

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 31 AUGUST 1882

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 31 August, 1882.

Petition.—Proposed Adjournment.—Petitions.—Questions.—Railway from Bundaberg to Port Curtis.—Ennu Vale to Harrisville Railway Survey.—Brisbane and Gympie Railway.—Motion for Adjournment.—Reward for Discovery of Tin-Lode in District of Stanthorpe.—Prospecting in the Mineral District of Stanthorpe.—Stanthorpe Water Supply.—Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

Mr. BLACK presented a petition from Selectors in the Bowen district, asking for relief from certain clauses in the Land Act of 1876.

Petition read and received

PROPOSED ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. GRIMES said he thought the matter he wished to refer to was more a question of privilege than of order, but if necessary he would move the adjournment of the House. On Tuesday evening last the hon. member for Mackay presented a petition from certain selectors and residents on the Johnstone and Herbert Rivers, and the hon. member stated that the

petition was respectfully worded and in accordance with the rules of the House in every way. He (Mr. Grimes) had an opportunity last night of seeing the petition, and he observed that it was not in accordance with the Standing Orders, as it contained irregularities which rendered it contrary to the Standing Orders to receive it. It might have been unnoticed by the hon. member for Mackay in reading over the petition, but nevertheless it was as he had said. He did not refer to the body of the petition, which might be respectfully worded. The irregularities to which he referred were some signatures being signed by the agents of the persons named; and that was contrary to the 197th Standing Order, which said:—

"Every petition shall be signed by the parties whose names are appended thereto, by their names or marks, and by no one else, except in case of incapacity by sickness."

There was no mention made whether those individuals were incapacitated by sickness; and if it were so it should have appeared on the petition. Over and above that there were two or three signatures evidently in the same handwriting. He could not say they were forgeries, but it would puzzle an expert to find out the difference. The privilege of petitioning Parliament for the redress of grievances was one which he in no way wished to prevent or hinder; but, at the same time, while they jealously watched over that privilege they should also have a mind to the dignity of the House and not allow any petition to be presented which was not in accordance with the Standing Orders. He moved the adjournment of the House to give hon. members an opportunity of speaking on the question.

The SPEAKER, referring to the point of order raised by the hon. member, said that he did not usually see the petitions which were presented until they came before the Printing Committee, and therefore he could not see for himself whether the signatures to the petitions were in the same handwriting or not. But he would point out to the hon. member that, even if certain signatures attached to a petition were those of the agents of the persons named, those signatures only would be invalid, and would not invalidate the whole petition so long as it was signed properly by other petitioners.

Mr. LOW said he believed no petition could be said to be free from the objection raised. He had received petitions for presentation with some hundreds of names attached; and how could he say they were all genuine signatures? There ought to be a law passed by which only genuine signatures should be allowed to be attached to any petition.

Mr. BAILEY said the petition referred to was signed by twenty-one persons, who called themselves sugar-planters, or persons engaged in tropical agriculture. He had looked through the petition, and he should like to know whether the hon. member for Mackay knew that those gentlemen were engaged in tropical agriculture, or that they were sugar-planters. He (Mr. Bailey) very much doubted whether one-half of them were what they were described to be. He found that ten out of the twenty-one were merely selectors, and that others were men holding from 1,000 acres to 3,000 acres of land; some were doctors and townspeople; and he was quite confident that not one-half of the twenty-one persons named were *bonâ fide* agriculturists of any kind. He thought, when a petition was presented containing signatures of persons representing themselves as belonging to a certain class, the member presenting the petition should make himself acquainted with the fact whether they were what they represented themselves to be or not. It was misleading the House when

a petition was presented containing a list of names not one-half of which were what they pretended to be.

Mr. SCOTT said it was impossible, as far as he could judge, for anyone presenting a petition to say whether the signatures were genuine or not. An hon. member received a petition as it was sent to him, and it was his business to see that it was in accordance with the rules of the House and that there was at least one signature attached. Further than that he did not see how anyone presenting a petition could be called in question as to the signatures. It was quite impossible, and he did not consider it was the duty of an hon. member, to verify the signatures attached to petitions. If such were the case—if hon. members were expected to verify signatures before a petition could be presented—he did not think many petitions would be presented to the House at all.

Mr. BROOKES said he differed from the last speaker. If an hon. member presenting a petition could easily satisfy himself as to the genuineness of the names attached, he should do so. The House was in great danger of being misled, because the majority of hon. members did not see the petitions, but trusted to the presenter of the petition having done what seemed to him (Mr. Brookes) not much to ask—that was, not to hold himself responsible for every individual signature, but to carefully examine them. In such a case as that referred to by the hon. member (Mr. Grimes), where four signatures purporting to be the signatures of four different persons were in the same handwriting, there could not be anything wrong in saying that the hon. member who presented the petition treated the House unfairly; because the House placed every confidence in any hon. member presenting a petition, and therefore they had a right to expect that no petition should be presented when the value of its signatures could be called in question. That was a fairly reasonable thing, being midway between two extremes. They did not wish an hon. member to verify every signature, but to see that a petition was respectfully worded and in accordance with the rules of the House; and, if an hon. member presenting a petition were asked, he should be able to answer that there were not four signatures in the same handwriting, and that the signatures were really and truly those of the class from whom the petition was supposed to come.

Mr. McLEAN said he would take advantage of the motion for adjournment to bring under the notice of the Government the present rate of postage between the colony of Queensland and Great Britain. He thought, if the Government could not come to some satisfactory arrangement with the Imperial authorities in connection with the postal system, the sooner they returned to the old rate of 6d. per letter between Queensland and Great Britain the better. People in the colony found themselves in a very awkward position in sending their letters by the Torres Straits mail when they put a 4d. stamp on a letter believing that that stamp would carry the letter to its destination in Great Britain, and afterwards received information from their relatives and friends that they had to pay the deficient postage. He thought the sooner the matter was looked into the better.

The PREMIER (Hon. T. McIlwraith): I do not think there are any cases of that sort.

Mr. McLEAN said that last mail brought information to the colony that letters posted in Brisbane with a 4d. stamp affixed, and carried by the Torres Straits mail, were charged 2d. extra postage in Great Britain. That was a fact.

The PREMIER: Have you seen the letters?

Mr. McLEAN said he could get the letters in which the statement was made by those who had written from home that on letters that were posted here at the usual 4d. rate they had to pay 2d. extra on their delivery in Great Britain. He thought the sooner they returned to the old 6d. system the better, rather than maintain the present system. People in the colony would not grudge the extra 2d., rather than have their friends at home called upon to pay it. If he understood the Colonial Secretary rightly, when the matter was previously before the House he stated that the extra rate that had been charged by the authorities here would be charged no longer; but by the very last mail by the southern route they had to pay the extra charge.

The PREMIER: I never said so.

Mr. McLEAN said if he misunderstood the hon. gentleman, and was mistaken, he apologised; but he thought that if they could not make satisfactory arrangements with the authorities at home the sooner they returned to the old 6d. rate by the Torres Straits route the better.

Mr. GROOM said it was very inconvenient to bring forward two subjects on a motion for adjournment, because it turned attention entirely away from the matter an hon. member had in view in moving the adjournment. Referring back to the subject the hon. member for Oxley had introduced, he thought they ought to be particularly careful not to interfere more than they could possibly help with the right of petition to that House. It was one of the privileges of the people conceded centuries ago, and was only obtained after a great struggle; and for that reason they should be very careful in interfering with it as little as possible. For the information of new members of the House he thought it was of consequence that they should understand that in presenting a petition they should make themselves acquainted, not only with the contents of it, but with the signatures also. The 197th Standing Order was very clear on the point:—

"Every petition shall be signed by the parties whose names are appended thereto, by their names or marks, and by no one else, except in the case of incapacity by sickness."

Then Standing Order 203 said:—

"It is highly unwarrantable, and a breach of the privileges of this House, for any person to set the name of any other person to any petition to be presented to this House."

It was also utterly inconsistent with the rules of the House of Commons for any person to sign the name of any other person to a petition; and he was inclined to think, although he could not at that moment put his hand on them, that he could produce authorities from the journals of the House of Commons to show that petitions signed by agents had not been received by the House of Commons. It was distinctly laid down by May, in his "Parliamentary Practice," page 563, as followed:—

"The petition should be written upon parchment or paper, for a printed or lithographed petition will not be received by the Commons; and at least one signature should be written upon the same sheet or skin upon which the petition is written. It must be in the English language, or accompanied with a translation which the member who presents it states to be correct; it must be free from interlineations or erasures; it must be signed; it must have original signatures or marks, and not copies from the original, nor signatures of agents on behalf of others, except in case of incapacity by sickness; and it must not have letters, affidavits, appendices, or other documents annexed. The signatures must be written upon the petition itself and not pasted upon or otherwise transferred to it."

Those rules were very plain, and clearly defined the right of petition as far as that House was concerned. Of course new members who were

not acquainted with such matters were liable to make mistakes in presenting petitions. There was also considerable force in what had been said respecting petitions from a distance—that the member presenting it, not being acquainted with the petitioners or their handwriting, would be unable to say whether they were *bonâ fide* or otherwise. He thought, however, that the hon. member for Oxley was quite right in calling attention to the matter, because it was a very easy thing indeed to get up a petition. He remembered that the late Sir Charles Cowper stated in the Parliament of New South Wales that he had only to stand at a street corner and get thousands of signatures to a petition, no matter on what subject, at 1s. or 2s. 6d. a thousand. But for all that there was something sacred in the right of petition to that House. It was the only means of redress people outside had against the tyranny of the Crown, or even the tyranny of that House, and they should not interfere with it unwarrantably or unnecessarily. But there were occasions, and perhaps the present was one, when it might be necessary to call attention to petitions, and to point out that they were signed by agents, especially when the petition was one asking for certain concessions, because in that case it was calculated to create suspicion as to the *bona fides* of the petition when they found persons signing as agents for others. It was the first time the matter had been mooted in that House, and, although it did not invalidate the reception of the petition, because the Standing Orders did not say so, nor did the extract he had read from “May,” still he believed he could show instances in the House of Commons where petitions presented having signatures attached by persons as agents for others had not been received.

The PREMIER said he should be very much astonished if the hon. member could produce one instance in which a petition had been refused to be received by the House of Commons because there were signatures on it purporting to be signed by agents instead of by the parties themselves. Such a thing would have the effect of depriving any body of people of the right of petition, because all a man would have to do would be to write across the petition, “So-and-so, agent for so-and-so,” and that would render the whole petition invalid. It was absurd to say that because one or two signatures were signed by agents the whole petition was invalid. The hon. member for Oxley had given two reasons for objecting to the petition in question—one, that it had signatures on it purporting to be signed by certain persons as agents for others; and then the allegation that some of the signatures were in the same handwriting. He (the Premier) would deal with the second objection first. He had the petition before him, and there were no signatures on it in the same handwriting, except in one instance, where “W. G. Ewan” signed for himself, and then as agent for “P. R. Ricardo,” and again as agent for “Jno. Broad.” There were no other signatures, so far as he could see, that were not apparently the genuine signatures of the parties themselves. If the principle contended for by the hon. member for Oxley was carried out it would simply take away from the House almost every petition he had ever seen presented. He had never seen a petition of any size presented that had not plenty of signatures in the same handwriting, and that did not invalidate it. It would tend to invalidate very much the respect they would have for the petition, because they would be inclined to take it for granted that there must be something wrong if the petitioners had to resort to such a device as getting signatures in the same handwriting. But they might be the signatures of ignorant people who could not write

their own names; and if petitions were to be rejected for that reason some of the greatest petitions ever presented in England—for instance, those in connection with the Reform Bill, in which it was calculated that there were hundreds of yards of signatures in the same handwriting—would have been invalidated and thrown out; but those petitions were received. What a ridiculous thing it would be if they were to hold that it would invalidate a petition because he signed his name “Thomas McIlwraith” and wrote “John Smith” underneath? And yet that was the contention of the hon. member. One genuine signature to a petition was perfectly sufficient to make that petition valid and to authorise the House to receive it. If there were others purporting to be signed by agents let them be struck off, but the petition would remain the same as it was before. With regard to the other matter, he did not think the hon. member for Logan was correct. He would like the hon. member to produce the envelope, showing that while it bore a 4d. stamp an additional 2d. was charged at home. He had no objection to debate the subject when the proper time arrived, and perhaps when the Estimates were before the House would be the best time; but he thought he had it in writing from the English Government that they did not intend to charge anything in addition to the 4d. He was not quite sure, speaking from memory, but he felt satisfied on the point. But it was far too large a subject to be dealt with in the way the hon. member proposed, because simply altering the rate to 6d. would not get rid of the difficulty at all. The difficulty was in regard to the routes, and to alter the rate to 6d. would simply ruin their own mail service. It was not such a simple question as the hon. member seemed to imagine. If his proposition was simply to advise the Government to increase the postage rate to 6d.—which they could now do at a profit of 4d.—he (the Premier) did not see the advisability of it; and that appeared to be all the hon. member asked them to do. If people at home had been asked to pay an additional rate it was a matter that had not been brought under his notice, and he was sure he had it in writing from the English Government that they would allow letters to be delivered without extra charge. The Government here charged only 4d.; they landed the letters in London, and all the English Post Office had to do was to distribute them through the post offices, and that was charged a great deal more for than if they posted each individual letter in the London Post Office for home delivery. They had been treated in the most illiberal manner, and the matter was still under contention; but they had no desire whatever, nor was it at all probable, that the Government would recede from the position they had taken up with regard to the 4d. rate. They had no intention of altering either the 4d. or 9d. rate until the English Government came to some satisfactory arrangement with them.

Mr. McLEAN said he was not in a position to comply with the request of the Premier, because he would require to send to England to get the envelope. But he could show the hon. gentleman the letter in which the statement was made that, on a letter posted here with a 4d. stamp, 2d. extra had to be paid when it was delivered in Great Britain. He had simply called the attention of the Government to the matter because he knew it was not settled at the present time.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said he held in his hand a letter addressed to a lady in town “*via* Brindisi, Galle, and Melbourne,” which was delivered by the Torres Straits mail steamer “Manora,” and the lady to whom it was addressed objected very strongly to her letters

being detained in London so that they might be sent out by the Torres Straits route instead of by the route by which they were addressed. He would hand the envelope to the Premier.

The PREMIER said the letter was from France, and was addressed *via* Brindisi, Galle, and Melbourne; and from the way business was conducted in the London Post Office he was not at all astonished at any blunders being made. He had seen other letters addressed in the same way, where not the slightest regard was shown to the instructions given as to the route.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said the same thing happened last mail.

Mr. BLACK said he was sure hon. members would not suppose that he had any wrong motives in presenting the petition he had received. Any member receiving petitions, either from his own constituents or from any other part of the country, affecting matters in which he himself was supposed to take an interest, had a right to present them. He was satisfied with the explanation of the Speaker that petitions should be received without criticising the signatures to them too minutely. If that was not the case hon. members would be unable to present any. The petition referred to did not deserve to be adversely criticised, especially as it was not asking any concession from the House. It was simply a petition from certain selectors asking to be allowed to spend money—it was not a petition for exceptional legislation in their favour. He had some other petitions of a similar nature which he intended to present later on.

Mr. GRIMES said he did not object in any way to the petition being presented, but he had thought that it was contrary to the Standing Orders for a petition to have signatures purporting to be written by certain individuals when they were really written by their agents. He begged to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn accordingly.

PETITIONS.

Mr. BLACK presented a petition from Selectors resident on the Lower Burdekin, Townsville, and other parts of the North, praying for relief from the operations of certain clauses of the Land Act of 1876.

Petition received.

Mr. BLACK presented a petition of similar purport from Selectors resident on the Johnstone and Mowbray Rivers.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. BAILEY asked the Minister for Works—

1. The name of the Railway Porter at Ipswich who was dismissed on or about 24th August, after six or seven years' service?
2. What was the reason for his dismissal?
3. Has he been informed of such reason?
4. The name of the Porter who was appointed about the same date in his place?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) replied—

1. William Milson.
2. For inefficiency.
3. Yes.
4. There was a lad porter put on at Ipswich on the 17th August named Macnamara, but not specially to take Milson's place.

Those were the formal answers which would appear in "Votes and Proceedings;" but, as the question had been put in consequence of a statement made by the leader of the Opposition on Tuesday night, he thought he had a right to make a short explanation in connection with it. The statement of the leader of the Opposition was that

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a man had been dismissed and a convict taken on in his place. He (Mr. Macrossan) had that morning asked the Commissioner for Railways to give him all the information he possessed, referring specially to the assertion made by the leader of the Opposition; and he had given him all the particulars in addition to the formal answer which would appear in "Votes and Proceedings." A porter named Milson had been employed for six or seven years at several stations, and had to be removed from each, as the station-master found fault with him for inefficiency. The man was cautioned and fined, and at last the Commissioner for Railways thought it was no longer of any use fining him, as he would not do his work properly, and gave him notice. The notice was sent in the following terms:—

"Referring to previous communication, please advise Milson his services will be dispensed with at the expiration of twenty-eight days' notice from this date. You will please inform him that it has been decided to take this action as he does not improve in any way, and every station-master under whom he has been is dissatisfied with his conduct."

So much for William Milson, the porter, who had been at the bottom of those questions. As to the boy Macnamara, the Commissioner for Railways had no knowledge whatever of the statement made by the leader of the Opposition. All he knew about the boy was that he was the eldest of a family of orphans, and that he was put on as a lad porter at 25s. a week—not in place of Milson, who was receiving 42s. a week, but because a lad porter was necessary at Ipswich. The lad underwent the usual examination which he (Mr. Macrossan) had instituted for porters and others entering the service.

The HON. G. THORN asked if he was in order in answering the Minister for Works? If not, he would conclude with a motion.

The SPEAKER said that in accordance with the Standing Order no debate could take place upon an answer to a question; and an hon. member could not put himself right by moving the adjournment of the House for such a purpose.

Mr. THORN said he thought he was justified in moving the adjournment of the House.

The SPEAKER said that, as the hon. member had intimated his intention of debating the answer given by the Minister for Works, he would again point out that it had been decided that an hon. member could not put himself in order by moving the adjournment of the House for that purpose.

Mr. THORN asked if the House was to understand that the statement made by the Minister for Works was to go uncontradicted. He meant to give it a contradiction.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member can do so by notice of motion in the usual manner.

Mr. MILES said it seemed rather unusual to allow the Minister for Works to make an explanation, and not to allow that explanation to be answered.

The SPEAKER said the Minister for Works informed him that he wished to make a statement in answer to a question, and pointed out to him that such was the practice in the House of Commons. He had looked up the matter, and found that what "May" said about it was—

"All questions should be limited, as far as possible, to matters immediately connected with the business of Parliament, and should be put in such a manner as not to involve opinion, argument, or inference; nor are any facts to be stated unless they be necessary to make the question intelligible. In the same manner an answer should be confined to the points contained in the question, with such explanation only as will render the answer intelligible; but a certain latitude is sometimes permitted, by courtesy, to Ministers of the Crown."

Mr. BAILEY said the hon. member (Mr. Thorn) did not seem to wish to debate the answer to the question, but the speech made afterwards by the Minister for Works, which was quite distinct from the answer.

The PREMIER said the hon. member who tried to get up the debate was clearly wrong. Every word spoken by the Minister for Works was a portion of his answer to the question. His hon. colleague gave in a written answer, and expanded it by what he considered a necessary explanation. That was the custom of the House of Commons. Ministers there did not produce written answers to questions, but invariably made their replies in the form of a short speech. The hon. member had his remedy. The Minister for Works had no objection to any debate on the matter, but let it be initiated in the proper way.

Mr. THORN said the Premier must not forget that private members had only one day in a fortnight to bring forward their grievances. He had no wish to make any allusion to the answer given by the Minister for Works, but only to contradict the statement made by him.

The SPEAKER: The statement must be taken as being part of the answer to the question.

Mr. THORN: The Government might allow me to say two words in reply.

RAILWAY FROM BUNDABERG TO PORT CURTIS.

Mr. NORTON, in moving—

That it is desirable that a sufficient sum of money for the Survey of a Line of Railway from Bundaberg to Port Curtis be devoted to that purpose, from whatever sum may be granted by this House for the survey of lines of railway—

said he thought the motion was one which would commend itself to the House. The expenditure incurred would not be very great, and it would be admitted that it was a matter of importance that at least a survey should be made in continuation of the lines the Government proposed to carry out. The distance from Bundaberg to Gladstone was somewhere about 105 miles, and a line of railway could be made in a less distance than that. The country throughout was almost entirely level, and along the route there was some very good land which would be taken up by selectors. Apart from that, there were minerals of different descriptions, and there was plenty of timber. Timber was already becoming scarce. There were several saw-mills at work at Bundaberg and one at Gladstone, and if the present rate of cutting was maintained the whole supply within a reasonable distance would soon be exhausted. Near the place where the line would run tin had been discovered two years ago, and, though nothing was being done there now, the explorations which had taken place showed that throughout the whole country around that spot there were deposits of tin. A large tin-buyer from Sydney who had visited the place and prospected around the heads of the creeks told him that everywhere near that spot there was more or less tin. There was every prospect, therefore, where such indications were found that in course of time a very good field would be discovered. The party who worked there for a long time were not working on their own account, but were backed up by a business man in Bundaberg. Some difficulty arising in connection with the selections, the body of those who went there at the rush got tired of waiting and cleared out. Coal had already been found near Bundaberg, and he believed the coal measures extended far away towards Gladstone. Near Gladstone in another direction coal had been found, and he believed the greater

part of the country between the two places was coal country. It was also a matter of great importance to the people about Bundaberg that they should be connected with a good port. Without wishing to say a word against their own port, he might say that it was well known that no large vessel could come in there. A few months ago he had the opportunity of spending some time in Bundaberg, and it appeared to him to be one of the most rising towns in the colony. A large amount of business was being done; considerable population was settling all round the place; and the work of sugar-planting and timber-cutting was increasing very rapidly. He did not wish to detain the House, and he should be satisfied with some sort of assurance that the survey would be made without unnecessary delay, feeling sure that if the survey were promised it would be carried out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he hoped the motion was not an insidious attempt on the part of the hon. member for Port Curtis to divert the trade of Bundaberg to Gladstone. He regarded the survey as one that would be carried out and acted upon some day or other. The line would form a portion of the coast line which must ultimately connect the capital with all the towns along the coast. The Government were now to a certain extent continuing the Maryborough line towards Brisbane by way of Kilkivan; and a preliminary survey was being made in order that the plan might be got ready to lay on the table of the House before the close of the session. The Government also hoped to continue the line from Esk to meet the Kilkivan line; and they would also, perhaps, continue the Burrum line to Bundaberg. The Government had therefore shown their *bona fides* in the direction indicated by the motion. He was extremely favourable to that line, and always had been, believing that all the coast towns should be connected with the metropolis in that way. It was, however, a question of time; all the surveys could not be made in one year. The line would have his favourable consideration in preparing the schedule of surveys. When that was laid on the table hon. members would have an opportunity of debating the subject; in the meantime the hon. member might be satisfied, and not press the motion.

Mr. THORN said he was glad to see that the Minister was carrying out the policy of the late Government. The hon. gentleman and the Government had evidently come round to his way of thinking. It was, however, a most extraordinary thing that, while they were desirous of shortening the route to New South Wales by means of a direct line, they preferred to go a roundabout way to connect the metropolis with Maryborough. That was as great a piece of political jobbery as he had ever heard of.

The SPEAKER: The subject under discussion is the survey of a line from Bundaberg to Port Curtis.

Mr. THORN said his remarks were connected with that subject. The country would see that going through Esk was not the right way to connect the coast towns. As he had previously said, they might as well propose to go to Toowoomba *via* Southport as go to Maryborough *via* Esk and Nanango. He was glad, however, that the Government had accepted the proposal, and he should cordially support the motion.

Mr. NORTON said he had no hesitation in adopting the suggestion of the Minister for Works and withdrawing the motion, because he believed that the line would be one of the first to be surveyed. He had omitted, however, to suggest that the land on the proposed line should be reserved from sale. There would be no

disadvantage in that, as, if another route were afterwards adopted, the land could be sold. With the permission of the House he would withdraw the motion.

Motion, by permission, withdrawn.

EMU VALE TO HARRISVILLE RAILWAY SURVEY.

Mr. ALLAN, in moving—

That the House will, on Thursday, the 7th September, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon a Supplementary Estimate for this year a sufficient sum to defray the cost of a Survey from Emu Vale to Harrisville, the present terminus of the line from Ipswich, towards Fassifern—

said that in framing the motion he had no wish to lay down a hard-and-fast line as to the route of the proposed line. His proposal was that the line should be surveyed from Emu Vale to some point in the line now surveyed between Fassifern and Ipswich. After a trial survey had been made it might be found desirable to commence from some other part of the line; or to go on to Killarney and carry the line from there to Harrisville; or to start from the terminus at Fassifern, to which place the Ipswich line was surveyed; the object being to connect the line which had been authorised from Warwick to Killarney with that which had been authorised from Ipswich towards Fassifern. He looked upon the work as a matter of national importance which would have a beneficial effect not only upon his own district but also upon the colony generally. At that particular part of the country there was some of the most magnificent agricultural land to be found in any part of the world. The Premier and other members of the Ministry had admitted that the land there, and the produce of the land, were second to nothing they had seen. He was surprised that the proposal had not been submitted before, as such a line would shorten the distance between Brisbane and Warwick by about one-half. The distance between Swan Creek and the end of the line surveyed to Fassifern was, as the crow flew, twenty-five miles, and, adding one-half more than that for deviations, such a line would shorten the distance between Brisbane and Warwick by about sixty or seventy miles. When the Western line was connected with New South Wales *via* Tenterfield, that would make an important difference in the length of the route to Sydney, and the mails would no doubt be carried over the proposed line. That would mean a saving of about four hours in the delivery of mails, goods, and passengers, and it would be a great advantage to all business men. The great increase in the traffic over the main line had led hon. members to believe that a second line of rails would have to be laid down between Ipswich and Warwick; but if the proposed line were made no such duplication would be necessary, and the expense of laying 130 miles of line would be saved. It would also open up a large amount of most beautiful country at present unavailable, because produce could not be brought from there. He was glad to say the land is reserved from sale, but in the meantime it was impossible to select, because the people could not get to the place. In looking over the Loan Estimates he was surprised to find that no sum was put down for the extension of the present surveyed line from Emu Vale to Killarney; he thought that full provision should have been made for a line to run through such magnificent country. On the occasion of the debate on the Conterminous Selections Bill it had been remarked that he had not quoted sufficient evidence to prove the Bill requisite; now he would read one or two notes from gentlemen in the part of the country the proposed line would traverse,

showing that the matter had at all events aroused the feeling of the people up there, and that they took an intelligent interest in the carrying out of that survey. He had a letter from Mr. McCara, a large and respectable farmer at Emu Creek, from which he would read an extract:—

"I may remind you that the vast table-land sloping westward on the top of the Main Range, intersected by Freestone, Swan, and Emu Creeks, is a very rich soil, growing an almost inexhaustible supply of cedar, pine, yellow wood, beach, native mahogany, etc., intersected with plains from five to fifty acres, I should say. I have never seen timber like it for size and quality, so that if a railway traversed up one of these creeks a great source of wealth would be at once opened up, and a trade with Brisbane at once established. Besides, I think it is perhaps the most fertile land for cultivation on the Downs, being of a rich, marly, porous nature, and the altitude tells much in its favour for rainfall. On the top of Emu and Swan Creeks the Main Range rises very abruptly, which is as far as I have been, never having gone down the Coochin and Fassifern side; but to look from the top the land seems rich, well-grassed, with extensive plains, and seems fit for cultivation right up to the foot of the Main Range. No doubt a pretty long tunnel on top of any of these creeks would be necessary, but otherwise I do not think the engineering difficulties at all great—very much easier, I should say, than the Toowoomba Range."

That was the opinion of one gentleman in the district. He had also the views of another gentleman, Mr. Sewell, who knew more about the country than any other living man, and who had a large experimental farm on which he cultivated different kinds of plants and grasses and other products of the soil. That gentleman referred to three routes—one by Glengallan, Merivale, and Cunningham's Gap; another by Swan Creek Valley; and a third by the valley of Emu Creek. Mr. Sewell said:—

"By the first of these routes the distance would be about 100 miles (Warwick to Brisbane), with no great engineering difficulties to be overcome; but almost all the land on this side belongs to Glengallan and Merivale, and on the other side to Messrs. Wienholt."

As that route ran through private property and not Government land, he (Mr. Allan) could not advise its adoption.

"The route by Swan Creek was the shortest and most direct. The distance from Warwick to Brisbane would be about eighty miles. No engineering difficulties going up Swan Creek, except at a place called 'Hell Hole,' when a certain amount of dynamite would have to be used for about half-a-mile. With this exception the ground rises with a gradual slope to the point where the tunnel would have to be made through the range. At this point the mountain is comparatively narrow at the elevation where the tunnel would be driven through, so that the latter would thus be quite short. On the eastern side of the range the slope down to Fassifern would be very gradual, presenting no serious obstacles. The land on the east side, though not what would be called first-class up here, is still very good land for the country below the range—plenty of very fair agricultural flats and good grazing ridges. By Swan Creek the line would be more directly in the centre of the producing district on this side, and would be more likely to gather close settlement around it on the other side than by any of the other two routes. The third route, that by Emu Creek, the distance would be about ninety miles; the work heavier and more expensive. The special advantages by this route are—1. It would come into direct contact with the most magnificent stretch of timber country to be found in the colony. This timber land is all Crown land; the quality of the timber is unsurpassed; and with any attempt at conservation, the quantity would be practically limitless. No better country could be found for a timber reserve than this. 2. Coal is also abundant in that locality of first-class quality."

Mr. Sewell said he had seen seams in the water-courses up to six feet in thickness, and he was certain that they would become very valuable if only opened up. Then Mr. Kemp wrote to him (Mr. Allan), saying—

"The general advantages to be gained by a railway by either of the three routes could not be easily exaggerated. I shall not trouble you with a mass of details at present; I shall be most happy to furnish you with such if you desire. Meantime I may say—what every man here whose opinion is of any value believes—that if you carry your proposed line you will completely revo-

lutionise the whole question of supplying Brisbane and the North with agricultural produce. Within a very few years the enormous sums now leaving the colony for hay, maize, potatoes, butter, cheese, bacon, etc., would be retained in our own hands. I can furnish you with the most convincing proof of this assertion if you wish. All we want is direct carriage to the metropolis."

He would not detain the House by reading from any more letters, but what he had read would show that the people in the district were of opinion that the line would not only be of great benefit to the metropolis, but that it would be a thoroughly paying line; and with that opinion he agreed. He might mention that the Premier had seen the country, and was very much surprised at it, as he had no idea that such land was to be found there, or that there was such farming. The line would no doubt influence others a good deal. He saw that on the notice-paper there was a motion by his colleague, Mr. Miles, and another by the hon. member for Balonne (Mr. Low), for railway surveys, both of which would be more or less influenced by his motion if it were carried. The people of St. George and the surrounding district, of which he knew a good deal, were now agitating for a railway, and no doubt they would get one at some time. It was proposed to run lines in several directions. There was no doubt whatever that if a line were taken from Warwick it would be of great benefit. It would go *via* Leyburn through rich agricultural country to Goondiwindi, and then on to St. George, tapping all the way the New South Wales Border. The whole of that line would go through good land. He knew the Leyburn and Warwick people were in favour of the line, and the whole country was more or less interested in it. In order to show that those were not merely statements of his own, he would read a short extract from an article which appeared in the *St. George Standard* of the 8th July, a paper ably conducted by an able man:—

"After reading the report of the railway meeting recently held in Roma, it is not at all surprising to find some of our contemporaries taking it for granted that the desire for railway communication between Roma and St. George is mutual. The *D. D. Gazette* says:— 'The people of Roma have been fraternising with the people of St. George; they have laid their heads together to see if they cannot row in the same boat, and thus secure railway communication between the two towns.' Not only is this not so, but we very much doubt if half-a-dozen people could be found here to approve of the project. To us it appears there is absolutely nothing to recommend it, the opinion of our Roma friends to the contrary notwithstanding. We cannot agree with them that it is 'a matter of national importance,' or 'one in which the whole colony is interested.' Of course, that is a very patriotic view to take, but we fail to see where the patriotism comes in, or how the line is to benefit St. George or the district when constructed. * * * But admitting, for the sake of argument, that the proposed line were constructed—although we do not for one moment believe that any Ministry would sanction such a waste of money—what benefit would accrue to Roma? For be it remembered that the agitation for this 'most important work' emanates from Roma alone. Goods and passenger traffic would pass through on their way here, and that is all. It would be as easy to fill orders from Brisbane as from Roma, and, if necessary, cheaper. The construction itself would circulate money, but, beyond that, we confess our inability to appreciate the numerous advantages which have been so glowingly foretold. If a branch line must be made from the northward, Yeulba appears to us to be in every sense a preferable spot from which to start it; but, if the work is really to be one of 'national importance,' and not a senseless waste of money, the branch should start from some suitable point on the Warwick line, extend in a due westerly direction, and thus secure the trade of the border country, most of which now finds its way into New South Wales, and all of which will assuredly do so at no very distant date, dependent only on the rapid progress of the line across the border. The cost of the suggested branch between Roma and St. George—say 130 miles—would build nearly half of the total length of a line from, say, Allora to the Balonne. The first would benefit nobody, while the

other would, to a great extent, fulfil the patriotic desires of the originators of the movement, who are evidently alive to the importance of 'a great national work,' and to their honour be it recorded they have spared no pain to make the project attractive. * * * If the people of this district really want the proposed line, we presume they will call a meeting and say so. At present they evince no desire to co-operate, and we don't believe they do want it."

That was the opinion of the people of St. George; and the opinion of the Warwick people was very similar. To show that, he would read from a letter which appeared in the *Warwick Argus* of Saturday, the 12th instant, respecting those branch railways, written by the respected mayor of that town, Mr. Johnson, a gentleman who spoke for many besides himself. He said:—

"In these days of railway-making, when railways are forming such an important part of our colonial politics, and also engaging the attention of the public at large, particularly in the thickly-settled parts of this colony, allow me through the medium of your journal to call the attention of the public to the great necessity that exists for a branch line from this town to Goondiwindi. It would run through some very populous and important settlements; for instance, through Sandy Creek, Darkey Flat, and the new goldfields, thence to Leyburn, Inglewood, and Goondiwindi; and taking into consideration the number of stations on this route which would contribute as feeders of the line, I consider it would be one of the best paying branch lines in the colony, together with being a boon to the people in the districts through which it passed through. It would undoubtedly increase settlement and population in the towns and localities named; and now when there is every probability of the Killarney and Fassfern lines being connected, it would be much the shortest and best route from Goondiwindi and Leyburn, *via* Warwick and Fassfern, to Brisbane."

He thought he (Mr. Allan) had stated sufficient to show that there were some grounds for bringing forward a motion of that kind, and that the line would be a great benefit, not only to the people of the districts through which it would pass, but to the whole colony and to other colonies. Melbourne and Sydney were joined by railway, and Melbourne and Adelaide would soon be joined in the same way; and when proposed extensions in Queensland were carried out the whole of the coast lines would at no distant date be connected. By the construction of the line he proposed there would be a much quicker route for passengers and mails, while the rates of carriage between St. George and Warwick and Brisbane would be fully one-third less than at present, and probably one-half less. That was a very important consideration. He begged to move the motion standing in his name.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that he must ask hon. gentlemen to remember that money for surveying nearly 1,000 miles of railway was to be asked for that afternoon. He had nothing very particular to say about the line now under consideration. The hon. gentleman who moved the motion had given them a very glowing report from the letters he had read, and from the newspapers. If what the hon. gentleman stated was correct—namely, that the distance from Brisbane to Warwick was only eighty miles by the proposed route, or perhaps eighty-five or eighty-six miles—he forgot which—and that already thirty or forty miles of it were constructed, leaving only thirty or forty miles to be surveyed—

Mr. ALLAN: There is only twenty-five miles

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that he thought it was a matter for the consideration of the House, if it was not worth while to make a survey such as was proposed, if it was possible to reach Warwick in that way by so short a distance. Such a line would be a great boon to the country, because it would undoubtedly give a great impetus to the southern border traffic, besides shortening the distance to Sydney very considerably; the latter line being one he hoped to see through within three years. For that reason he had no objection to making the survey

that was asked, even if it was only to prevent the sale of land along the line of route, and consequently also to prevent the Government having to pay an exorbitant price for that land when they came, in the future, to require it. He would promise the hon. gentleman to give the matter every consideration.

Mr. MILES was understood to express a hope that the hon. member for Darling Downs had not taken up the question in the way he had with a view to shelve it. He considered that the Fassifern line was perfect humbug, and in saying so he did not speak of the working of it, but of the gradients. Plenty of people preferred to go in their buggies than by it. One thing was that the hon. gentleman had travelled all over the country; but he (Mr. Miles) thought that if the survey commenced from Killarney it would be much better.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that the hon. gentleman had been talking about a line of which he knew nothing at all.

Mr. MILES said that he had not found fault with the construction of it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said that the line was the best ever constructed in Queensland, and as to the gradients there were only three or four that were over 1 in 30, and at a slight expense that grade could be made lighter. The hon. member who had proposed the motion had done so very ably, eloquently, and truly. There was not an inch of the country spoken of which he had not been over himself, and a finer district he did not know. As for the timber, there was not such a good description in any other part of the colony that he had been in. He thought that the hon. gentleman would be wise to take the advice of the Minister for Works. Before railways were constructed up here at all it was the intention of the New South Wales Government, before Separation, to bring a line that way, and now they had to pay for having taken it to Warwick. Branch lines seemed now to be the order of the day. They had always in the past avoided the good land, and that was still their way at the present time. In fact, the line to Fassifern only went through four or five miles of good land, whereas, if they went further, they would come to plenty of good timber—cedars and other trees. He could vote for the line moved for with a clear conscience, not only on account of its securing them the border traffic, but on account also of the immense tract of agricultural country which would be opened up by it.

Mr. THORN said that he should not have uttered a word upon the question had it not been for the answer which the Minister for Works had given him a few days previously with regard to the extension of the line of railway from Harrisville to Fassifern. The Minister for Works told him then that there was no survey beyond Harrisville; but he found, on looking at the map of the colony—the official map of the Railway Department—that a survey had been extended beyond Harrisville for a distance of ten miles; and yet the Minister for Works said that there was no survey at all. He (Mr. Thorn) might tell the House that the Fassifern line did not go into the Fassifern electorate at all, while there was an expensive survey into the heart of the Fassifern district. What would hon. members think of the Minister for Works after that, and after he had contradicted directly the evidence of the map which had been lately handed to him (Mr. Thorn) by the hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Allan)? Why was not the line gone on with? It did not matter much which of the routes indicated was chosen. There was no doubt of its being a good line, and

the whole of the traffic to Warwick would go by it when it was completed. Why, then, was it not gone on with? He hoped the hon. member for Darling Downs did not wish to shelve the Fassifern line, but his action looked very much like a dodge, and as if he was put up by the Government for the purpose of shelving it. The money for the construction of that line had been voted by the House. A sum of £75,000 was voted for the Fassifern line; and the line to Harrisville had cost something like £20,000 or £27,000. Why, then, was it not gone on with and the balance of the money spent? Why did it not go into the heart of the Fassifern electorate? He might inform the Government that almost a sufficient sum had been already voted by the House to take the line to the top of the range to meet the Killarney line, or perhaps as far as the Condamine River. He believed they meant to shelve the Fassifern line for an indefinite period; and he hoped the Minister would contradict the statement he made the other night—that no survey was in existence for a further extension to Fassifern. There was no excuse for the Government in the matter. They might call for tenders to-morrow for the extension, and he could not see why they should not go on with it.

Mr. FOOTE said that the remarks made by the hon. member for Stanley in reference to the Fassifern line might be true as far as the construction was concerned, but the line itself was in no way a suitable one for the traffic to go upon. In the meantime, however, he thought the line should be pushed on to meet the views of the hon. member, as far as the foot of the range was concerned. A great deal of very good land would thus be thrown open; and he believed the day would come when it would be found to be almost impossible to take all the traffic by a single gauge; and it would be of very great use to have a line either from the Killarney, or some other line, which would be suitable at the time. He had, however, risen principally to point out that the Fassifern line was in a very unsatisfactory condition at the present time. He did not know the intentions of the Government in respect to it; but he supposed they wanted all the traffic they could get, and that they were disposed to accommodate the district and to meet the wants of the inhabitants of it. That was not done at present. For instance, a goods-shed was wanted at Peak Mountain, and he had been going to put a question on that matter. Parties bringing in maize or other produce could not leave it at the station all night, as there was no place to put it into; and, although there was a porter there, nobody was responsible for it. People would not run the risk of leaving their goods exposed to all sorts of weather. He heard of a case several days ago of some farmers taking several loads of maize to that station. There was, of course, no train there to receive it; nor was there any place at which to leave it except the platform, and the parties had, therefore, to provide tarpaulins to protect their goods. A goods-shed was badly wanted there; and the one train a day was really little better than if there was no train at all. It might accommodate some persons; but no one could leave town for the district in the morning and return in the evening, but must stay there for the night. Again, there was a remarkably slow rate of speed on that line. He was told there was one stopping place where the trains stopped so long that the drivers of the engine got off, boiled a billy, and enjoyed themselves until the time had expired when they should proceed to Ipswich. There was a great deal of good timber on that line, yet the Government had done nothing to meet the requirements of the timber traffic. Sidings were required where trucks could receive the timber,

and they would be of great service to a number of people living along the line. He hoped the Government, as they had constructed the line, would now try to meet the wants of the district. It looked as if they wanted the line to be a failure, in not supplying the necessary sheds and sidings. If those wants were attended to, and the Government extended the line as far as the survey went, they would find a very considerable traffic along it that would pay very well—in fact, as well as any other line in the colony. He hoped the Government would give the matter full consideration, and that the hon. member (Mr. Allan) would get the survey he asked for. The Government would be wise to survey lines of that sort.

The PREMIER said the hon. member for Northern Downs often made rash statements in the House with very great confidence, and he wished to draw attention to one the hon. member had made that evening. The Minister for Works was, the other day, asked by the hon. member the following question:—"When will the Government call for tenders for the extension of the line from Harrisville to Fassifern?" The answer was—"That the hon. member knew that no permanent survey had yet been made, and that no tender could be called for till that was done." If the hon. member for Northern Downs had been ingenuous enough that evening to speak of it as a preliminary survey he would have been correct. No permanent survey had been made. The hon. member chose to contradict the Minister for Works by taking up a map and telling the Minister for Works he was perfectly wrong; but that map, he believed, said it was merely a preliminary survey of the line. He believed himself it was only a barometrical survey. Unless statements of that kind were contradicted some credence might be given to them outside the House, though none was given inside the House. With regard to the motion before the House he firmly believed that the Fassifern line would be, before many years, the main line to Sydney, and he should like to see all the railway work undertaken by the Government tending in that direction. It had been said by hon. members opposite that the Fassifern line was not a good one. The Government had never claimed that it was; but they had thought it wiser to go in for a cheap railway at the time, and one which could be easily improved. The Fassifern line would be easy to improve, and he had little doubt that much greater alterations would be required than hon. members might think. There was no doubt that part of the main road to Sydney would be along it, and it would consequently have to be the best line in the colony. The Government had done well in making that line fit merely for the traffic of the present time. The hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Miles) had charged the Minister for Works with trying to divert the line as proposed from a particular point—namely, Emu Vale. Now, the Minister for Works approved of the motion under debate, and so did he (Mr. McIlwraith); but that approval of the motion did not amount to their believing that a line should go to Harrisville and Emu Vale. Whether it went to Emu Vale, or Warwick, or Killarney, depended on the result of the survey. They did not commit themselves to any of those places. Viewing the line in the important light he did, he believed their grand aim should be to make it a good main line and the shortest route to the colony of New South Wales. That was what should be kept in view, and the line must not be diverted a mile to one side or to the other simply to provide for local wants.

Mr. GROOM said he thought, from what had been said in the House that afternoon, that it

would be well to have the survey made. It would also be necessary for the Government to take care of what was done with the land along the line. Already, he was given to understand, half-a-dozen speculators were sending advance guards to see what could be done with the land. He knew there were several other projected lines in regard to which the same thing was being done. There was a similar movement going on with regard to the timber lands at Highfields. One of the reasons why the line was being taken along there was the quality of the timber; but there were certain persons taking up quantities of land merely for the timber, so that when other people had denuded their land of timber they would have to go to those persons and pay a high price for it. He thought the Government should put its foot down against the encouragement of speculators to take up land along lines of railway. It was a great evil in the Southern and Western districts of the colony, and he understood that the Central districts were not better off, and that there was no settlement along the lines there, the land having been all gobbled up by speculators. It was terrible that in New South Wales, as well as in this colony, the gambling spirit should be so strong. The Minister for Lands in the New South Wales Parliament had lately stated that £500,000 had actually been forfeited to the Crown for dummied selections. How much more land had been dummied which had not been forfeited it was impossible to say. That showed what lamentable results followed from the gambling spirit in connection with land. The whole of the lands along a line should be withdrawn by the Crown, and doled out in small portions when the Government was certain that it would be settled upon. He would not interfere with the Killarney line; but he did not think the proposed Fassifern line would do any good to Warwick. That town had been in a state of collapse for some time, and the Fassifern extension would give another blow to it, for every particle of its trade would be taken away by the line. If Warwick had been a terminal station it would have been a different thing, but the taking of the line through the town and straight on to Brisbane would be to the injury of Warwick, as the same thing had been to towns in other places. He saw no objection to the motion, but he did not think a large section of the constituents of the hon. mover would be altogether pleased with it. There might be a few—perhaps those gentlemen who wrote the glowing letters describing the scenery and the natural resources of the district. He did not suppose one could find in the colony of Queensland more delightful scenery and beautiful land than in the neighbourhood of Swan Creek and Killarney. It was fortunate that the late member for Warwick, Mr. Morgan, had saved so much land there from the clutches of the dummies. There was no credit due to the stationholders for that, as, if Mr. Morgan had not moved in the matter, they would probably have dummied it. It seemed from the Premier's remarks that in the case of the proposed line local interest must not be considered—it was to be a through line to New South Wales from the city of Brisbane. That was exactly what he had expected. It would be another blow struck at Warwick.

Mr. HORWITZ said he was sorry he was not in the House earlier that afternoon to hear the remarks made by the hon. member for Darling Downs in introducing his motion. He should like to know whether the hon. gentleman had taken the trouble to ride over the line and make himself acquainted with the kind of country through which the railway would pass. He might inform the hon. gentleman that he was not going to oppose the survey, because it was neces-

sary to have a survey there; but he wished to know why the hon. gentleman had not given notice of motion for a survey of a line from Killarney to Fassifern. He (Mr. Horwitz) might inform the House that all the land there was of a superior nature and very valuable to farmers, even though he spoke against his own interest in that matter. It appeared to him that the Killarney line had been ignored altogether. They were well aware that a survey had been authorised for a line from Warwick to Killarney for the last two years. The distance from Warwick to Killarney was only twenty-seven miles, and the survey might perhaps take two months to finish. They had had the promise of the Minister for Works that the survey would be commenced in December last; but nothing had been heard of the plans and specifications. He wanted to know why the Government did not go on with that work first, and why they should spend money for surveys all over the country when it was only wasted? He spoke now on behalf of the Killarney line. There had been a staff of men sent there, and the survey of the line ought to be finished by now. There had been a sum of money voted for it, and the people of Killarney ought to get the benefit of it. The Government should finish that line first, and then it would be time enough to see where the next line should go to. The Government wanted to borrow another million of money to throw dust in their eyes, and then instead of spending it to put it in the Queensland National Bank. They could see nothing on the business-paper but motions for railway surveys all over the colony, and the Minister for Works had as many lines on his hands already as he would be able to finish in the next two or three years; and it was as well that they should finish those lines before making fresh ones. Another thing to be borne in mind was that they had not got sufficient rolling-stock to go on with any more railways. Some goods had lately been sent to the Warwick Railway Station, and had remained there for three or four days because there were no trucks to take the stuff away. That was the position the Government were in now with regard to rolling-stock. They had no right to make any more railways for the next two or three years until they finished those they had already in hand. What they wanted most, however, was a good traffic manager, and then they could think of extending their lines to the border, and not before. He would not oppose the motion, as he thought a survey in the neighbourhood would be of advantage.

Mr. ALLAN, in reply, said it was very gratifying to him to get the courteous answer he had received from the Minister for Works, and it was also a great gratification to him to hear hon. members on both sides of the House speak as they had spoken upon his motion. He no longer had any doubts of the survey he asked for being proceeded with, and ere long the line itself being carried through. He regretted the hon. member for Warwick was not in the House when he was speaking upon the motion, or he would have heard him refer to the Warwick and Killarney line. He begged, with the permission of the House, to withdraw his motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BRISBANE AND GYMPIE RAILWAY.

Mr. HAMILTON, in moving the motion standing in his name, said that last year he had asked for a railway survey between Brisbane and Gympie, and the Premier then gave as a reason for opposing the survey that the £25,000 placed on the Estimates was a very large sum considering the position of the colony, and it had already been decided that the

Gympie district should have a fair proportion of that sum. The Minister for Works had been so enchanted with the picture he (Mr. Hamilton) had presented to the House that he admitted from an engineering point of view a better route could not be desired. The gentlemen who had supplied him with the material for the picture were Captain Whish—whose position in the Civil Service should be a guarantee of his competency and reliability—and the Hon. Mr. Pettigrew, who knew the country as well as anyone in the colony. The great objection the Minister for Works took to the survey at the time was that there was an immense range about 1,000 feet high in the way which he did not know how to surmount. He (Mr. Hamilton) had since removed that range, and it was not a very difficult engineering feat to perform, because the range existed only in the imagination of the Minister for Works. Having removed that objection raised by the Minister for Works, and as the specific objection of the Premier did not now exist, he hoped those who opposed him last year would support him on the present occasion. Last year, as hon. members would no doubt recollect, he took them, metaphorically, over every mile of the distance between Brisbane and Gympie. He should not take up their time by doing so again, but he hoped they would recollect the favourable nature of the country over which he had taken them; the fertile valleys of Caboolture; across creeks; through scrubs; over barren plains; and through miles of forest country, carrying timber of great variety and value; and landed them in Gympie without passing over any range over 300 feet high. Hon. members who accompanied him in that trip must have been fully satisfied of the possibility of that route and the benefit that would accrue to the colony by the construction of a railway such as he proposed. The timber on that route alone would be a mine of wealth, and the only machinery required to utilise it was a railway. The country over which a line along that route would run was particularly well suited for the advancement of the sugar industry, as had been proved by the success of the sugar-planters at Mount Budgeree and Caboolture. If that railway were opened, there were thousands of acres of equally good country in the same district which would be eagerly taken up by persons who would thus be brought practically close to the market. That alone and the prospect of being able successfully to dispose of that land should be sufficient inducement to the Government to construct that railway, and the settlement upon the line would form a large source of revenue to the railway. Now that so many immigrants were flocking to their shores, he thought it would be much better that they should be offered such inducements as that would create than that they should be sent hundreds of miles into the interior. An inspection of the map he had seen in the hands of hon. members would show the enormous amount of unalienated land between Brisbane and Gympie. Having inspected the map from curiosity, he found that for about forty-four miles along the length of the line, and about twenty-two miles on either side of it, he had calculated that there were a million of acres of unalienated land. In advocating the survey he did not confine himself to any particular course, because it was quite possible that more than one survey would have to be made before the best route would be discovered; for instance, if the railway was carried in the direction of the valley of the River Mary, that would be much further from the coast than the line he had advocated last year, and would open up a much larger area of country. Reference to the map would show that by starting the line from Brisbane to Sampson Vale, some miles west

of Caboolture, the line would have to go through very little alienated land; whilst by going through Caboolture every foot of the land through which the survey would be carried was freehold. The line from Brisbane through Sampson Vale was more rugged, but it might be more advantageous for the Government to carry the line in that direction, because by carrying it from Brisbane through Caboolture the whole of the land would have to be repurchased, whereas by carrying the line in the other direction the Government would profit by the increased value of the adjacent Crown lands. In making the line through the Mary River Valley they would have to go through higher country, but perhaps the consequent increased expenditure might be compensated for by the increased amount of land thrown open, and the high lands in that district would be just as fine a sanatorium as Toowoomba, with the additional advantage of being nearer. In fact, the land was as admirably suited to the growth of the various cereals as that on the Darling Downs. Members who visited that portion of the country would agree with him that the soil there was just as rich, and there was an immense amount of it unalienated. If facilities of access were given to that land by railway it would command a price nearly equal to the land on the Downs; therefore, by projecting a railway in that direction, it would be equal to the repurchase by the Government of those blocks on the Darling Downs which had been so often proposed in the House, because it would throw open to the people equally good land, and at the same time the coffers of the Treasury would be filled by its disposal. There were scrubs in that district of miles in extent, with soil equal in richness to any he had ever seen; and the specimens of timber in that part of the country were perfectly gigantic. He had seen four men at one time at the same tree cutting it down for bees' nests. Hon. members laughed; but that in itself was a proof of the healthy character of the country when its residents had to work off their surplus energy in such a manner. The stock in that part of the country were always in splendid condition—in fact, it was a land of milk and honey—and, he might add, leeches—for he recollected, when camping about five miles deep in a scrub there for a fortnight when prospecting, that he used to while away half-an-hour each morning in slinging them out of his tent by their tails; for, on awaking in the morning, they used to find themselves ornamented with leeches about as thickly as a Government Bill generally was by the Hon. Mr. Griffith's amendments. That country was also rich in minerals; reefs had been found on that table-land, giving prospects which would satisfy any experienced miner that, if capitalists could only be brought on to the ground and facilities given for the transit of machinery, they would be a profitable investment. The fact that those had been discovered, although so little prospecting had been done, and also that all the way to Gympie—a distance of fifty or sixty miles—auriferous indications met the eye in every hill and gully that was crossed, afforded good ground for belief that, if that country were opened up, fields equal in richness to Gympie might be discovered. At the same time he wished it to be understood that he was not basing his arguments in support of the construction of the railway on the ground of the possible discovery of a goldfield, for, if he were to do so, some of those who were not in favour of immediate construction, by attempting to show it was not necessary, would use his argument as a reason why the immediate survey should not be granted. He therefore based his claim for an immediate survey on grounds which he thought could not be assailed by any member

of the House who had any faith in the future prospects of the colony. Although it might be a question of opinion as to the desirability of an immediate construction of a railway from Brisbane to Gympie, it still must be admitted by all that the formation of that railway was merely a question of time; it must take place sooner or later. For his own part, he would like to expedite the time when the whole of the colonies of the Australian continent would be connected with a band of iron encircling the coast. The expenditure which would be required to accomplish that union would be amply compensated for by the advantages which would accrue to them socially as well as commercially. As the formation of the railway from Brisbane to Gympie was merely a question of time, it was clearly their duty to profit by the example which had been afforded them more than once of the immense loss the colony had sustained through delay to make surveys through country across which railways were subsequently projected. The cost of the repurchase of land between Brisbane and Ipswich would more than pay for the construction of that line; and, unfortunately for the colony, that was not the only case where great difficulty and expense had been incurred in railway construction by the alienation of land through delayed surveys. The longer the survey of the Brisbane and Gympie line was deferred the ultimate expense to the colony of the construction of that line would be increased. Reference to the map would show that there were between Brisbane and Gympie as much as 2,000 and 3,000 miles of unalienated country. That land was being rapidly taken up. When he last advocated the survey he pointed out that the delay of every successive year in making it meant a loss to the colony. Since his motion for the survey last year about 80,000 acres had been taken up along the probable course which the survey would take, and each year a large increasing proportion of land would be taken up in that part of the country. That afforded sufficient grounds for justifying the necessity of an immediate survey, so that land could be reserved along the courses which the survey would indicate the line should take. As, therefore, the making of the railway must be admitted, even by the opponents to its immediate construction, to be only a question of time, and as the delay in making that survey, which must eventually be made, might yearly saddle the colony with a debt through the rapid alienation of land along its line which would subsequently have to be repurchased by the Government at a heavy cost, and as the small sum saved in one way by delaying the survey was a mere bagatelle compared with the loss which would be occasioned to the colony through such delay, he moved:—

That the House will, on Thursday, the 7th September, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates of this year a sum sufficient to defray the expenses of an immediate survey of the following line of railway:—Extension of Gympie and Maryborough Line of Railway to Brisbane from Gympie.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the line of railway spoken of by the hon. member for Gympie was one of those difficult questions which it was almost impossible to decide. The hon. member had told them that he had taken members on an imaginary journey when he was explaining the line on a former occasion, and that no higher elevation than 300 feet would have to be reached. He (Mr. Macrossan) had had deputations waiting on him about that same question, who told him that of their own personal knowledge it was impossible to reach Gympie by any route near the coast unless by going over very large ranges far higher than 300

feet. He had had a deputation before him who wished a survey to be made by way of Samford to Gympie, saying that that was the most level line; and yet another deputation waited upon him, headed by the hon. member for Moreton, who advocated the extension to Gympie *via* Caboolture, or rather the extension of the line to Caboolture to be ultimately carried the whole distance. Amidst those contending opinions it was difficult to decide, and the best way was to have a survey made and reserve the land along the route. He was very doubtful about the glowing account given by the member for Gympie. He would, however, advise his hon. colleague (the Minister for Lands) to reserve the land along every line of survey that they were making. It would be far better for the country in the end than to allow the land to be taken up by speculators who would hold it until its value was increased by the railway, or else claim heavy compensation for its resumption. He need not detain the House further than to say that a survey was the best way to settle all difference of opinions as regarded the route to be taken.

Mr. H. PALMER (Maryborough) said he was really surprised with the admission made by the Minister for Works in face of the speech he made last session on the same question. He (Mr. Palmer) knew something about land in general, and about the proposed line in particular, and he would say that there was no poorer stretch of country in the whole colony of Queensland than that on the proposed route. The fact of that land being unalienated up to the present time was a proof of its worthlessness, for if it had been worth anything it would have been occupied long ago. There was nothing to justify them even in making the preliminary survey, with the object of spending half-a-million of money on the line, for he was quite sure the line between Brisbane and Gympie could not be made for a less expenditure than £4,500 per mile. Talking of the range, he knew it was a most difficult one to cross, and, to his mind, was as difficult or almost as difficult as the range between Ipswich and Too-womba; moreover, there was no traffic on the line of route and nothing to encourage it. It was only some eighteen months ago that the Gympie people made application to the Postmaster-General, when the mail steamers were temporarily delayed at Maryborough, to have the mails brought overland to Gympie. What was the reply? That the length of route, and there being so little passenger traffic, would not justify him in granting the request; and that, besides, the road had become so bad through the divisional boards neglecting it for want of funds, that Cobb and Company would not attempt to run a stage coach on it unless the subsidy granted for carrying the mails was a very heavy one. The roads were all bad, and not likely to be properly made, as there was no settlement there and no ratable property along the line. There was nothing at present to justify the line—certainly not in the face of the line that the Government had proposed by way of Kilkivan, Nanango, and Mount Esk. The Government were evidently in favour of that line, and he was astonished to find that the hon. member for Gympie—who was as sensible a man in general as any member of that House, and ought to know something about the matter—had the courage, in the face of that other line, to bring forward his motion. He had heard it said by hon. members that there was a very good strip of land along the line *via* Caboolture that was worthy of a railway. He would not dispute that, as he did not know much about it; but he had heard that gentlemen had sugar plantations there, and that they were never able to make them pay, and that many of them were advocating the line of railway there merely to

enhance the value of their properties. Taking the road from Caboolture to the head of the range, he asserted that the country in general was bad, at least for three-fourths of the distance. The hon. member for Gympie told them that 80,000 acres had been alienated, and he (Mr. Palmer) should like to know whereabouts the 80,000 acres had been alienated. If it had been, it must have been the land on the Mary, or near Noosa. He admitted that there was a piece of good land along the top of the range, and that extended from six to seven miles. Probably that piece remained in the possession of the Crown still; but from the range along the valley of the Mary he believed there was very little land unoccupied, and he was certain, from what he had heard, that the best land was all taken up. None of that land was good; in fact, it had always been looked upon as a very bad piece of country. He knew that on Cannondale there was some very good land, but it was all taken up. The hon. member for Gympie had pointed out that the top of the range would be very valuable as a sanatorium, but he (Mr. Palmer) considered that there was no necessity for a railway forty miles long to enable the Gympie people to get a breath of fresh air, as they had a railway already to Maryborough; and it was a fact that many of them went down to the sea-coast to enjoy the fresh air, and they showed very good taste in so doing. In the face of the choice of selection between that line and the other line *via* Kilkivan, Nanango, and Mount Esk, he could not see that the Government were justified in voting a sum of money for a preliminary survey of the line proposed by the hon. member for Gympie. He thought he was right in calling the attention of the Minister for Works to the speech he made on the question last year. He was not in the House when the question came on; but he saw that there was a majority of seventeen to ten against it. Of course that was in a thin House, and if he had been there he would have made one more to add to the seventeen.

"The Minister for Works said the hon. member for Gympie had given just such a description of the country he wanted surveyed as he (Mr. Macrossan) would give if about to propose plans of a railway which he wished the House to adopt; but, while feeling great respect for the gentlemen mentioned by the hon. member, he was not prepared to accept them as authorities on railway surveys."

Those gentlemen, he believed, were the Hon. Mr. Pettigrew and others, who spoke very favourably of the country for timber. He thought some of them were Caboolture landed proprietors.

"One thing was certain, that no matter what route might be taken the line must be taken to a great elevation to reach Gympie; and the hon. member had not shown how the jump was to be made from the low coast lands to the high land near Gympie. The hon. member would like the House to understand that the whole route was easy, plain, and very practicable; and the reason put forth by him for the survey was that land likely to be required might be reserved before it was alienated. If the motion were simply for a survey with no prospect of further expenditure for a number of years, there would not be so much objection to it; but he (Mr. Macrossan) had never known a motion of that kind to stop there. The first step towards making a railway was to get a sum voted for a survey, then, sometimes before the survey was made, another sum was asked for, either by an hon. member or by the Government of the day, to make the railway itself. He objected to railways being obtained by surreptitious means of that kind; if they were to be had let them be obtained fairly and openly. At the present time there was a very good railway to Gympie; in fact, Gympie was better off in the way of communication than any other goldfield in the colony."

He (Mr. Palmer) quite endorsed that.

"To make a railway now in the other direction to Brisbane would be to simply destroy, to some extent, the utility of the one made at present; and he did not mean for a single moment to consent to the railway

being made to bring Brisbane into competition with Maryborough. The plan as sketched out in the *Telegraph* in the interests of the city of Brisbane was evidently intended to destroy the trade which Maryborough naturally expected and should expect, and transfer it to Brisbane. When something had been done by the Maryborough and Gympie line towards developing a paying traffic between those two towns it would be quite time to make a survey with the ultimate intention of making a railway to Brisbane. He had promised the House on two occasions to make a survey from some point on the Maryborough and Gympie line to Gayndah, and also a survey from the Mount Perry line to Gayndah, in order to determine the best route to reach Gayndah. Two railway surveys in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts, he thought, were quite sufficient at a time, especially while there were many other districts requiring surveys much more. He thought it would be premature at the present time to make this survey. The hon. member must have had a very green eye when he imagined the marine residences along the shores between Sandgate and Caboolture, Caboolture and Mooloolah, and between Mooloolah and some scrub. The marine residences spoken of by the hon. gentleman were not likely to spring up on the low-lying swamps that skirted the sea-coast from Sandgate along to the foot of the Mooloolah Range. He hoped, therefore, that the House would not agree to this; but that it would protect the Supplementary Estimates. The least sum that would be required would be £20 a mile. He did not know the distance of the line.

Mr. HAMILTON: About 120 miles."

The hon. member for Gympie had stated 120 miles, but he (Mr. Palmer) was sure that no railway line could be taken in that distance. Allowing for curves to overcome that extraordinary high range, it would take at least 130 or 140 miles; moreover, it would necessitate the crossing of many very large creeks at the head of the Mary River, and the bridges that would be wanted would involve a very heavy outlay indeed. In fact, it would be a very expensive line all through, in any direction; therefore he thought the line was premature in the public interest, and undesirable in the face of the other line, which went through what he knew to be for the most part exceedingly good country. There was no comparison whatever between the two parts of the country—he might say between the goodness of one and the extraordinary badness of the other. The line *via* Nanango was perfectly justifiable and would be remunerative, whilst the other would be a losing concern to the country. Then he would like to know who were agitating for the railway from Gympie to Brisbane but a few gentlemen speculators? It appeared to him that in Brisbane there were a number of men who did not care to travel round by Maryborough because they would be a few hours at sea; and of course there were also a number of gentlemen in Gympie who were also interested in travelling, and who would like to go to Brisbane without going to Maryborough. Again, was it at all likely that heavy traffic would go along that line? Could heavy traffic exist on the line from Brisbane to Gympie, in the face of the facilities afforded by water carriage?—there would certainly be a loss of 10s. per ton in taking goods overland. At present the carriage for sixty miles between Maryborough and Gympie was 20s. per ton for dead-weight, and 10s. per ton from Brisbane to Maryborough. That would be 30s. altogether; and he was certain that, if the proposed railway were made, heavy goods could not be taken for less than 40s. a ton. Therefore it would never answer as a traffic line, and would only suit a few travelling persons, and they had not, as the Minister for Works said last year, very much to complain of in going down to Maryborough in three or four hours and getting a steamer at almost any hour they chose to go on board. There was nothing to justify even the survey of the line, and he hoped the Government would not consent to it, because the primary object in view was, as the

Minister for Lands had said last year, to develop the trade between Gympie and Maryborough. If the railway were made to-morrow it would not attain that object, and he should certainly oppose the motion.

Mr. BAILEY said the hon. member for Gympie had asked the House to assent to the motion that a survey should be made from Brisbane to Gympie. He did not think the hon. gentleman had done that of his own accord. He knew that from all parts of that district he had been requested to bring the motion forward. One would almost think from the speech of the hon. member for Maryborough they had just heard that the construction of that line would involve the destruction of Maryborough. He was very sorry to see that in a question of that kind little local jealousies had been brought in, for it was just the beginning of a scheme for the carrying out of which all local jealousies should be set aside. It was not a question between one little town and another, or between one port and another; but it was a question of a system of railways along the whole coast from Brisbane as far as Rockhampton, or even Townsville. It was the thin end of the wedge. They were asked to consent to a motion for the survey of a line which was the beginning of a continuous line from Brisbane to the northernmost parts of the colony. He cordially agreed with that motion, and the scheme that was attached to it. In the constructing of such a line they must not go "jerry-mandering" all over the country for a bit of good land here and another there; but it should go as direct as possible from one end to the other. He was very glad the Minister for Works had consented to the motion, and hoped he would carry his consent still further, and see that all similar motions leading to that object, which had been had in view by members on his (Mr. Bailey's) side for some years, would be carried out at as early a stage as the colony could afford. He noticed the opposition to the motion from the hon. member for Maryborough was rather ungenerous, because it seemed to show petty local jealousy, and the hon. member was not exactly fair in his remarks. He gave the House all the difficulties, not only on the route which was the best of the three—for there were no less than three proposed routes—but he noticed all the difficulties which existed on each and every one of the routes as if they were the difficulties on one particular route. On the route recently surveyed—it was only a trial survey, not at the expense of the Government, but of the people of Gympie and their friends—most of the difficulties had disappeared. The length of the range that had been made so much of—that difficulty had disappeared; and the swampy, spuey flats had been avoided. And the hon. member omitted to mention that the route crossed near the heads of no less than three or four rivers and immense areas of rich scrub lands. It crossed the Maroochie, the Mooloolah, and the Noosa Rivers. Only a few weeks ago, on a private property on one of those rivers, he saw seven or eight miles of railway quite equal to the Sandgate line; and, if private individuals found it paid to construct a railway to carry on their own business, he thought the country might very well be expected to construct a railway in the district. He anticipated the day when the people of the different parts of the colony, instead of being as now at difference with each other—emulating perhaps, but certainly at variance with each other—each striving and each envying the other the little trade they could attract and force to their port, each striving to get all they could from any part of the district with which they were connected, no matter what would be for the benefit of the people;—

instead of that being the case, he hoped very soon to see the day when the inland people—the people remote from the coast—would be able to choose their own port, whether it was Brisbane, Maryborough, Rockhampton, or Townsville. He wished to remark also that the opposition to which he alluded was only a continuation of a very old policy. He remembered the time in that House when the very idea of a coast railway was scouted—when members now sitting with him on the Opposition side of the House were reproached publicly and privately, in the House and in the Press, for the most extravagant designs in relation to railway construction. The idea of constructing railways in the coast districts for the benefit of the settlers was looked on as absurd. It was said that they would ruin the country by so doing, and that such railways would never pay for the grease on the wheels. But they had proved the fallacy of that assertion; and, more than that, they had actually converted the present Government. The Government had become converts to the opinions held by the Opposition; and the policy enunciated by the Liberal party—the policy which was successfully carried by them—was being gradually adopted by the present Ministry. He was willing to give them credit for being able to change their opinions—there had lately been several instances of that—and for being willing to adopt the opinions held by the Opposition when they saw that they were right and proper; but when experience had proved them true the Government claimed those opinions as their own. They (the Opposition) had always argued that the people who paid the taxes of the colony should receive the greatest possible benefit from that taxation; they had always argued in favour of railway construction in the densely populated districts—the settled districts of the colony; they had ever been the first to extend the western lines, and had never neglected the others. He was very proud that evening to hear for almost the first time a Minister for Works who was certainly not a Minister of a Liberal party—he was proud to hear him acknowledge that the coast districts had claims quite equal to those of the interior of the colony.

Mr. DICKSON said he was glad to find that the necessity for railway connection between the metropolis and Gympie was at last recognised, and he only regretted that the Minister for Works did not see his way, when the question was under discussion last year, to grant to the hon. member for Gympie, who then introduced a similar motion, the moderate encouragement he had given that evening. He used the words “moderate encouragement” advisedly, because he thought the hon. member for Gympie had preferred the claims of the district in a very lukewarm manner; as instead of being satisfied with the funds necessary for a trial survey of the line—which had long been admitted as one that was of most immediate importance—the hon. member ought to have taken the Government, which he supported, to task for not having made provision in their Loan Estimates for the construction of a line which was of equal importance with any of the other eleven lines, provision for which had been made. He was not going to take up the time of the House in urging the claims of the district in regard to a railway. They had heard the line advocated repeatedly, and it might be accepted without argument that the connection of the metropolis with one of the principal goldfields of the colony—that goldfield which was most immediately adjacent to it—was a matter which ought to receive the unanimous consent of Parliament. They must all remember that it was owing to Gympie that the colony recovered from the great prostration which visited it about eight or

ten years ago; and he believed that the wealth which had been derived from the Gympie Gold Field from its discovery to the present time was infinitesimal in value compared to what was yet to be extracted. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if the metropolis were connected directly with the Gympie Gold Field there would be an immense amount of capital invested in that field, which would encourage enterprise and possibly lead to the development of auriferous deposits at present lying idle for want of capital being invested. They knew that in the neighbouring colony of Victoria great impetus had been given to gold-mining in the auriferous districts of Sandhurst and Ballarat by the connection of those districts with the metropolis; and, apart entirely from the question of the remunerativeness of the line in going through a rich agricultural district or otherwise, he contended that the importance of the two extremities of the line was in itself sufficient to justify its immediate construction. He had no fear that such a line would not pay, and he was convinced that the extension of the Sandgate line to Gympie was geographically the most direct line that could be taken.

Mr. O’SULLIVAN: No!

Mr. DICKSON repeated that geographically it was the most direct line. It would pass through immense tracts of rich agricultural land—through the valley of the Pine River to Caboolture; its course might be extended into the rich plains of Durundur, along the heads of the Mary; and, in fact, almost all the way to Gympie it might be taken through good agricultural land. The hon. member for Stanley had contradicted him when he stated that geographically that line would be the most direct, but a glance at the map would show that he was right. The line to Sandgate was already carried twelve miles north; the line from Maryborough to Gympie was sixty miles due south, and the intervening space was little more than 100 miles as the crow flew. He thought it was very undesirable that they should have to travel a distance of 250 miles to Gympie when the interval to be overcome between the metropolis and that place was only a little over 100 miles. He did not at all intend to say anything antagonistic to the line that appeared on the Loan Estimate—the Mount Esk line, *via* Kilkivan. That would be debated on its merits, and he deprecated entirely bringing the two lines unnecessarily into antagonism. They were in different districts, and to his mind possessed distinctive features which would specially mark them. His advocacy that evening was directly and distinctly the extension of the line from Brisbane to Gympie by the most direct course, to give facilities to some of their oldest settlers—he said it advisedly—to some of their oldest agricultural settlers in the southern part of the colony, who had been settled for many years upon the Pine Rivers and other water-courses in East Moreton, and who were at the present time excluded from the advantages of railway communication that were extended to other districts of the colony. They knew that a very large extent of valuable land in the neighbourhood of Blackall Range, beyond Caboolture, might be rendered much more accessible by the construction of that line, and, without desiring to occupy the time of the House by entering into details as to the fertility of one part of the district as against another, his main contention was that, viewing the great amount of settlement at the extremities of the proposed line and the great importance of having direct access to the oldest and most permanent goldfield in the colony, the Government were, in his opinion, to blame—that they

had shown a degree of remissness in not having made provision, or shown any intention of making provision, for the construction of that line when introducing a scheme for the construction of other lines that were on precisely the same footing at the present time—being unaccompanied with proper parliamentary surveys. The Government might, perhaps, defend their position by saying that they had no survey which would give them sufficient information as to the cost of the line, but he thought anyone looking at the Loan Estimate would see that such apology would hold good as against several of the lines which it was understood the Government intended to ask the House to adopt that session. The Government had promised that a survey would be made, and he hoped that there was yet time for them to introduce a Supplementary Loan Estimate to show that they intended, as soon as the survey was completed, to proceed with the construction of the line.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he did not know any member of the House who could fill *Hansard* better than the hon. member who had just spoken. When he was speaking he (Mr. O'Sullivan) interjected that the line from Sandgate to Gympie was not the most direct line. They had already money granted and the work underweigh for a line to Esk, and from Esk to Gympie was the most direct line that could possibly be taken. The hon. member had advised him to glance at the map, but he would advise the hon. member to do so, and see if what he (Mr. O'Sullivan) said was not correct. He was in favour of the proposed survey or of any other survey being made. He thought the answer given by the Government a very reasonable one; and, as he supposed the mover of the resolution was satisfied with it, he did not see any necessity to detain the House longer on the question.

Mr. THORN said the hon. member for Stanley stated that the line from Esk to Gympie was the most direct line, but he would point out that the Government did not propose to go to Gympie at all *via* Esk. They proposed to ignore that important goldfield by going twenty miles to the west of it. If the hon. member for Stanley looked at the Loan Estimate he would see provision made for a line to Maryborough from Ipswich, ignoring Gympie altogether. He could inform the House that the Gympie Progress Association had had a survey made of a line from that goldfield to Caboolture, and they found that they could go up the valley of the Mary and cover the distance in seventy miles, but that route would necessitate a tunnel. An alternative line had been surveyed, he believed, by the same association, which was eighty miles long without a tunnel; but he thought the shorter line with the tunnel preferable, and that it was not yet too late for the Government to come down with a Supplementary Loan Estimate and ask the House to grant a sum of money to construct the line. As he stated in the debate on the Financial Statement, that line when constructed would pay 14 or 15 per cent. upon the money invested in its construction; there could be no question of that. It would connect the two largest towns in the colony—Brisbane and Maryborough—they could borrow the money at 4 per cent., and he believed that they would get a return of something like 15 per cent. When speaking a short time ago he referred to a map that was lying on the table of the House, and the Premier contradicted him; but he would ask members to look at that map and they would find that the surveyed line was ten miles beyond the place indicated by the Minister for Works some time ago. He did not know whether he was right or wrong, but according to that map he maintained he was correct. He wanted

merely to make the statement because, if he were wrong, he was so in consequence of the department not furnishing the House with a proper map.

Mr. GARRICK said he certainly thought the electorate he represented had good reason to complain against the Government in the matter of railways. He supposed the treatment they had received was to be accounted for by the fact of the member for that district always sitting on the Opposition side of the House. Hon. members would recollect the very great difficulty they had in getting even the small line from Brisbane to Sandgate; how reluctant Ministers were to grant it, and how it was only with fear and trembling that they put the sum on the Estimates. He maintained that there was no line in the colony that had paid as well as that line, and he was satisfied that only a short time would pass away when the Minister for Works would find that a single line was insufficient for the traffic between Brisbane and Sandgate. A survey from Brisbane to Caboolture had been made for a very long time—for six or seven years—and amidst all the railways that had been made—all the branch lines through agricultural districts—not one single move had been made by the Government to construct a line through the agricultural district of Moreton. He did not say it for that district more than any other, but it was well known that it had within it a very large area of rich agricultural land, and according to the last census the population of that district was denser than in any other agricultural district in the colony—thereby showing in the plainest manner that a railway pushed on to Caboolture would pay. He was sorry to hear that local jealousies were being introduced into the matter, as it would be better for them to sink all those jealousies. He did not think there were likely to happen those losses—or rather that the injury would be done to Maryborough—which the hon. member for that town (Mr. Palmer) intimated as likely to happen if the line proposed were constructed. That hon. member talked about the rate of carriage between Brisbane and Gympie, and he (Mr. Garrick) did not at all agree with him on that point. The hon. member ignored altogether the settlement that was likely to take place between Brisbane and Gympie. He stated that between Caboolture and Gympie there was some very poor land, and no doubt there were belts of poor land there as in most other districts of the colony; but he (Mr. Garrick) believed there were no richer lands to be found than in the scrubs and on the banks of the rivers and creeks between Caboolture and Gympie. The Minister for Works had said that it was desirable that when a line of railway was surveyed they should reserve all the land along the line, and he (Mr. Garrick) concurred in that view; and he only regretted that the hon. gentleman did not allow the motion to be carried when it was brought before the House last year or the year before, because since the time that motion was rejected at the instance of the Government upwards of 80,000 acres of land had been selected there. That at once showed the fine country there was between Caboolture and Gympie. Persons with their eyes open would not take up that quantity of land unless there was a chance of its giving them a good return. There were, he believed, no richer cedar scrubs in the colony, and no place where timber-getting was more actively carried on. It was known that the Blackall Range was almost entirely free from frost, and the planters who had for some time been cultivating there had done so with a very fair return. No other conclusion could be come to than that a line of railway between Brisbane and Gympie would prove a remunerative one.

He did not expect the Government would have opposed the motion. They were too near a general election for a chance of that kind to be missed. There were political exigencies which rendered it absolutely necessary that the Government should not oppose the motion; and as soon as the survey was made the Government would keep two or three lines dangling before the eyes of the electorates to be used at the proper time. But he could hardly understand how their assent to that survey fitted in with their published proposal to construct a line from Ipswich to Maryborough *via* Kilkivan. They would hardly, it was to be assumed, assent to the survey of a line without being of opinion that at some time or other the line should be constructed; and yet they proposed to approach Gympie *via* Kilkivan. The two projects seemed to directly clash. He did not think the hon. member (Mr. O'Sullivan) was right in his assertion that the Esk route was the most direct to Gympie, and it certainly presented far greater engineering difficulties. He had spoken to gentlemen thoroughly acquainted with that route, and also to timber-getters who knew the district well, and they had told him that it would be almost impossible to take a line from Esk to Gympie. Did the Government intend to make the line for which a sum of money was down on the Loan Estimates? And was it possible that both the lines would be proceeded with? He had no objection to opening up the country to the west of Gympie; but he hardly saw how it was to be done by the line proposed. He was glad, however, that the Government had accepted the motion, although he did not at present expect very much from it. There would be two or three lines, no doubt; and when the proper time came the Government would dangle them, in accordance with their usual practice, before the different constituencies.

Mr. HAMILTON said that, as he had had a distinct promise from the Minister for Works that the proposed survey would be made, he thought it would be better to withdraw the motion than to stand the chance of losing it in committee, as was the case last year, when certain hon. members opposite who had promised him their support left the House and refrained from voting. Before sitting down he would refer to one or two remarks that had been made. The hon. member for Maryborough said he had travelled over the country and that it was quite barren; but as that hon. member stuck to the road the whole way he was not competent to judge of the character of the country. The road went through some very bad parts, but not far from it there was some really first-rate country. The hon. member for Maryborough said the true object of the survey was to divert the railway *via* Mount Esk. He admitted it, but if the hon. member was so satisfied of the superiority of the Mount Esk line, why should he be afraid of the new survey? The same hon. member wished the House to believe that the country between Esk and Kilkivan was about as level as a bowling-green. According to what he knew of it, nothing but an adventurous billy-goat or a love-sick wallaby intent on suicide would attempt to climb the precipitous hills in that direction; and he believed they would hear of casualties amongst the men who were now surveying that route. A line *via* Mount Esk would not benefit Gympie in the slightest degree. The hon. member (Mr. Dickson) had talked about the lukewarm manner in which he had brought the motion forward. The fact that his motion had been accepted by the Government ought to be a sufficient reply to that. He was glad to find that the hon. member had such a high opinion of the value of a railway between Gympie and Brisbane. The hon. mem-

ber's opinion on that point had changed considerably since the time, some years ago, when he stated in the House that he did not think the railway between Maryborough and Gympie would pay for grease for the wheels. The hon. member certainly made that remark, for he had looked it up a few days ago and found it in the *Telegraph*. He was amused at the hon. member for Northern Downs saying that Gympie was ignored in regard to the matter. They all knew what that hon. member's objects were, and no one thought it worth while to contradict any statement he made in the House. Only the other day that hon. member, with a supercilious smile, asked the Minister for Works whether it was decided that a survey should be made from Bowen to Houghton Gap; and sat down under the idea that the Minister dared not go against his constituency by granting it. When, subsequently, the Financial Statement was read, and the hon. member actually saw a sum on the Estimates for the construction of that railway, he was so disgusted that he actually hung down his head and walked out of the House. The hon. member for Moreton had talked about the political exigencies which had induced the Government to accept the motion; but the hon. member's sincerity in the matter was shown by his conduct last year. Had the hon. member been in his place when the matter was brought forward, the motion would have been won; but he carefully stayed away.

Mr. GARRICK: You carefully brought it forward on a Friday morning.

Mr. HAMILTON: It was known by every member on the previous evening that the question was coming on on the Friday morning.

Mr. GARRICK: You sold us.

Mr. HAMILTON said it was known to every member on the Thursday night that the question was coming on on the following morning. Various Opposition members spoke to him about it, and one or two explained to him that they would not be able to be present, as they had to go to the Downs. The hon. member for East Moreton was actually present on that morning, though he took care not to be there in time to vote.

Mr. GARRICK wished to say, in explanation, that he was present on that morning, but he did not reach the House until ten minutes to 11, when he saw the hon. member, who told him, with a sort of grin, that the thing was over.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member was present on that morning, and could have been there in time for the vote if he had liked.

Mr. GARRICK: You were to keep the thing going, and did not.

Mr. HAMILTON said the hon. member had just before stated that he had no knowledge that the question was to be brought forward on that morning, and now he stated it was arranged he should keep it going until he arrived. Both tales could not be true. That showed what weight should be attached to any statement the hon. member made.

Mr. GARRICK: I did not say that I was not aware it was coming on, for I was fully aware of the fact; but I understood that the hon. member was to keep the thing going until I arrived.

Mr. HAMILTON said he would challenge the hon. member or any one in the House to say that he ever made any such statement. The hon. member should have been only too anxious to look after the interests of his district to require him (Mr. Hamilton) to keep it going for two or three hours until the hon. member chose to get out of bed and come down to the House. The hon. member had distinctly stated only a minute

or two ago that he did not know the question was coming on that morning.

Mr. GARRICK : I beg your pardon.

Mr. HAMILTON said the pardon was granted. Now that the Minister for Works had promised to make an immediate survey of the line from Brisbane to Gympie, he would ask leave to withdraw the motion.

The SPEAKER : Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : No !

Mr. FRASER said he knew it was somewhat irregular to take part in a debate after the mover of the motion had replied ; but he was about to speak when the hon. member rose. He must object to the statement by an hon. member that when the debate came on members on the Opposition side absented themselves on purpose. It was a notorious fact that members on that side had always been consistent advocates of that line.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Ministerial Side : No !

Mr. FRASER said the hon. member for Maryborough had introduced the only feature of local jealousy that at all tinged the discussion. The hon. member said plainly that, if constructed, the line would not pay ; but that had often been said respecting the Maryborough and Gympie line. Hon. members on his side of the House were abused over and over again on account of that line ; yet, as a fact, there was not a line, except perhaps the Sandgate line, that paid equal to that very line. He was persuaded that the proposed line, if constructed, would pay infinitely better than either of those lines. He had no objection to the construction of a line to Esk *via* Killkivan if it could be justified on its merits ; and he was persuaded that, notwithstanding a large amount of indifferent land to be gone through, there was evidence that it would be a success. The hon. member alluded to the fact that sugar-planting had been undertaken at Caboolture some time ago, but unsuccessfully, and presumed that the line was being advocated by parties interested in order that properties there might be so much enhanced in value that they would meet with a ready market. The failure to grow sugar at that time was due, however, to the unsuitableness of the land taken up ; but at the present time there were between Brisbane and Gympie some of the most successful sugar plantations in all Queensland. If ready access by rail were provided the whole district along the Caboolture, Mooloolah, and other creeks might become an active field for the sugar industry. Some hon. members thought the railway could hardly be justified, on account of the nearness of the sea-coast ; but he would point out that the sea-coast was useless, on account of the want of access to it—the rivers, with one exception, being unnavigable for the greater part of the year. The great hindrance to settlement was the want of ready means of carriage ; and there were numbers of people waiting to take up the rich scrub lands between Brisbane and Gympie if the Government would construct the proposed line of railway and throw those lands open. The construction of the line would accomplish the two great objects of railway construction : it would afford a ready access to market for those already settled on the land, and it would encourage and extend settlement throughout the district. It was often asked whether there had been any demand for a railway which was asked for in the House. In the present case there had been considerable agitation, beginning at Gympie, the residents of which district were more immediately and directly

interested in the movement. They had gone to an amount of trouble and labour in the matter sufficient to justify the inference that they were satisfied the line would be a useful and successful one. As pointed out by the hon. member for Wide Bay, this was but the commencement of a system of railways that must inevitably come ; it was a question of time, and the sooner they were undertaken the better. It was far better to spend money in constructing a railway that would promote the best interests of the colony and extend settlement than in main roads which gave no direct return. In his opinion a great mistake had been made in taking the line first to Sandgate ; it should have gone direct from Brisbane to Caboolture, and been carried to Sandgate by means of a branch. If ready access by railway were given to districts along the coast, settlement would take place as rapidly there as it had along the southern coast. There were splendid sea-beaches which, if made attractive to the population, would create a passenger traffic which would go far towards making the line remunerative.

Mr. STEVENSON said he only rose for the purpose of taking exception to the remark of the hon. member who had just sat down—that the present Opposition had always advocated the proposed line. He remembered that in 1875 or 1876, when Mr. Hemmant, then on the Treasury benches, stood up and told the House that the Maryborough and Gympie Railway would not pay for grease for the wheels, he was supported by the hon. member for South Brisbane (Mr. Fraser), the present leader of the Opposition, and the hon. member for Enoggera (Mr. Dickson). Those gentlemen cheered Mr. Hemmant at the time, and supported him. The very reason why the hon. member for Northern Downs, when Premier, bunched those six lines of railway was simply that his own supporters would not carry the Maryborough and Gympie line unless it was bunched with the others. It was no use for those hon. members to say they had always advocated that line, for they had not. The objection to allow the present motion to be withdrawn was simply a political dodge. The hon. member (Mr. Fraser) must know that if the motion were pressed to a division the Government must necessarily vote against it. Hon. members knew that the survey would be on the schedule, and would be carried out just as quickly whether the hon. member for Gympie carried his motion on division or not ; so that the hon. member would not make much capital out of the matter after all.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said he should support the hon. member for Gympie. He had done so last session when there were only ten votes given in favour of the proposal, and he had not since then changed his views in regard to the matter. He hoped the House would divide in order that they might see who were for and who against it.

The PREMIER said that, a demand for a division having been made by some hon. members opposite, he had waited with patience to see whether any of those hon. members would give a reason for their demand. The motion was one for the House to go into Committee on a future day for the purpose of considering whether a sum should be placed on the Supplementary Estimates to make a survey. The Minister for Works, in reply to the mover, intimated quite clearly that the Government had decided to make a survey, and that provision would be made for that purpose. How could any hon. member who desired that survey obtain what he wished in any better way? Hon. members on the Opposition side, however, knowing that there was only a thin House, thought that if they went to a divi-

sion and the Government voted against the motion—as they would do—they would be able to defeat the Government. The result in such case would be that the House would affirm that the sum should appear on the Supplementary Estimates. He was perfectly satisfied that that would not be the case. At any rate, the motion would have to get into committee, and it would be three or four weeks before it could come on. The Government method would be adopted and the survey would be made in the same way as other surveys—that was to say, it would appear with others on the Loan Estimates. The present was simply a small party move. He could easily throw bombshells into the Opposition camp, if he chose to rake up the subject of the railways to Gympie and *via* Kilkivan, and could split up that body in spite of all the efforts of the hon. member for Northern Downs to keep it together. The question was whether the survey should be made as the House was asked to affirm; and the Government had told the hon. member for Gympie that it would be made. And the Government did not accede to the request for a survey that night through pressure. A joint deputation of people residing in Brisbane and Gympie waited upon him two or three months ago, and he had told them clearly and distinctly that that survey was one of those which the Government proposed to make; and the same answer had been given that night. The hon. member for Moreton said that his constituents had very great cause to complain about the action of the Government in respect to railway-making. He (Mr. McIlwraith) was, however, satisfied that the constituents of Moreton thoroughly believed and knew that but for the present Government they would have had no railway to Sandgate. Hon. members remembered the impotent attempts of the late Government to make that railway. The motion had been brought forward, but it had always been thrown out, and the Government never had the courage to bring forward a scheme which they could carry through the House. It was only when the present Government came in that the railway was carried through; and he was quite sure the people of Sandgate, and everybody interested in the line, were thoroughly cognisant of that fact.

Mr. GARRICK : There was no stronger speech than yours against it.

The PREMIER said he knew perfectly well that he opposed the line, and he was not ashamed of any speech he had made; but when the right time came the Government made the line, and they claimed credit for what they had done. The hon. member surely did not think the Government wished to curry favour with his constituents; they were not afraid of that constituency, or of any other constituency interested in the proposed line. Now, the hon. member had just shown the weakness of his position. He had just opened up a bombshell in the camp on the other side by putting it clearly and distinctly before them that if they got a railway from Ipswich *via* Kilkivan they would not get the other line. But that would not serve them; the Government were in duty bound, according to their promise, to assent to that survey. It did not follow, however, that the Government would provide the money during the present year for making the line. It did not follow that it would be provided at all, because there was no part of the coast they knew so little about for railway construction purposes as that between Brisbane and Gympie; that required to be found out. But the Government acknowledged the necessity for the survey, and assented to it months ago. He wished the House to understand that if the matter went to a division, and the motion that the money be provided out of the Supplementary Estimates on a future day was

carried, it did not follow that it would be done. A victory of that sort could not do the other side any good; and, therefore, what was the use of it? They might defeat the Government, but it was simply affirming that they would go into committee three weeks hence for the purpose of getting a survey which the Government had already made up their minds to carry out.

The HON. S. W. GRIFFITH said he wished to make a few remarks after what had fallen from the Premier. The hon. gentleman said that it was within his power to throw a bombshell into the Opposition camp; but they knew that he had been trying to do that for several months past, and not only with respect to the railway to Gympie, but to other places; but he had not been very successful up to the present time. The hon. gentleman also told them that the people of Sandgate were duly grateful for the Government having given them a railway. He (Mr. Griffith) agreed that they were duly grateful, but they knew perfectly well that they had not to thank the Government at all for it. The Government opposed the line as long as they could, said it would be worthless and would never pay, and then took it by the cheapest route and made the cost as low as possible. The population was left out of consideration in every way. The line was granted, it was true, but it was like throwing a bone to a hungry dog. He thought the people were perfectly able to judge for themselves what they owed the Government for the concession. The hon. gentleman told them that months ago the survey of a line to Gympie was promised; but he (Mr. Griffith) did not remember seeing anything about it in the public prints.

The PREMIER : It was there.

Mr. GRIFFITH said if that was so it would have been much more simple for the hon. member for Gympie to have asked the Minister for Works whether it was the intention of the Government to cause the survey to be made, so that the Minister could have said "Yes"; and all the time and trouble they had had would have been avoided? That would not do, however; there were other purposes to be served. They were told that the Government always did things at the right time. It was satisfactory to know that the Government acted in that way; but no doubt it depended very much where proposals came from whether they would be adopted. If they came from members on the Ministerial side of the House, everything was promised; but if any proposals of a similar kind came from the Opposition side, no matter how reasonable they were or how good the arguments in support of them, they were instantly refused. If a proposal came from an influential member on the Ministerial side, it was at once accepted, only the hon. member was invited to withdraw his motion, and not embarrass the Government. But he (Mr. Griffith) did not understand that way of conducting public business, and he hoped it would not be followed. He held that the Government represented all parts of the colony alike, and that the proposals of members on both sides should be received equally, according to their merits, and not according to whether a member was a follower of the Government or an opponent. The Premier had told them that the money would not be taken from the Supplementary Estimates, but that was a matter of words; the question before them was not an argument about words, but about things. He for one thought that a resolution affirming the desirability of making the survey was a much more satisfactory thing than an intimation from the Government that they intended to do it. The question would be—When? Like the girl when she pulled the flower to pieces—"This year, next year, some

time, never." It did not follow, they were told, that the Government would do anything more. Possibly the survey would be a barometrical survey, such as they had heard of that evening, taking three days to make. But that was not the sort of thing the House meant. If a majority of the House thought that it was desirable that the survey should be made, he thought there were good reasons why it should be carried out in a proper manner. He saw no necessity for a division. He thought it was undesirable that motions should be brought forward in that way, apparently with the previous knowledge of Ministers, so that the House might go through the form of a debate. The member who brought it forward could, of course, afterwards say:—"Look at the motion I brought forward; I only withdrew it because the Government agreed to it." He (Mr. Griffith) did not understand that mode of conducting public business. If hon. members chose to vote against the survey, let them do so; if, on the other hand, they thought it desirable to have the survey, let them vote for it. Why should motions be brought forward and then withdrawn because the Government said they would be embarrassed? He objected to a system of enabling a member to make a flourish before his constituents. He should vote for the motion.

Mr. MACDONALD-PATERSON said that the people of Sandgate were not indebted for the railway entirely to Ministerial support. He knew at least five members—and he was not quite sure that there were not seven—on the Opposition side who helped the Government to carry that railway through the House; therefore, that disposed of the statement that it was entirely owing to Governmental influence that that line was adopted. He did not intend to say very much upon the subject of the motion for survey. He had given the hon. member for Gympie a most cordial support upon the subject last year. The motion was carried, and when the matter went into committee he was unable to attend. The hon. gentleman knew it, and did not expect to see him then. He wished to take the opportunity of stating that he trusted that the Minister for Works would, in carrying out the survey, take the shortest practicable route between the city of Brisbane and Gympie. It was not simply a question of opening up certain agricultural land; but it was a national work, with the object of connecting these two very important centres.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. A. Archer) said he had seldom heard a speech which reflected so much credit on the Government as the speech of the hon. member for Rockhampton who had just sat down. The hon. gentleman stated that the Brisbane-Sandgate Railway would not have been carried by the present Government unless they had been assisted by several gentlemen sitting on the Opposition side of the House. It only showed how sincere the present Government were in their advocacy of the railway, when, in spite of some of their own followers who were opposed to it, they carried it, with the assistance of some Opposition members. He did not know anything that could be of more credit to the Government in connection with the matter.

Question put, and the House divided.

Mr. HAMILTON called attention, during the division, to the fact that the junior member for North Brisbane had paired with the hon. member for Normanby (Mr. Stevenson) in all business which took place after 8 o'clock; whereas he was now voting in the present division.

The SPEAKER said that the matter was a private arrangement only, and no notice could be taken of it.

The PREMIER said that the arrangement was more than a private one. If the whips on both sides made arrangements in regard to the voting of two members, they must surely be adhered to, unless one of the members concerned disclaimed it.

The SPEAKER said that, by the practice of Parliament arrangements might be made by two members, but the House had nothing to do with it.

Mr. BROOKES said that, as he was the person alluded to by the Premier, he would explain his conduct after the division was taken.

The following was the division list:—

AYES, 20.

Messrs. Griffith, McLean, Dickson, Thom, Buckland, Garrick, Isambert, Rutledge, Brookes, Baynes, Miles, Fraser, Macdonald-Paterson, Grimes, Macfarlane, Bailey, De Poix-Tyrel, Groom, Aland, and Ilowitz.

NOES, 22.

Messrs. McIlwraith, Macrossan, Archer, Pope Cooper, Feez, Perkins, Low, Norton, Hamilton, McWhannell, Govett, Allan, Francis, Ferguson, H. Palmer, Scott, Black, H. W. Palmer, Kellett, Foote, O'Sullivan, and Price.

Question resolved in the negative.

Mr. BROOKES said he wished to explain to the House the little matter of his alleged pairing off with the hon. member for Normanby. That gentleman was now present in the House, and would bear him out in what he said. While the Premier was speaking, he (Mr. Brookes) saw the hon. member for Normanby going out, and followed him, and told him that he would not be able to keep his promise with him, as there was going to be a division. The hon. member agreed to that. He could have been at the division if he had liked. He (Mr. Brookes) did not like being accused of having broken faith with the hon. gentleman. He did not think it would now be possible for anyone to say he had acted otherwise than honourably and as a gentleman.

Mr. STEVENSON said he would now tell his story. It was quite true that he had paired off with the hon. member for North Brisbane, for the very reason that he thought there would be a division; so that he did not think there was much use for the hon. member to go and tell him there would be a division. For what other reason could he (Mr. Stevenson) have come to such an arrangement? Was it that they should speak after 8 o'clock, but not vote? It was true the hon. member had come to him and asked him to let him off the arrangement. He (Mr. Stevenson) had told him he wanted to get away; though if he had known the division would have come on so soon he should have stayed. He had told the hon. member that he would stick to his part of the arrangement, and that he (Mr. Brookes) could do what he liked. That was in the hearing of the hon. member for Burnett. He (Mr. Stevenson) had told the hon. member for Gympie of the arrangement, and was going away when he heard the division bell ring.

Mr. BAYNES said he could confirm—

The SPEAKER said the hon. member was not in order. The hon. member for North Brisbane had made a personal explanation, and after hearing him, the hon. member for Normanby was alone entitled to speak.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. BAYNES said he rose to move the adjournment of the House, for the purpose of corroborating what the hon. member for Normanby had stated. He was in conversation with that gentleman in the lobby, when the hon. member for North Brisbane came out and said

he wished to be let off, but the hon. member for Normanby would not agree to it. He now begged to withdraw the motion.

Motion withdrawn.

REWARD FOR DISCOVERY OF TIN-LODE IN DISTRICT OF STANTHORPE.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said as so many notices of motion had come on that afternoon, and as there were yet nineteen to be considered, he would not say very much on the motion in his name. He might as well state at once that he would go to a division, so that the Ministry need not put themselves to the trouble of promising the sum asked for. He was asking for a reward for the discovery of a payable tin-lode in the mineral district of Stanthorpe advisedly, as the district had contributed from its mineral resources a great deal to the revenue of the colony. The sum asked for was a very small one; and, moreover, it might never be required. The onus of proof that the money was earned devolved upon the person who might ask for the payment of it. Parliament had on various occasions voted rewards for the discovery of payable goldfields and of gold, and he knew that rewards had been paid away. He would not detain the House further than by moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates a sum of £1,000 as a reward for the discovery of a payable tin-lode in the mineral district of Stanthorpe.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (the Hon. J. M. Macrossan) said he was extremely sorry that he should be obliged to oppose the hon. member. He had seen many notices of motion on the paper asking for money, but he had never before seen one like that before the House. They were asked to vote £1,000 for the discovery of a payable tin-lode in the district of Stanthorpe! It was a purely local matter for the hon. member's own district. There were tin-lodes being discovered every day in the northern parts of the colony, and nobody ever asked for rewards. There was a section in the Goldfields Act which provided for the payment of £1,000 for the discovery of a payable goldfield; but there was as vast a difference between the discovery of a goldfield and a quartz-reef as between a tinfield and a tin lode. The hon. member knew very well that a lode might be discovered that would only pay the wages of the party that was working it; so that they would be paying away £1,000 for a lode which would just pay wages, and not for a payable tinfield. The country would not benefit from that; indeed he did not see what benefit could come from the discovery of a lode that would employ six men. Hon. members who were acquainted with the tin-lodes of the North knew that they did not generally run very far, and seldom admitted of more than two claims being worked on each side of the lode, and in many cases only one claim could be worked. He thought he need say no more as to the absurdity of the motion. If they were to pay £1,000 for the discovery of every lode found in the colony—in the northern part of it, north of Mackay—within the last two years they would very likely have to pay half-a-million of money. Why they should be called upon to make an exception in favour of Stanthorpe which was not made anywhere else in the colony he could not understand; and he thought the House would agree with him that it would not be right to do so. There was no reason why it should be so, as there was nothing in Stanthorpe to warrant exceptional

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legislation in its favour. He should oppose the motion if the hon. member went to a division upon it.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL, in reply, said the Minister for Works had made use of the very best argument that could possibly be made in support of his motion. He said they were now making discoveries of tin-lodes in the North without paying for them. That was all the more reason why they should pay for the discovery of one down south. As to saying that a lode would only require four or six men it was absurd. Instead of four or six men it would result in the employment of 400 or 600 men if there was a tin-lode discovered in the district referred to. He hoped hon. members would see the motion in the same light as he did. He should certainly divide the House upon it, even if he had to sit on one side by himself.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 18.

Messrs. Thorn, Low, Brookes, Rutledge, Fraser, Price, Buckland, Bailey, Aland, De Poix-Tyrel, Isambert, Dickson, McLean, Miles, Macfarlane, Groom, Horwitz, and Macdonald-Paterson.

NOES, 20.

Messrs. Archer, McIlwraith, Pope Cooper, Macrossan, Perkins, McWhannell, Black, Pez, Norton, Foote, H. W. Palmer, Kellett, Baynes, O'Sullivan, H. Palmer, Francis, Scott, Allan, Ferguson, and Hamilton.

Question resolved in the negative.

PROSPECTING IN THE MINERAL DISTRICT OF STANTHORPE.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL, in moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates a sum of £5,000 for the purpose of prospecting the mineral district of Stanthorpe for tin and other minerals—

said he had a little more to say than he had said upon the previous one. He should like to give a reason for the motion. The district for which he asked that sum for the purpose of prospecting was one which contributed largely to the revenue of the colony. He might state that the return of tin-ore from that district had already been valued at the sum of £1,900,000, or nearly two millions sterling, and 34,000 tons of tin had been sent away from the district by train. It had contributed to the revenue of the district in the shape of railway traffic alone some £51,000. The district, which at one time employed 8,000 men, at the present time, he was sorry to say, employed only 1,000. If the district were properly prospected it would be found to be very rich in stanniferous deposits. The people had done the best they could in raising the sum of about £500 and spending it in prospecting, but the experiment had not proved successful. It was distinctly understood by the contributors to that fund that they were not to get any return, but it was simply for the benefit of the district that the subscriptions were raised. Anyone could take advantage of what was found. As a matter of fact, one small patch was found which was immediately pegged off by the working miners of the district, and afterwards sold to Chinamen. One man he knew realised £300 or £400 from his claim. He would point out in the report of Mr. Jack that he suggested a system of prospecting which was beyond the means of anyone in the district. He would read the paragraph in this report:—

"Although the quartz reefs may occasionally afford 'punches' of tin-ore, as they do on the New South Wales side of the border, I have little doubt that, after the exhaustion of the alluvial deposits, the future of Stanthorpe will depend on the question of the profitable working of the stanniferous dykes. The tin-ore crystals

of the dykes are precisely what, with a little attrition, would yield the stream tin of the heads of the Severn. I should recommend to all concerned in the prosperity of the place a vigorous search for dykes of this character, (1) by prospecting the surface wash and following up any indication of its richness, (2) by cross-trenching at right angles to the direction of the joints in the granite in the places to which the surface prospecting may have led, and (3) by sinking on the dykes, when found, to a sufficient depth to prove their productiveness where they are beyond the influence of atmospheric agencies."

He thought he was justified in asking for that sum of money, but he was quite prepared to submit to an amendment. He would be prepared to amend his motion, making it apply to the whole of the colony. He thought they were quite justified, now that they had such a large surplus revenue, in expending money in prospecting the different districts for minerals.

The MINISTER FOR MINES said the hon. member for Carnarvon had said that he ought to give reasons for his second motion, implying that he had given no reason for his first. The reasons he had given for his second motion, however, were just as valueless as those given for the first. The principal reason he gave was that Stanthorpe was producing a large quantity of tin, and that Mr. Jack's scheme for working it was beyond the means of the district. He took the hon. gentleman's figures as correct, but, admitting that, he was extremely sorry to say that the largest portion of the product of the district went into the pockets of Chinamen, and the balance into the pockets of Sydney speculators. He thought, therefore, the argument very valueless indeed. The hon. member had read a paragraph of Mr. Jack's report tending to show that prospecting was not within the means of the people of the district. If the hon. member had read another paragraph he could have told the House whether it was really beyond the means of the people. He would read the next paragraph:—

"There is every reason to believe that dykes of the character referred to will be regular in thickness and have good walls. The tin oxide will probably be found disseminated uniformly throughout; in fact, it may be predicted that everything will be favourable to mining it, provided the proportion of ore be sufficiently high to pay. The immense quantity of ore which has been derived from the stream workings forms the strongest argument in favour of the hope that the industrious use of the dish and pick will be rewarded by the discovery of rich "stockwerk" tin deposits. What little attention has hitherto been devoted to lodes in the district has been mainly directed to quartz reefs. I should recommend a departure from this line of search, and a diligent inquiry for stanniferous dykes. Everything connected with the occurrence of stream tin points to numerous sources."

Were the miners of Stanthorpe above the use of the dish and pick? Were they so impoverished that those implements were beyond their reach? The arguments the hon. member had used were decidedly bad. What had been the result of the money spent by the present Government in prospecting? It had been literally wasted. The hon. gentleman said he would be willing to amend his motion, making it apply to the whole colony. That would make it more liberal, but not more acceptable, as at the present moment tin-lodes were discovered over the whole colony, and there was no need to give these subsidies. The Government had spent several thousands of pounds in prospecting without reaping any benefit whatsoever. The only way to pay for the discovery of mineral deposits was to pay the prospectors when they discovered the deposits and not before. It was only waste of money to pay men for prospecting who only loafed about the country. On behalf of the Government he could not consent to the motion.

Mr. BAILEY said it was surprising the dexterity with which the Minister for Mines could

argue against anything in favour of the mining industry. No matter in what guise the motion was brought into that House, the hon. gentleman had no right to abuse it, as formerly he expressed himself ready to support it. The hon. member for Carnarvon, in bringing forward the motion, made a very fair and liberal offer to the Government. At first the resolution appeared to be merely a local one, as whatever benefit might be derived from it would be confined to one particular district. But the hon. gentleman had consented that the resolution should be amended so that it should apply to the whole colony. The hon. Minister for Works had told them that prospectors were constantly finding out tin-lodes and other minerals in different parts of the colony; but he did not tell them what became of the men who made those discoveries. Let him go to Herberton, and he would find that one-half of the men who had made discoveries had wasted all their means and were leaving the colony in numbers, and it was for the benefit of such men that such a reward as was proposed under the resolution should be given. At present the prospector was a mere prey to the speculators. He made a discovery after many months' toil, and, his means being exhausted, he was obliged to sell out to the first one who offered, and came away very little better off than before he found it. By a resolution of the kind proposed they would give an incentive to prospectors in different parts of the colony where minerals abounded. A man might devote months of weary toil and fatigue and hardship in making discoveries, and then reap no benefit. He proposed to amend the resolution by striking out the words "mineral district of Stanthorpe," so that it would read—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be placed upon the Supplementary Estimates a sum of £5,000 for the purpose of prospecting for tin and other minerals."

He thought it was quite time that the House recognised the importance of the mining industry in some way. They taxed miners and took all away from them that they could, and made all sorts of repressive regulations, yet they would not do anything that would benefit them. He hoped on the present occasion the House would show a little more liberality. The sum asked for was only a very small one and might do a considerable amount of good.

The PREMIER said the hon. member who moved the original motion gave as his only reason the poverty of the Stanthorpe district, and the amendment made by the hon. member for Wide Bay had taken away that, because he wished it to apply to the whole colony. If they looked at the position of the tin-mining industry in the colony they would see that tin was being discovered everywhere. He dared say that in one-third of the colony discoveries of tin were being made, for which the labour market of the colony was perfectly insufficient to supply the necessary work. Many tinfields were lying unworked because there was not enough labour in the colony to supply them; and the motion meant that the Government should not be content but actually employ workmen to find more. There was something to be said in favour of the original motion, and that was the poverty of the district. They all sympathised with the hon. member for Carnarvon, as it was a pitiable thing to see a district that was once so prosperous falling to decay as the Stanthorpe district was. It was, perhaps, only the proper thing for him, as representative of the district, to ask the House for money, with the possibility of being able to resuscitate that prosperity; but to consent to the alteration made by the hon.

member for Wide Bay was to destroy that reason. He did not believe in giving that money to the Stanthorpe district for the reason that the labour market was very badly supplied. Men were wanted, not for the tin industry alone, but for every other industry, and to bring forward a motion to spend £5,000 in inventing means for finding further employment for the men was an absurdity. But there was another reason, and it was this: The hon. member knew perfectly well that the men who would benefit by the motion were the men who ought to put their hands in their pockets and prospect for themselves—the proprietors of land in the Stanthorpe district. There was plenty of land that had been got for a mere song, and it was simply being held in the belief that through the strength of one party or the weakness of the other a sum of money would be put on the Estimates for prospecting it. He held that it was the duty of those owning land in the Stanthorpe district to go on prospecting themselves.

Mr. McLEAN said he thought, in looking over the resolution, even if it were carried the Government would not be compelled to pay 1s. of that £5,000 for prospecting for tin. The hon. member for Wide Bay seemed to reason that that sum of money ought to be paid as a reward to discoverers; but that was not the object of the hon. member for Carnarvon. The object of that hon. gentleman was that the money should be spent in aiding those who were searching for mineral deposits. He must take exception to the remarks made by the Minister for Works. That gentleman stated that the money that had already been voted in that House had been loafed away by the prospectors. He (Mr. McLean) thought that was an injustice to those who had taken their lives in their hands and gone out into the far bush to prospect for gold and other minerals. There were plenty of those men who were engaged by the Government who actually did their duty as far as they possibly could. The hon. member for Stanthorpe had weakened his cause by suggesting the amendment. If it was necessary that prospecting should take place anywhere, Stanthorpe was the district. They knew that a great deal of private prospecting was taking place at the present time in the northern portion of the colony. Stanthorpe had been a rich field, and it was very possible that if some proper system of prospecting was carried out fresh discoveries might be made. The Minister for Works had alluded to the poverty of the miners and also to the report of Mr. Jack; and now those miners were so poor, and as all that was necessary to bring about the prosperity of the district was the employment of the pick and dish, perhaps the Government would supply them with a few dozen of those articles. It was immaterial whether the motion were carried or not, as the Government were not likely to spend the money.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put and negatived.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said he would point out to the Minister for Works, who stated that the miners could live with the pick and dish, that it was necessary that the miners should live while prospecting, because as soon as the discovery was made they could easily make a living. He was sorry to hear the Premier say that the miners should put their hands into their pockets and prospect. He could tell the hon. member that they had done so, and had done the best they could, but they found it impossible to carry on prospecting any further. If a further discovery of tin were made in the district of Stanthorpe it would be for the benefit of the whole colony, and the miners of the district would have as

good times as they had eight or ten years ago. He would also point out that the Government were the largest landowners in the district, and that he did not ask the money for prospecting private property. Nine-tenths of the country was unalienated, and if that were prospected and a discovery made the whole of that country would be taken up and would give employment to a large number of people. The traffic on the railway would be greater, and the prosperity of the colony would be increased in every way. He received a petition the other day which was rejected by the House as informal, but if he read that petition it would show the feeling of the people of Stanthorpe better than anything he could say:—

"We, the undersigned, on behalf of the Stanthorpe and Border Mining Association, have the honour to request that you will be pleased to grant a sum of money—

That was the £5,000 for which he asked—

"for the purpose of prospecting and further developing the mineral resources of this district.

"It is intended, should your honourable House accede to our prayer, that the grant be devoted entirely to the developing of the tin-lodes and deep alluvial leads which are fully believed to exist in this extensive and comparatively unalienated district.

"Your petitioners feel assured that it requires but little inducement to divert a steady stream of capital to this field and place this important portion of Queensland in that position which it formerly occupied as a source of considerable revenue to the colony.

"The development of our tin industry into immense proportions is only, we feel assured, a matter of time: but your petitioners respectfully submit that the monetary grant asked for will hasten by a considerable period the consummation of the desired object.

"Your petitioners are fully aware that the money, if granted, should be expended in the development of Crown lands only, and would further respectfully show that the nature of the ground proposed to be opened up—namely, tin-lodes or deep alluvial—is not such as to induce the employment of Chinese, as evidenced by similar operations in other parts of the colony.

"And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will always pray, etc."

He thought that placed the matter as clearly as possible before the House, and he hoped the Government would see their way to granting the concession.

Question put, and the House divided:—

AYES, 16.

Messrs. McLean, Dickson, Griffith, Rutledge, Brookes, Sheaffe, De Poix-Tyrel, Macdonald-Paterson, Buckland, Thorn, Aland, Miles, Grimes, Garrick, Bailey, and Horwitz.

NOES, 23.

Messrs. Archer, Price, McIlwraith, Perkins, Macrossan, Pope Cooper, Feez, Scott, Hamilton, Allan, Foote, Norton, McWhannell, Black, Ferguson, H. Palmer, Govett, Fraser, Kellett, Baynes, H. W. Palmer, Low, and O'Sullivan.

Question resolved in the negative.

STANTHORPE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. DE POIX-TYREL said that, after the small amount of encouragement he had received in connection with the last two resolutions, with the consent of the House he would withdraw the motion standing in his name for a grant for the purpose of conserving and supplying water to the town of Stanthorpe.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said, as he understood it was the desire of hon. members on both sides of the House to adjourn early, he would move that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. McLEAN said he wished to know what position private motions would occupy that day fortnight if they adjourned now? He had a motion on the paper, and he would have no objection to give way if it occupied the same

position that day fortnight that it did now ; but if it were going to be shunted down to the bottom of the paper he should certainly object to the adjournment, although, no doubt, the Government would carry it against him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved, by way of amendment to the Premier's motion, that the words "until Monday next" be added.

Mr. KELLETT said he would also like to know in what position the business-paper would stand if they adjourned now. He had a motion on the paper which should come on next, and he had been waiting patiently for it all night. He attended the House at great trouble and with inconvenience to himself, and found at the last moment that they were to adjourn at a quarter past 9. He thought it was very unfair to private members that they should adjourn at such an early hour, simply because some hon. members wanted to go to a ball. He should have liked to attend the ball, but he found it was impossible to do so, because he had to attend to business in that House. There were a good many motions on the paper, and if they adjourned at such an early hour he did not know when they would come to the end of them.

The PREMIER said he was consulting the wishes of a very large majority of the House in moving the adjournment; in fact, it was at the request of the leader of the Opposition that he had moved it, and the business had been so arranged for the last hour. As to the position that private business would occupy on the paper, it depended a great deal upon members themselves, for most of them knew thoroughly well how to get their business at the top of the paper. He had no influence whatever as to the arrangement of the business-paper.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN hoped that the practice of tackling one another about putting one motion before the other would not be allowed. He had been dodged in that way at the beginning of the session, and a motion in his name was now almost at the bottom of the paper, and appeared likely to remain there. He should like to see the paper arranged for next Thursday in the order in which motions now stood, because then members would know exactly when their motions were likely to come on. He thought as they were now going to sit on Monday, and as that would be a Government day, the Government should give Friday for private business, because if hon. members did not get that day as well as Thursday they would never get through their business.

The PREMIER said of course the Government would be quite willing to assist in making a House on Friday.

The SPEAKER said he would remind hon. members that any notice of motion given for next Thursday would of course take precedence of motions at present on the paper.

Mr. De POIX-TYREL pointed out that on next Thursday Orders of the Day would take precedence.

Mr. McLEAN said if the Government promised to assist in making a House on Friday morning, no doubt several notices of motion on the paper could be disposed of. There was now a large number on the paper, and no doubt there would be still a large number, and if the whole evening was to be spent over two or three motions some hon. members would never get their business through.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added—put and passed.

In answer to Mr. GRIFFITH,

The PREMIER said the notice-paper on Monday would stand in something like the

following order:—Fire Brigades Act Amendment Bill; Liquor Retailers Licensing Bill; Bills of Exchange Bill; Insanity Bill. With regard to the Bills of Exchange Bill, he did not intend to do anything more than make a short speech and put it before the House. He had no intention whatever of carrying it during the present session.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past 9 o'clock until the usual hour on Monday next.