could do any possible harm to Brisbane or anywhere else; and he was sure it would do a great deal of good. He believed it would give an impetus to the interests and welfare of every portion of the community. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. C. S. MEIN thought it would be much better to come to a decision to-night. The subject had been fully discussed, and he could not understand the object of an adjournment. Was it to have another *fiasco* like they had this evening? Surely the Government knew the strength of their supporters just now? They had had one member very actively engaged canvassing and trying to coerce members to vote in favour of the Government on this question. He did not think that was a very dignified course, and he thought that every member should have a sufficiently strong mind to determine how he should vote without private coercion or solicitation. This was a question which should be decided upon broad public grounds, and not upon personal feeling. This was about the largest meeting of the House they had had during the present session; the subject had been pretty well debated; but if there was any new light to be thrown upon it he was prepared to stop and

listen to it. At the same time, he thought it was just as well in the interests of the country and the progression of their duties as legislators, especially at that period of the session, that they should come to a decision at once.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said no doubt the hon. gentleman would like the House to come to a conclusion to-night. In opening the debate that afternoon he (Mr. Buzacott) informed the House that he wished for further evidence, because the officer who was able to give that further evidence was in attendance and would hear what he said, and therefore he abstained from making many remarks in favour of the course proposed by the Government, which he should certainly not otherwise have withheld. He confessed that the objections raised by the Hon. Mr. Walsh with respect to the appointment of that committee destroyed what interest he felt in it—the hon. member had objected to the committee on the ground of its irregularity, and had said that when the report came up it might be thrown out on the ground of its irregularity. For that reason he did not take all the evidence he might otherwise have taken, and that was the reason why the evidence as to this particular line was left incomplete. He felt that to have taken other evidence, under the circumstances, would have been labour thrown away. However, the House had adopted the report, and he considered it advisable to accept the situation. At the same time, he was determined that he would not allow the matter to go to the vote until the House was placed in possession of all information on the subject. He would remind the House that the Government did not ask for the construction of the line to deep-water at the present time. They said the plan before the House would bring the line to a point that it must go to in any case, no matter where it found its way to deep water. With all the lines in the neighbourhood of the metropolis there was so much diversity of interest that the whole country had been surveyed over and over again, and wherever it might be determined to take the line it would be impossible to give satisfaction to any considerable section of the people. They had evidence to-night that there was a strong section of the House who were interested in the Sandgate Railway, and who were determined to oppose the passing of the South Brisbane line. He had never seen so much interest displayed by hon. members opposite in any question, and they were all interested in the Sandgate line.

The HON. C. S. D. MELBOURNE said he sat on the Opposition side of the House, but he had not a penny of interest in the southern part of the colony.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he did not intend to include the Hon. Mr. Melbourne amongst those gentlemen who were the advocates of the Sandgate line and were trying to throw out the South Brisbane line. He submitted that his suggestion at the opening of the debate ought to have been taken, and that Mr. Stanley's evidence ought to have been heard before they proceeded to discuss the question. One half of the speech of the Hon. Mr. Mein was occupied in combatting an argument which no longer existed, with regard to carrying the line to River Terrace or to Shaftston. He hoped hon. members would not allow their intelligence to be obscured by the very skilful and subtle arguments of the Hon. Mr. Mein, who put the matter in such a way that it was calculated to mislead. He did not say that the hon. gentleman had intentionally misled the House, but his arguments were so skilfully marshalled that his speech had that effect. The hon. gentleman said that to carry the line to Shaf-

ston or one of the other points indicated would cost about £60,000; but he carefully excluded from consideration the fact that a great part of that amount would be necessary to construct wharves and other accommodation, no matter to what point the railway was taken. They had the statements of Mr. Stanley that the total cost of the construction from Sherwood to Woollongabba Reserve would be £26,000; and they had his further statement to-night that it would not cost more than £7,000 to complete the line to the Dock Reserve. Although it might be said that was only an approximation of the cost, still he maintained that the country between Woollongabba and the point he had mentioned was of such easy character and was so well known that any man who had any knowledge of country over which railways passed would come to a very fair conclusion that the extension would not cost more than that amount. It was not at all necessary to settle the question this session as to where the line should touch deep-water, but it was very desirable indeed that the House should sanction the construction of the line from Sherwood to Woollongabba. The people of South Brisbane had some claims for consideration, especially as it was admitted by those best qualified to judge that the line should have been taken there originally. He was satisfied that the construction of this line would lead to considerable settlement in the neighbourhood, and that this would cause a very profitable passenger traffic to spring up. It was a line upon which there was a large amount of omnibus traffic, and frequent opportunities for passengers which did not offer from the terminus on the north side. The Hon. Mr. Walsh had talked about no evidence being supplied by coal-owners. They had a document in their possession which consisted of the evidence and report of a Royal commission appointed only two years ago. In that they had the evidence of coal-owners and other people interested in the coal industry, and the evidence also of engineers. He would not trouble the House with more than one reference. He invited the attention of hon. members to the evidence given by Mr. Thorneloe Smith, one of the oldest railway engineers in the colony. In answer to questions put by the Mayor he gave the following evidence:—

"If I gather rightly from your evidence, you consider the south side, at River Terrace, the better part of the river for discharging coals and cargo generally? There is another proposition which has some weight, and it is the Bulimba line.

"But, as far as the north and south side are concerned, you think the south side is better? Yes, better than the Queen's wharf; and better than taking the line to the other wharves."

Then this question was put, in reference to the South side:—

"How much could be discharged there in an ordinary working day? That would depend upon the number of trains you could get in and out. From the junction of the line with the Bridge portion of the line I should say you ought to be able to discharge twenty trucks of coal in an hour, as the trucks would be made with moveable bottoms.

"About 1,000 tons in ten hours? Yes; but that would depend upon the trains being able to get in and out."

If they could get one-third of that amount of traffic it would be very satisfactory indeed. He would not detain the House longer. If the hour were earlier he should certainly devote his time to answering some of the other arguments brought forward by hon. members opposite; but after their long sitting it would be asking too much of hon. members to listen to him for another half-hour. He was quite willing to let the matter go to a division. It had been amply discussed—far more so than any question that had come before the House this session. If the majority thought the line should be deferred, he

would be content with the decision; if not, he should be satisfied that the better course had been taken.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said there was not the least doubt on his mind that the Postmaster-General had been speaking against time, and that in the tactics he had pursued he had some mysterious object in view. He charged the hon. gentleman with wasting nearly the whole of the present evening. The hon. gentleman endeavoured to relieve himself of some of the responsibility by making an accusation against hon. members on the Opposition side over the question they put to the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways; but he (Mr. Walsh) did not hesitate to say that he never saw an evening wasted as the present one had been wasted by the Postmaster-General, at a time, too, when hon. members were urging the Government to bring the session to a close. What had been the conduct of the hon. gentleman the whole evening? He introduced the motion in a most protracted speech for which there was no necessity, and he invited the opposition that it had met with. Then again, as soon as the Engineer-in-Chief was called to the table, the hon. gentleman put questions which were much longer than the answers. And now when he could go to a division and probably carry the motion, he, for some reason which it was impossible to divine, solicited in the first place the hon. member, who was a resident of Ipswich, to make a long speech, and in the next place, made a speech himself which was equally as long but not as eloquent as the hon. member's. He did not understand what the tactics of the hon. gentleman meant. What was the object of not going to a division now? He believed the Government had a majority and were afraid of it, but even if they had not a majority, was it not their duty to abide by the sense of their minority. It was not absolutely necessary for the welfare of the country that the railway should be made between now and next year. The truth was, that they made a promise to a new Government supporter that the line should be made, but that was not a sufficient reason why the House should commit itself to the task, before it felt inclined, or that the Postmaster-General should go out of his way so earnestly and fervently to urge upon the House the necessity for the construction of this line. Having called their attention so much to the matter, why on earth should they not go to a division? He (Mr. Walsh) was prepared to give his vote, and doubtless the hon. member was prepared to record his; but he was uncertain, and hoped, apparently, that by deferring the decision he would obtain a majority for certain. If he did not go to a vote that evening he would not do so to-morrow, for some doughty opponents would be in attendance. The Postmaster-General had better resist his inclination for these little tactics, and let the matter go to an honest vote.

The HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY said he wished that every vote he had given in the Chamber was as safe to be as good and honest a vote as the one he intended to record this evening in favour of the railway; and he should give it, as he had always done, on thoroughly independent grounds, feeling convinced that in doing so he should be doing justice to the whole colony, as well as to the people more immediately interested in its construction. The only serious objection he had to voting for the line was that he was only asked to sanction it as far as Woollongabba. But for the fact that it was the duty of the Government to forward a project of that kind, he should have supported the Hon. Mr. Mein in postponing the work till next session, in order to secure from the Government a complete plan

of the line from its divergence from the main line to whatever point on the river it was intended to go. The plan laid before them by the Chief Engineer showed that the line would be one of the cheapest and best paying lines that had ever been constructed in the colony. They were told that its construction would not cost more than £32,000. Having been a member of the Royal commission which sat to inquire into railway matters nine years ago, under the presidency of the Hon. G. H. Simpson, he perhaps knew more of the matter than most hon. members. The evidence with regard to a line in that particular district showed that, so far as passenger traffic and the traffic in farm produce was concerned, a larger portion might be expected from the country about Sherwood than from any other part of the line. He believed the line would pay from the very start. But it was as a coal line that it would perhaps be most profitable, and on that point many able addresses had been given by the Hon. Mr. Hart and the Hon. Mr. Foote, who both coincided in the belief that as a coal line it might be expected to produce most valuable results to the colony, and develop one of the greatest resources of Southern Queensland. Putting everything else on one side, he should vote for the line relying upon the sagacity of the Government to adopt the most judicious termination for it. A sort of debt was owing to the settlers in that district, for years ago they took up land there, paying a high price for it on the distinct pledge of the colony that a railway was to pass through it. He should therefore, with great pleasure and an independent conscience, vote for the line.

The HON. G. EDMONDSTONE said he greatly regretted that the Government had brought the railway forward without putting two ends to it. If they had given it a water terminus anywhere, hon. members would have had no difficulty in making up their minds as to how they were to vote. He was perfectly willing that the line should begin at any point between Ipswich and Brisbane, so long as it came to a certain definite spot on the river. As a coal line, how could coal be delivered from Woollongabba? Was it intended to carry the line to River Terrace, or to Shafston, or still further down the river? His own idea was to concentrate the trade as much as possible within the city of Brisbane. He was altogether averse to its being taken to the mouth of the river, or even as far as Shafston, and would prefer to see it go no further than River Terrace. The most practical speech on the subject was delivered by the Hon. Mr. Hart, whose words hon. members ought carefully to consider. The only difficulty he had in voting at once and with a good conscience for the line was that it had not a river terminus. Had that terminus been named, the motion would have found hardly a dissentient voice. He intended to vote with the Government for this railway.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY, speaking to the question of adjournment, said he thought the debate had been a very instructive one. A great deal of light had been thrown on the subject. He had a good deal to say upon the question, and he believed several other hon. members intended to speak. He hoped, therefore, that at that late hour the debate would be adjourned.

The HON. F. J. IVORY said the session was to all intents and purposes moribund. The other House had practically concluded the business of the session, and he thought hon. members of that Chamber should not object to sit a little later in order to finish the business before them.

The HON. J. C. FOOTE said he would, with the permission of the House, withdraw his motion for the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. W. F. LAMBERT said that when he heard the evidence given before the select committee of which he was a member, he was at first inclined to strongly oppose the construction of the line; but, since then, he had obtained other information which had caused him to regard the proposal more favourably. Coal was a commodity which would not bear a great amount of expense, and he found that in New South Wales the ruling price was about 10s. per ton. At the present time the coal from Ipswich had to be carried about twenty-five miles to Brisbane, and if another ten miles haulage were added it would mean, at the rate of 4d. per ton per mile as fixed in the Railway Bill, an increased cost of 3s. 4d. per ton. That would be a great discouragement to the export trade, and therefore he was of opinion that the House should agree to the construction of this line. Hereafter hon. members would have an opportunity of deciding upon the best route to be adopted from Woollongabba to deep water. At present he was rather in favour of the Shafston route, for the reason that there would be more space there than at the other proposed terminus. On a future occasion he should have something to say about the way in which the port might be improved by means of a cutting, so that large ships would be able to come in.

The Hon. C. S. D. MELBOURNE said he had been to some extent influenced by the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Lambert, who, like himself, had not the slightest interest in the southern portion of the colony, all their interest being in the central and northern districts. They were interested in the general advancement of the colony, but not of the south in particular, and therefore their votes were likely to be disinterested. He could not help noticing that Mr. Stanley's statements were nearly all surmises, and he had to acknowledge, when asked questions about the probability of the line taking certain routes making a return, that he had never been over the routes. The evidence of a grazier who had ridden over certain country would probably be more valuable on such points than that of a man who had never been over the country, and could not have any practical knowledge of the matter. The proposed work would cost at the least £33,000, and it might amount to £66,000, all of which would have to be paid not by the people of Brisbane alone, but by the people of the whole colony. If hon. members were not careful to restrict the expenditure the amount of interest payable on money borrowed to carry out these branch lines would be so great that there would be some difficulty in meeting it. He regretted the necessity of speaking on the subject at so late an hour.

Motion, by permission, withdrawn.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said the evidence before the House, so far as the report of the committee was concerned, was comparatively valueless. He had hoped that the question would have been decided on its merits, without reference to party, and if he could see his way to support the line he should certainly do so. It was a Government measure, and great stress had been laid on it as a measure calculated to benefit a portion of the colony which it was said had not hitherto received justice. He, however, failed to discover any reason for that view;—he held that there were a great many other localities more entitled to consideration, both with regard to Government expenditure and to public convenience. It appeared to him that the benefit which South Brisbane would derive from the line was of a very limited character. The House had been told that the passenger traffic would be almost *nil*, and the more he considered the matter the less

likelihood he saw of any coal traffic arising of sufficient magnitude to justify the construction of this line. Looking to previous reports relating to schemes for railways to deep water, he found that in 1876 a report stated that the total amount of coal raised in that year was 50,000 tons, and that out of that quantity 1,750 tons only was exported, the balance being used in local manufactories and for home consumption generally. The quantity of coal now brought down in excess of the requirements of the city and of the railway department was exceedingly limited; and he was satisfied that the quantity of coal raised from that year (1876) to the present had very slightly increased. The evidence given before the select committee went to show that although there might be a very large quantity of coal in the vicinity of Ipswich and on the banks of the river, the total quantity exportable was very small. In that respect, therefore, the construction of the railway seemed to be premature until the capacity of the mines was more fully established. It was to be regretted that more evidence as to the actual amount of coal which proprietors were now prepared to send down had not been given. He was quite willing to assume, however, that the coal traffic might increase. The next thing to consider, then, was the simplest and best mode of bringing the coal to market. The evidence on this point showed that when a line by the present route was brought to deep water the cost would have been very little under £40,000, and he did not think such a line could be made under £60,000. The Hon. Mr. Mein had very ably represented the merits of a branch line to the river in the neighbourhood of Bulimba, and he had shown that, in the long run, the cost of carrying coal to there would be very little more than the cost of carrying it to South Brisbane, and that the difference was not enough to justify the expenditure of a larger sum in construction. He would, however, go a step further and show a way by which the coal could be brought to deep water at an expense even less than the expense of carrying it to either Bulimba or South Brisbane. The plan he referred to was not a new one: it was to construct a branch from the present line at a point near the Milton distillery, to run along the North Quay, pass under the Brisbane Bridge, and thence on to the Queen's Wharf. Such a line could be constructed for about £20,000—the engineer's estimate, based on an actual survey, being £18,000 and some odd pounds. A further survey had been made from the Queen's Wharf, passing through very little private property to run round by Portland Place; thence through Alice street, trenching very slightly upon the Botanic Gardens, to the Alice street ferry, where there was ample room for the establishment of an extensive coal wharf, sufficient to meet the requirements of this part of Queensland for very many years. The Hon. Mr. Mein had pointed out that the adoption of the South Brisbane line would necessitate the employment of a separate staff, and the Engineer-in-Chief had shown that an ugly gradient would be encountered in getting the coal to the wharf. The line might not be an impracticable one, but it was very questionable whether it was desirable to adopt such a line when another could be found with gradients not exceeding 1 in 50. Another advantage of the line he proposed was that from about the Victoria Bridge to Harris' Wharf, a distance of some 12 chains, there was a sufficient depth of water for large vessels to load. In the evidence given the danger of taking large vessels from the wharves without a certain amount of loading had been pointed out, and that danger would be entirely removed, because large vessels could load at the

Alice street ferry, whilst those of lesser tonnage could be accommodated at the Queen's Wharf. The cost of the extension to the Alice-street ferry of the line to which he had already referred as costing £18,000, or according to Mr. Stanley's estimate £20,000, had been estimated by competent authorities at £12,000, making a total of £32,000. He put it to the House whether it would not be far better and more to the interests of the coal trade, the shipping trade, and to the inhabitants of Brisbane generally, to make that line in preference to the other. It must be evident to the Postmaster-General that the line proposed would give very little satisfaction to a large section of the House, and he hoped that the motion would be withdrawn. The matter could be brought forward early next session, when hon. members would have better opportunities of making themselves more acquainted with its merits.

Question put—the House divided :—

CONTENTS, 7.

The Hons. C. H. Buzacott, W. Aplin, J. C. Foote, K. I. O'Doherty, J. F. McDougall, W. F. Lambert, and F. H. Hart.

NON-CONTENTS, 8.

The Hons. W. H. Walsh, C. S. Mein, W. Pettigrew, J. Swan, F. T. Gregory, W. D. Box, J. Cowlshaw, and J. S. Turner.

Question resolved in the negative.

The House adjourned at half-past 11 o'clock, p.m.
