

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

TUESDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 1884

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 11 November, 1884.

Assent to Bills.—Native Labourers Protection Bill.—Jury Bill.—Brands Act Amendment Bill.—Crown Lands Bill.—Divisional Boards Agricultural Drainage Bill.—Maryborough and Urangan Railway Bill.—Highfields Branch Railway Extension.—Imported Manufactured Leather.—Railway between Toowoomba and Highfields.—Townsville Gas and Coke Company (Limited) Bill.—second reading.—Maryborough School of Arts Bill.—committee.—Sale and Use of Poisons Bill.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 4 o'clock.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

The PRESIDENT read messages from the Governor conveying His Excellency's assent, on behalf of Her Majesty, to the following Bills:—Immigration Act of 1882 Amendment Bill, and Oaths Act Amendment Bill.

NATIVE LABOURERS PROTECTION BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, intimating that the Assembly had agreed to the Council's amendments in clauses 7 and 8.

JURY BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to amend the laws relating to jurors and to amend the Jury Act of 1867.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. C. S. Mein), the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to amend the Brands Act of 1872.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

CROWN LANDS BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to make better provision for the occupation and use of Crown lands.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

DIVISIONAL BOARDS AGRICULTURAL DRAINAGE BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Council, a Bill to provide for the drainage of lands in the colony of Queensland.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

MARYBOROUGH AND URANGAN RAILWAY BILL.

The PRESIDENT read a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding a Bill to authorise the Vernon Coal and Railway Company, Limited, to construct and maintain certain lines of railway in the Wide Bay district, to be called the Maryborough and Urangan Railway, and to enable the said company to acquire certain lands in the Burrum Coal Reserve, and for other purposes.

On motion of the Hon. P. MACPHERSON, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

HIGHFIELDS BRANCH RAILWAY EXTENSION.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: I beg to move—

That the report of the Select Committee on the proposed extension of the Highfields branch of the Southern and Western Railway from Cabarlah to Crow's Nest township be now adopted.

In the year 1881, this House, in conjunction with the Legislative Assembly, affirmed the desirability of constructing a branch line from the main Southern line near Toowoomba towards Crow's Nest. We subsequently approved of the construction of a portion of the line, and funds were voted for the purpose. There are now in operation about eleven miles in the direction of Crow's Nest; and the present proposal is that the line to Crow's Nest shall be completed. That involves the construction of an additional eighteen miles or thereabouts. The committee appointed by this House to inquire into the matter dealt with it at considerable length; they examined gentlemen of the district familiar with the industries and capabilities of the place, as well as professional gentlemen, and the Acting Commissioner for Railways. The evidence of the gentlemen residing in the district may be regarded as interested to a certain extent; but the testimony given by them was very strong. It was to the effect that there is a large quantity of timber in the district; that the country is capable of agricultural development to a very large extent; and that unless the proposed extension is made the line already constructed may as well be pulled up, as it is now practically useless. The evidence of the Acting Commissioner is to the effect that the line now in use is not profitable, and that it was carried on at a loss during the last eight months; but, though Mr. Curnow does not anticipate a large amount of profit from the proposed extension, he is decidedly of opinion that unless it is carried out the line at present in use had better be pulled up. Mr. Phillips gives stronger testimony; for whilst agreeing that if the line be not extended the portion already in use will be valueless, he goes further, and says there is good agricultural land in the district which will be developed by the extension; and that the timber is practically inexhaustible. I think, with that testimony before us, we shall be acting unwisely if we do not fall in with the unanimous views of the Legislative Assembly, and agree to the extension of the line, the construction of which was

unanimously affirmed by us so far back as 1881. Holding these views, I beg to move that the report of the Select Committee be adopted.

The HON. W. D. BOX : Hon. gentlemen,—To my mind this motion is a mistake, as I do not believe that the extension will ever pay working expenses. The part of the line already opened passes through the most thickly populated portion of the district, and that portion does not pay. How then can we expect the remainder to pay, which will go through barren country where there is no population? I have seen deserted farms in the district, but no prosperous farms. There is splendid shooting about the place, but the fact of there being good shooting implies that the country is at present unpopulated. The district has been well known for a long time. It is near Toowoomba, and if it contained valuable agricultural land it would have been settled long ago. There is a coach running, but it carries no passengers. The average number of passengers from Cabarlah to Crow's Nest is barely one a day, so the coachman informed me. On the whole, I think the House would be very much wiser if at present it refused to consent to the proposed extension. Eleven and a-half miles have already been constructed, and this resolution, if adopted, will pledge us to the construction of seventeen and a-half miles of a railway which, according to the evidence, does not pay working expenses. If any part of the line would pay, surely it is the part to Cabarlah, which overcomes the difficulties of the road to Crow's Nest, and along which timber can be carried, either sawn or in log. Possibly the proposed extension may supply the wants of the interior in respect to timber; but there are other timbers more available than those at Crow's Nest. The evidence given before the Select Committee is undoubtedly that of interested persons. Edward Wilnot Pechey is a sawmill proprietor, who has long been settled in the district, and if the railway is made absolutely through his yard he will be able to place timber on the trucks to very great advantage. Surely that is the evidence of a man deeply interested. The evidence of Mr. Curnow, to my mind, does not bear out the necessity for a railway. He says the tonnage carried over the line during the year has been 1,845 tons of timber, and about 68 tons of agricultural produce. The total receipts for freight up to the end of August were £543. The only evidence I can get for the House, as to the public business transacted, is in relation to the telegrams sent from Crow's Nest. The answer to that will be that a farming population does not require to send telegrams; but there is no farming population in the place. The telegrams sent in the year 1882 amounted to £27; in 1883 the amount paid for telegrams amounted to £20; and in 1884, to £23 odd. Those amounts include payments on account of the Public Service—namely, £13 out of £27; £4 out of £20; and £6 out of £23. That is all the information I can get on the subject. I may tell hon. gentlemen that I have visited the place, and that I speak from personal knowledge. Mr. Curnow says that the present traffic does not pay. The Hon. James Taylor has a very nice property near the proposed line, so that his evidence must be considered interested.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : He gave no evidence before the Select Committee.

The HON. W. D. BOX : I shall vote against the resolution, and I think the amount might very fairly be expended in a very different direction. There are railways wanted in many parts of the colony. There is a railway wanted to the Bald Hills and the Blackall Ranges, where there are vast forests of timber. This unfortunate Crow's Nest I am afraid will get this benefit, but I shall certainly vote against it.

The HON. J. TAYLOR said : Hon. gentlemen,—I am rather surprised at the speech which the hon. member (Mr. Box) has just made. I took the trouble, last Saturday, to go along this line myself to see the country, and I say that there is not a single acre of land there deserted. I defy him to prove otherwise. He has evidently, since this line came before the House, got what is vulgarly called a "down" upon it; but he makes a grand mistake when he says the land is deserted. There is an immense agricultural population settled there since it was established, as is proved by the large amount of stuff that is sent from there by rail into Toowoomba and Brisbane. The hon. gentleman says that Mr. Pechey's evidence is partial and interested. How does he know it? What right has he to say it? Mr. Pechey is as much a gentleman as the Hon. Mr. Box is, and he has no right to say that Mr. Pechey's evidence is partial, and that he is interested in any way. I believe, myself, if this railway is not made to Crow's Nest, the whole of the money already spent has been wasted, and that by making these few miles—seventeen and a-half—further on it will make it a payable line. The hon. gentleman refers to Mr. Curnow's evidence. That evidence is not worth one single straw; it is not worth the paper it is written on, and I will call attention to it to show you why. Mr. Curnow says here :—

"113. Do you expect the line to be a fairly profitable one if it is completed? I do not expect it to be a profitable line.

"114. Why? Because of the traffic we have already from the district. I think, however, that the extension will help to make the line a better paying line than it is at present. In fact, if it is not extended I think it had better be shut up."

Now, just before that Mr. Curnow says he knows nothing about the line—that he has never been along the country and knows nothing about its resources in any possible way; and yet he gives that evidence that it will not pay. What is the use of evidence of that sort? This witness is the Acting Commissioner; but I am convinced that the line will pay if it is made, and pay very well indeed. The quantity of timber there is immense, and we will be able to supply some of the western country with it. I for one am very glad indeed that the line is to be made. The hon. member (Mr. Box) says I am an interested party. I am not an interested party in any possible way. I do not care two straws whether the line is made or not, as far as my own personal interests are concerned.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said : Hon. gentlemen,—Having a personal knowledge of the country generally, although not of Crow's Nest in particular, I think, perhaps, it will be convenient for me to explain the condition of things in regard to this railway line. There is no doubt that, so far as the railway line has been carried, it has been a mistake, because the only reasonable object for a railway line up towards Crow's Nest would be for the supply of timber to the western districts. There is a tract of timber commencing near about Highfields, stretching round like a horseshoe across behind Dalby, round this side of Baramba, and down to the Blackall Range. This is a long streak of very fine timber country, and although many people have been there in different places, there is really not much known about it. Nevertheless that streak of country is the only one to which we can possibly look for the supply of large bridge-building and other heavy structural timber for our western railways; and even if you were to spend apparently £20,000 or £30,000 in making a railway into this timber country, we should by a far larger amount reduce the cost of our contracts for the western work. The present line which has been started undoubtedly goes into the wrong place,

but having been made so far, it would scarcely be desirable to pull it up and shift it away a short distance, comparatively, and reconstruct it elsewhere. We may just as well take so much as is actually made. Had the most suitable spot been selected for supplying timber for the western country it should have been somewhere farther on, where it would have gone more into the heart of the country—most probably about Dalby would have been the spot from which the line ought to have started. It would have gone through far more valuable country, and into very much better timbered country than the present line, even when it is completed to Crow's Nest. Under these conditions, the line having been constructed so far, I think we ought to proceed to finish it. At the same time, I must point out that if the line is finished to Crow's Nest it will not be a part of any line which can be continued with any advantage to any farther point in that part of the country; nor will it open out, as far as I can tell, any very large extent of agricultural land. The country which it will open up will be chiefly scrub land which may come under cultivation, but the extent of it is not such as would justify a railway being made for that purpose only. It has been stated that there are deposits of gold, silver, copper, etc., that the line of railway will lead to, but except the one spot where the diggings are proceeding with about four men, I think—there may be four men and a boy—the line does not extend to the place where gold has been found or other metalliferous deposits exist. They are in a country which is in direct communication with the Mount Esk or Brisbane Valley line, and which can only be accessible from that line, because, even were an attempt made, regardless of cost, to take a line from Crow's Nest out towards the Burnett or Nanango, you would have been forced back almost to the Darling Downs and round the head of two or three very large creeks—such as Einn Creek and Cooyar Creek—before you could possibly get back again to the eastward into the Burnett district; and if you wanted to go there it is very much easier to start from Dalby, or anywhere along the line at that part. We must throw aside any hope that the line is going to be one for the purpose of opening up any agricultural district: in fact, the tract of country into which the line will go, and which it will render valuable for any purpose, is one that will only produce timber, and for its own local use, possibly coal, but the coal will not be sufficiently valuable there to be brought to Toowoomba or to the Western line at a profit. I think, under the circumstances, that having made a part of the line, we may just as well complete the undertaking that has been commenced, which will conduce to the advantage of the country, although it might have been better designed by it taking a different starting point.

The Hon. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—Whether the railway pays or not depends on the rate of carriage to be charged for the timber. If a rate somewhat similar to what the people are now paying for the carriage of timber were adopted by the Railway Department, it would pay; but if political pressure is brought to bear and the rate is reduced to a minimum it cannot pay; therefore it must rest with the Railway Department either to make it pay or not. If political pressure is brought to bear to that extent that timber will be carried for too low a rate, of course it cannot pay. In other respects the prospect is that it will pay if the rate be somewhat similar to what they now pay by horse and bullock teams for timber.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM said: Hon. gentlemen,—I was rather astonished at the conclusion

of the Hon. Mr. Gregory's speech, because I really thought that he was talking against the adoption of the report. I think he gave the most sound and correct reasons why this report should not be adopted that could possibly be put before the House—much better than I could give myself, having only looked in a cursory way over it. I think the report brought up by the committee itself is quite sufficient. A more half-hearted report I never read. I see they have got one word in italics, "recommend," and that is about the only thing in support of it. The rest of it is just about the feeblest recommendation I have ever read of anything. The Hon. Mr. Taylor quoted from the evidence of Mr. Curnow, who holds a responsible position in the Railway Department, which I intended to quote from too—exactly the same evidence:—

"Do you expect the line to be a fairly profitable one if it is completed? I do not expect it to be a profitable line."

"Why? Because of the traffic we have already from the district. I think, however, that the extension will help to make the line a better paying line than it is at present. In fact, if it is not extended I think it had better be shut up."

It is very well to say that Mr. Pechey is as much a gentleman as the Hon. Mr. Box, and all that sort of thing. I was rather astonished to hear the Hon. Mr. Taylor talk such utter rubbish. Mr. Pechey is interested in the line, and very naturally his evidence will be in favour of it. I think the man would be an ass if he was not; but this evidence of Mr. Curnow, whatever his knowledge of the country may be, is the evidence of an impartial man with some knowledge of the working and paying of the Railway Department.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: He says he has no knowledge of the country whatever.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM: He may have no knowledge of the country, but he has knowledge whether the line has paid—and we know the present line has not paid—and even if it were extended he says it will not pay. My idea all through life has been that, when you get into a bad thing, get out of it as soon as possible—not go on and get deeper and deeper into it. I think if the rails and sleepers of this line were taken up and utilised somewhere else it would be the best thing that could happen. It has been a mistake from the beginning, and now they are going to continue it with no prospect of making it any better. There was evidently an intention of the Committee to try and prove, on account of it being for a longer distance, that the line could be worked more cheaply than it could be for a short distance, and Mr. Curnow's evidence there is not very satisfactory. He says:—

"You cannot take it *pro rata*, because it will depend to a great extent on the stations and the gates that are on the extension. If it is a through traffic—if there is no stoppage from Cabralah to Crow's Nest—the line can be worked much more economically: but if we have to provide gates at every crossing, and gate-keepers, and stations, they will all increase the cost of working."

Mr. Taylor's argument was that there is a great deal of settlement and farms here, and no doubt, in that case, there must be crossing places, and, therefore, there must be gates, and they, of course, will cost something. Mr. Gregory also spoke about the large extent of valuable timber, which in all probability will have to be utilised for the extension of the Western line. I know that the Hon. Mr. Gregory has a very intimate knowledge of most of the country, but I also have some knowledge of it, and I can tell the Hon. Mr. Gregory that there is timber much more convenient to the Western line than anything near the Crow's Nest—at such places as Darah, Jinghi, and a number of those stations bordering on the Burnett, where there is some of the grandest timber I have seen; and that is much nearer than going to Highfields. As far

as gold and minerals and that sort of thing are concerned, that is a very harmless thing. A railway to bring down gold! You can bring that down on a pack-horse. At least I think you might do that with all the gold they are going to find there; and even if they do get a great amount it could very easily be brought down. Of course, if a large number of miners are working there a railway would be convenient for getting supplies; but I think it is looking too far into the future to construct a line there for that purpose. I am perfectly certain there are a number of places where the same amount which is required for the extension of this useless line at present, and which will be useless even when it is extended, except for the benefit of a few, could be expended in a much more sensible and useful way. The Hon. Mr. Gregory also pointed out, when I thought he was speaking against the adoption of the report—I imagined he had been the one dissentient in the Committee—that it was not possible to extend this further—that the useless line is to run to a place and to stop there. He put that matter very clearly before the House. I think that is a very strong ground why we should not continue it. If an argument were put forward, "Well, it will not pay by possibly going there, but it is the highway to some other place, some very good land, or some big agricultural district," there would be more sense in it; but I am glad to say the Committee had the modesty, I may say, not to put forward any plea of that kind. It is to run to this place and stop there. The Hon. Mr. King spoke about the rate of carriage. No doubt, if he could keep the rate of carriage up high enough to make it pay, it will pay. But we all know the tendency of the people, and I think it is stated here in the evidence given by Mr. Curnow, or some of the other witnesses who appeared before the committee, that there is always a strong desire as soon as a railway is made to get the rate reduced. There is not the slightest doubt political pressure would be brought to bear to try and reduce the carriage in the same way as has been done in agricultural frontages. I have never known any strong pressure brought to bear—at least it has never had very much effect—in reducing the price of wool coming down, but in agricultural produce or timber I have not the slightest doubt that an agitation towards the reduction of carriage would be successful, and the price would be brought down to a limit that would not pay. I shall certainly vote against the motion.

The Hon. A. RAFF said: I differ entirely from what has fallen from the Hon. Mr. Gregory and the Hon. Mr. Graham with regard to this line being ultimately of benefit to the country. I am persuaded, from my knowledge of the country, that the line, if made, may ultimately be connected with the Esk line, and in that way relieve the main Western line of some of the very heavy traffic that has now to come down the Main Range. That is one strong reason I have for supporting the extension of the line. It will also make the portion of the line that has been constructed pay better than it otherwise would. And by going on to the Esk line, a large amount of heavy traffic that has now to come down the Main Range may be taken by that route into Ipswich, and in that way make a second line, and thereby relieve the traffic on the present line.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: I will trouble the House with one or two words in reply. I think it is a matter of regret that the Hon. Mr. Box did not avail himself of a more suitable opportunity of offering opposition to the construction of this line than the present. He

was present here when the construction of the first portion of the line was proposed, and his voice was not raised against it; on the contrary, judging by the reported utterances of hon. gentlemen, the House was entirely in accord as to the advisability of constructing this line. It was then put forward by the Government of the day as a line necessary for the purpose of developing the industry of supplying timber, the demand for which could not be supplied from this side of the Range except at extravagant rates. It was for that purpose chiefly that the line was constructed; and I hope that hon. gentlemen present who think of opposing the resolution will hesitate in doing so until they have read the evidence taken before the Select Committee. We have heard one or two extracts read from it, and in order that hon. gentlemen may thoroughly understand the situation, and be able to form a satisfactory conclusion upon the subject, I will trouble the House by reading a few more. I certainly did not follow the reasoning of the Hon. Mr. Box in his remarks to the effect that this is sterile and barren country. One would conclude from such a statement that the country was incapable of growing anything, but the evidence is overwhelming that it grows magnificent timber, and that where timber does not exist in large quantities there is scrub land which is capable of being converted by clearing into agricultural holdings. The statement of the hon. gentleman with regard to the desertion of farms has been refuted to a certain extent by the Hon. Mr. Taylor. I believe the hon. gentleman formed the opinion he has of the country because he has gone up there pigeon-shooting, but I believe that pigeons are generally discovered in those rich scrubs. I should like to know what the hon. gentleman would have thought of the Rosewood Scrub before it was opened up and developed into the magnificent agricultural district it is now? I do not ask the House to assent to this proposal for the reasons urged with considerable force by the Hon. Mr. Raff; I ask hon. gentlemen to deal with the matter on its merits. We have already confirmed the desirability of constructing a line from Toowoomba to Crow's Nest principally for the purpose of supplying the demand which exists for timber, which cannot be supplied at present in sufficient quantities. What is the evidence upon that point? Mr. Pechey, I am prepared to admit, must have a certain amount of interest in the matter, because he has property in the locality which may be more satisfactorily developed if the line is constructed; but that is no reason why we should altogether disregard his testimony. When Mr. Pechey states facts I take it that we know him sufficiently to believe that his statements are correct. If it was a matter of ideas then we might differ from him, but in regard to statements of fact I do not think that his testimony can be controverted. Let us refer to some of his statements. At question 114 he was asked:—

"There would be sufficient timber traffic alone, in your opinion, to keep the line going?"

His reply was—

"I think so. At the present time, I am turning out about 40 tons a week; but I have machinery that would turn out 160 tons a week of sawn timber. Then, I imagine, if the railway was constructed, that there would be a large quantity of piles and split timber, both for fencing and shingles, sent in. There is a great deal of the timber there—for instance, bloodwood—which is not suitable for sawing purposes, but which is excellent for splitting, and also for sleepers and things of that kind; it makes grand posts."

Then, coming to question 22, it answers what the Hon. Mr. Box complained of—that there is no agricultural population there. Mr. Pechey accounts for it:—

"Is there any agriculture in the district, at all? Yes; a good deal of agriculture in the district. But, of

course, one would expect to see it largely increased with the facilities afforded by this railway. Another thing, which has been a considerable drawback to the township of Crow's Nest itself, is that a great part of the best land in the neighbourhood is yet under lease, and has never been thrown open for selection."

Passing on to question 63:—

"If this line is not carried on to Crow's Nest, the present line would be almost useless?—What do you think of it yourself? I think it is very nearly useless. I may show you what I mean:—At the present time I am paying 1s. per 100 feet for taking timber—hardwood—into Toowoomba by the road. I pay 3s. for taking it to Cabarlah—that is the present terminus of the branch railway;—4d. per 100 feet for loading it there on the trucks; and 11d. for railway freight into town, from Cabarlah to Toowoomba. That makes 4s. 31., or 3d. per 100 feet more by the railway than I can get the timber taken into town for by drays. But even that does not show all, because when I hire teams to take the stuff into town I can get it delivered at the buildings by them; whereas I have to pay 5d. more to take it from the railway station and deliver it at the buildings in Toowoomba; so that it costs me 8d. per 100 feet more by railway than by drays from my mill. An advantage of the railway is, I can send as much as I choose by it; whereas I am circumscribed by the number of teams that I can engage for the road. But the present line to remain as it is would be almost useless."

In fact, the length of the present line is so short, and the loading and unloading of the timber so expensive and inconvenient, that it is carried right past the railway into town by road instead of going by rail. I will read the evidence of Mr. Phillips, an independent witness, upon that point hereafter. Then we have the evidence of Mr. Munro, who is very much more sanguine as to the results of the railway than Mr. Pechey. I shall not quote from his sanguine remarks, but will quote his replies to the following questions by the Hon. Mr. Taylor:—

"98. What is your opinion, Mr. Munro, about the line paying, if it goes on to Crow's Nest?—You think it will be one of the best paying lines in the colony, as a branch line? Yes; I do.

"99. What quantity will it turn out?—If this line is formed, all those horses and bullocks now used to draw timber to town will be used for drawing logs for the mills? Yes; I may state further, that in the event of the extension being constructed we shall get in all our pine logs from Crow's Nest by rail.

"100. Do you think there will be a vast amount of split timber sent in by this railway, such as posts and rails, etc., that we cannot get now? Yes; a large quantity is sent in now.

"101. I suppose we shall get ten times as much as now? Far more. Because a large quantity of timber that is suitable for fencing is not at all fit for sawing—such as bloodwood, woolly-butt, blue-gum."

We next come to the evidence of Mr. Curnow, which appears to be the testimony that has shaken the confidence of the Hon. Mr. Graham, who, by his silent vote in 1881, seemed to indicate that he advocated the construction of the line. At question 113, put by myself, and which has been quoted already, Mr. Curnow was asked:—

"Do you expect the line to be a fairly profitable one if it is completed? I do not expect it to be a profitable line.

"114. Why? Because of the traffic we have already from the district. I think, however, that the extension will help to make the line a better paying line than it is at present. In fact, if it is not extended I think it had better be shut up.

"115. You have no personal knowledge of the district yourself? No; I have not."

Further on, at question 123, he was asked:—

"It is entirely a question of rate. If you have 600 tons a month coming down, and if it costs 12s. a ton by teams, the advantage of the quicker transit would certainly justify the mills in offering to pay the railway the same as they pay for teams? If we could charge the same, I have no doubt we could make the line a paying one. If we could adapt our rates to make a paying line, no doubt we should succeed."

Then at question 147 he was asked by myself:—

"Are the Committee correct in assuming that your idea of the line not paying is based entirely on the 1881—N

present returns? That is all. I hope I do not give the Committee a wrong impression. The present is not a paying line; and I believe that it is desirable to extend the line in order to make the present section pay. The very traffic that we are endeavouring to get to make this line pay will not be received unless we extend the line: we do not get near the mills, but we get into a better timber country, by the extension. I assume, if it is to be a paying line, we must do that. Of course, I give the Committee my opinion for what it is worth. I do not think the line will pay. I do not think any line that depends on agriculture and timber traffic will well pay; because it is not a good paying traffic."

There is the secret of the whole of Mr. Curnow's evidence. He is of opinion that there should be no line of railway constructed in any portion of the colony for the purpose of developing agricultural or timber production at all, because he looks at the question from a purely commercial point of view. He has the management of a large concern which he desires to see worked as profitably as possible in the shape of a money return to the State on the capital invested, without looking at all at the indirect profit which may ensue to the whole country by the development of industries arising from the productions of the soil. That is where Mr. Curnow made a mistake. He admits that he knows nothing of the country, and puts his conclusion as to the line not being a profitable one entirely upon the return of the traffic for eight months since the line has been opened, which he admits himself does not show the whole of the traffic; because, as Mr. Pechey said, the expense and inconvenience of loading and unloading are so great, and the distance the present line runs is so short, that men employing teams find it more profitable to pass by the railway, and take their stuff directly into town. Then we have the evidence of Mr. Phillips, a gentleman whose testimony, I believe, influenced the Council very much when Mr. Morehead, my predecessor, proposed the making of this line in 1881. He then said that it was a district in which there was a large amount of timber, and that it only wanted the construction of a railway to develop that very important industry. On the present occasion, at question 153, he was asked:—

"As far as its capacities for supplying traffic to the railway are concerned?"

The question relates to the character of the country. His answer is:—

"It is a well-timbered country.

"154. Is there any agricultural land there? Yes; in the neighbourhood.

"155. Do you think there is sufficient timber to supply the railway for some years to come with traffic? Yes; I think so.

"156. What is your opinion as to the necessity or otherwise of the extension of the line—or the advisability of it? I think it is advisable to extend the line, as I hear Mr. Curnow say, to make the present section pay better. I agree with that opinion. I know for certain—I have seen the timber from the mills go right past Cabarlah, in drays—the large timber traffic that exists does not get on the line at all."

Then Mr. Curnow, being again called and further examined, states at the end of his evidence that there are £45,000 available for the construction of the line. I think the evidence I have quoted is very satisfactory. If we were dealing with the question now for the first time, perhaps the House might fairly hesitate before it authorised the construction of the line. But here we have the fact staring us in the face that we have constructed about twelve miles of line over the most difficult part of the country, for the purpose of developing an industry which is of great value, but, owing to the line not going further into the district, it has as yet failed in its object. There is the testimony of most disinterested persons to show that. One gentleman, Mr. Curnow, looks at it from a purely commercial point; Mr. Phillips very probably looks

at it from a broader point of view; but their testimony is clear, that, without extending the line further, the money that has been spent will be thrown away; and that there is a fair prospect of having a satisfactory return if the line is extended into the district, as was contemplated when it was first agreed to in 1881. Facts have not altered since then. Mr. Curnow, in his evidence, which I omitted to quote from, but which for the benefit of hon. members I will now refer to, states that the traffic is increasing.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: Where?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I will inform the hon. gentleman directly. At question 144:—

"Within the last four months the traffic showed a very large increase."

That was what Mr. Curnow said.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: Read beyond that.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I therefore trust that hon. gentlemen, in view of these facts, will not alter the decision deliberately arrived at in 1881, and throw away the large amount of money which has been already expended upon this work.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: Surely hon. gentlemen are not going to consent, apparently *sub silentio*, to the passing of a resolution of this kind. The whole thing was a swindle, it is a swindle, and it will be a swindle. I can use no other words in connection with it; and at any rate I beg to record my opinion of what that railway was from the very beginning. I repeat it was a swindle, it is a swindle, and it will be a swindle; and all the sophistry and lawyer-like arguments of the hon. gentleman who has moved the adoption of the report do not alter the fact one bit. I say that the whole of his facts, the whole of his figures, and the whole of his fallacies—for they are fallacies from beginning to end—will not warrant us in going to the very unjustifiable expenditure of the people's money for this railway. I simply protest against it.

Question put, and the House divided:—

CONTENTS, 9.

The Hons. C. S. Mein, J. C. Heussler, F. H. Hart, A. Raff, J. S. Turner, A. C. Gregory, J. Taylor, G. King, and W. Pettigrew.

NON-CONTENTS, 7.

The Hons. W. Graham, A. J. Thynne, A. H. Wilson, W. G. Power, W. Forrest, W. D. Box, and W. H. Walsh.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension of the Highfields Branch of the Southern and Western Railway from Cabarlah to Crow's Nest township, as received from the Legislative Assembly by message dated 2nd September, 1884.

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

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: Before the motion is carried I would remind the hon. gentleman that we have hardly had time to consider it. These plans or papers may have been on the table of the House, but our attention has not been called to them till this afternoon; and that extraordinary division, which the Postmaster-General secured to himself just now, is quite sufficient to awaken us to a sense of the danger to be apprehended from such a motion. I would therefore suggest the postponement of the motion for a week, to enable the House to see what really is this railway, the construction of which we are called to approve. I have not heard of it before; nor has the country been awakened to a sense of its danger till this afternoon by the extraordinary division just taken.

The PRESIDENT: Does the hon. gentleman make a motion?

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: I move that the debate be adjourned for a week.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I hope the hon. gentleman is not serious in asking us to adjourn the debate. We have practically, by our last division, affirmed the motion I just moved, which is simply a corollary to the former resolution. The discussion of these matters invariably takes place on the motion for the adoption of the report; and when the report is adopted the other resolution goes as a matter of course. The hon. gentleman is quite in error in saying that the House has been taken by surprise, for I gave notice of motion so far back as 21st October. The plans, of which we have practically expressed our approval by the adoption of the report of the Select Committee, were sent from the Legislative Assembly on the 23rd September, nearly two months ago. They lay on the table for a week in accordance with the Standing Orders, in order that the hon. gentlemen might make themselves acquainted with their character and details; and were then referred to a select committee duly appointed after notice. That committee took the evidence which was laid on the table so far back as the 21st of last month, and their report has been commented on in the public Press, of which I believe my friend the Hon. Mr. Walsh is a most diligent reader. I have seen a full copy of the report in several newspapers, and I know that it has attracted no little attention on the part of the public. The matter has been fully discussed in a fairly full House this afternoon, and there is no reason why the debate should be adjourned for a week in order that we may consider whether we acted wisely or not in adopting the report. It seems to me that such a course would be very childish indeed; it would be going back on our course of action in all similar cases in the past.

The Hon. W. D. BOX said: It is perfectly true, as the Postmaster-General has said, that it has been the custom to agree to the motion for the approval of plans, without discussion, after adopting the report of the Select Committee; but I have been in the House for some years, and I have never seen such a close division on a railway motion before; and I feel sure that if we had a larger House the question might be decided in a different way. I cannot help thinking that the debate should be adjourned; for, if the Postmaster-General should carry his motion in a fuller House, it will be more satisfactory to himself, and if he should fail to carry it he will have done his duty. While I have the opportunity I will correct a statement made by the Hon. Mr. Taylor. I think he misunderstood me, for he seemed to be under the impression that I said the farms through which the railway passes are closed. I did not say that, for they looked beautiful when I saw them. I referred to the country through which the proposed extension will be taken, for it is that part of the line which we are discussing. The railway is to be extended from the farms through which it now runs to Crow's Nest, and the extension will not pass through those farms. My vote in the year 1881 was also referred to, but at that time I had never seen the country. I still feel certain that the extension will be a mistake; and I hope that we shall have another chance of deciding the question. If the Hon. Mr. Walsh should press his motion, or if that of the Postmaster-General be put, I shall vote for the one, and against the other.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: I trust the Postmaster-General will not agree to the adjournment of the debate as requested by the Hon.

Mr. Walsh and the Hon. Mr. Box. We have taken one division by which we decided in favour of the adoption of the report. The Postmaster-General's motion follows naturally after the other, and we ought to come to a vote at once.

Question—That this debate be now adjourned—put and negatived.

Original question put and passed.

IMPORTED MANUFACTURED LEATHER.

The Hon. W. D. BOX said: I beg to move—

That a Return be laid upon the table of this House showing the declared value of boots and shoes, and saddlery and harness, imported during the years ending June, 1883, and June, 1884, distinguishing the importations from New South Wales.

In moving this resolution, I may say that I obtained the consent of the House to a similar motion on a previous occasion; but Parliament was not in session when the return was prepared, and it was not laid on the table. I have no other means of getting the return before this Chamber, and I therefore trust that hon. gentlemen will again consent to adopt the resolution.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: Surely the hon. gentleman representing the Government in this House has something to say on such an important matter! I simply rise to enable the House to know whether the Government will accede to the motion, and whether we shall get a full and fair return.

Question put and passed.

RAILWAY BETWEEN TOOWOOMBA AND HIGHFIELDS.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said: I beg to move—

That a Return be laid upon the table of this House, showing,—

1. The total cost, with interest added, of the railway line between Toowoomba and Highfields up to the 30th September last.

3. The receipts from all sources in connection with the working of the line for the same period.

I do not suppose for one moment that the motion will be acceded to by the Government, because it will tell fatally against them.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: There is no objection whatever to giving the information required, but the hon. gentleman is slightly inaccurate in his proposition. There is no railway between Toowoomba and Highfields; but there is a railway from a place called Pengarry Junction to Cabarlah, and I believe that is the line the hon. gentleman had in contemplation, and that he tabled the motion to make use of the information in the discussion on the proposed line from Cabarlah to Crow's Nest.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: May I avail myself of the information given by the Postmaster-General in regard to the motion? He announces that there is no line between Toowoomba and Highfields; but I fancy we have hitherto laboured under the idea that there is such a line. However, I simply want to get some information, to show what justification there is for extending the line.

The PRESIDENT: I must put the resolution as it stands on the paper. The hon. gentleman can amend it with the consent of the House.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH: I have invited the Postmaster-General to amend it.

The Hon. W. GRAHAM: I think it would save trouble if the Hon. Mr. Walsh would withdraw his motion. To a certain extent, he has owned that, as it is worded, it will not obtain for him the information he requires.

Question put and passed.

Paper laid on the table accordingly, and ordered to be printed.

TOWNSVILLE GAS AND COKE COMPANY (LIMITED) BILL — SECOND READING.

The Hon. P. MACPHERSON said: Honourable gentlemen,—In moving the second reading of this Bill I will merely state that it is similar in its provisions to the Gympie Gas Company Bill, which during the last few weeks has been assented to by this House. It contains, like that Bill, a provision to enable the local authorities to take over the gasworks, and to purchase the company's undertaking after fourteen years. With these remarks, I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed; and committal of Bill made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

MARYBOROUGH SCHOOL OF ARTS BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the House went into Committee to consider this Bill.

Clause 1—"Repeal of Maryborough School of Arts Lands Sale Act of 1876"—passed as printed.

On clause 2—"Trustees may sell and convey,"—

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said he was not going to oppose the Bill at all; but it was decidedly improper to see the representative of the Government advocating a measure of that kind. They were called upon to religiously protect the rights of persons connected with that matter, and though he had no knowledge whatever of the Bill, he said it did appear to him highly improper for a member of the Government to be advocating for the destruction of the original rights of the trustees or executors under the Act of 1876. He hoped that his hon. friend the Postmaster-General would not take his remarks unkindly. He was simply doing his duty by pointing out the matter. It was quite a new thing to him to see the Government advocate the destruction of the original rights of people. As far as his experience went it was entirely in accordance with practice, when a Bill of that kind was brought in, for the Government to religiously and zealously protect the original occupants of those lands—the trustees. He would simply say the practice was new; he would not say it was indecent, but he would say it was new, and that it behoved hon. members all the more to see that they were doing their duty to the actual occupant or trustees of the land. He knew nothing about it at all except that it was very strange, and he could not allow it to pass without entering his protest against the Government really advocating the passing of a private Bill. He would warn hon. members, when a Bill of that kind was going through the Chamber, that by gossiping, by apparently not taking notice of what was going on, they were not doing their duty at all. They found it was a matter for depriving people of their rights, and they found the Postmaster-General—a member of the Government—in charge of the Bill, and he thought it was decidedly wrong.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the hon. gentleman began the discussion by saying that he had never studied the Bill, and yet he lectured him for dealing with a Bill that he (Mr. Walsh) knew nothing about, and said his conduct in that respect was improper. It was one of the usual peculiarities and inconsistencies of the hon. gentleman which amused them so much at times. He could assure the hon. gentleman that the Bill was not going to destroy the rights of any trustees. It was a Bill to add to the rights of the trustees. He had explained in the House on the second reading of the Bill, that in 1876 the Legisla-

ture passed a measure authorising the trustees to sell the whole of the land on which the School of Arts was constructed in order that they might appropriate the proceeds for the construction of another; and that that Act, singularly, although it authorised them to sell the whole, did not authorise them to sell a part. After the Act was passed, the trustees discovered that they only required to sell a portion of the original grant, in order to be in a position to erect upon the remainder a building suitable for the purposes for which the grant was originally intended and held in trust. The object of the Bill was to enable them to do that. It was not a Government measure. The hon. gentleman very properly said it was private in its character. It originated as a private Bill in the Legislative Assembly, and he simply took it up in that Chamber out of good nature. There was no person connected with Maryborough in the Chamber at the time, and the hon. gentleman who had charge of it in the Legislative Assembly had neglected to ask the assistance of some hon. gentleman to pilot it through that House. He therefore took it up, in accordance with his usual habit, and pushed it through its initiatory stages; and finding there was nothing objectionable in it, and that it was practically restricting the rights conferred by the Act of 1876, and was likely to be beneficial for the purposes of the trust created by the original grant, he very cordially undertook afterwards to see it through the House.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he still maintained it was quite indecent for a member of the Ministry to be advocating the passage of a private Bill through that Chamber. It was wrong, and he did not hesitate to tell the hon. Postmaster-General, with the influence he possessed, it was wrong to do so; and therefore on behalf of those who had to fight their battle against that Chamber, or the other part of Parliament, he protested against it. He would say that the Postmaster-General had no business whatever to father a private Bill in that Chamber, and wherever he could trace that it was so, or that he was so interested, he (Hon. Mr. Walsh) would protest against it on principle. He believed the hon. gentleman had no business whatever to be the father of that Bill. More than that, he would say there was certainly one prominent representative of Maryborough who would take charge of the Bill if it was going to lapse. It did seem very strange to him—and he did know something about the matter—that it required a member of the Government and a lawyer to get the Bill through Parliament. He thought they should pause before they rushed a Bill of that kind through the Chamber. He knew something about it; he had had something to do with the contributions towards the institution, but he would warn hon. members whenever they saw a member of the Government—and a lawyer—pushing a Bill through the Chamber, that they should take time to consider whether it was conducive to the general interests of the people. He would assure his hon. friend the Postmaster-General that he was doing nothing wrong by that motion, except that he was too kind. But as he found his hon. friend (Mr. Heussler) had got an amendment to move, he would leave it to him. However, he objected entirely to the Postmaster-General of the colony fathering a Bill—pushing Bills of a private nature through that Chamber. He thought it was wrong, and he begged to warn hon. members of its effect.

The HON. J. C. HEUSSLER said his hon. friend (Mr. Walsh) said he had an amendment to move, but he had nothing of the kind, and he only wished to refer to some remarks which had been made by the Postmaster-General. That hon.

gentleman said the trustees had the power of selling the whole of the land, and now, because they did not want to sell the whole but only a part, they required to get power to sell that part. Now it struck him very forcibly—at all events he had always thought that where they had the power to do the greater thing they could do the smaller. If he had a power of attorney to sell a thing, he did not think he would ask the question whether he could sell a smaller part. He believed the question was one which was rather worth discussing. At least he should think, where the power was given to the larger part, it would come to the smaller without requiring a new authority.

The HON. A. H. WILSON said he was very sorry to see the opposition that was taken to that very simple matter. With regard to the piece of land it was most centrally situated. It would be almost impossible—in fact it would be impossible—to get such a fine situation for the school of arts. The piece of ground they had was rather large. The house they had got was useless. It was tumbling down, and was kept up now by props; and as to selling the whole of the land, supposing the trustees did sell the whole they could not get another piece of ground so suitable. Therefore, instead of selling the whole, as they had power to do, they simply wished to sell a half; and they expected to realise sufficient from the sale of that half as would put up another building, which would be erected on even a better site than the present one. It was a pity that any opposition should be made to the Bill passing.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he did not think that the hon. gentleman who had just spoken understood the question at all. The question was whether the Government, or the representative of the Government in that House, should have charge of a Bill of that kind. It appeared to him most uncommon that the Government should take charge of a private Bill. If the hon. gentleman who had just spoken had charge of it he could understand that there might be some righteousness in it; but when the Postmaster-General took charge of it, he was bound to suspect that the business was being improperly conducted.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 3, as follows:—

"Immediately after the receipt of the moneys realised by the sale of the said land the trustees or their successors shall pay the reasonable expenses of such sale, and shall deposit the remainder of the purchase moneys in the Queensland National Bank, and shall not withdraw the same or apply any part thereof for any purposes except for the purposes of labour done or materials actually supplied for the building of the said new school of arts."

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he decidedly objected to the clause. He objected to the Queensland National Bank being introduced into the question at all. He was of opinion that the Queensland National Bank at that moment was not solvent; he did not hesitate to say so.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL: Say that outside!

The HON. W. H. WALSH: No; he would say it there; and he (the Postmaster-General) forced him to say it. He (Hon. Mr. Walsh) said it was a most impudent introduction in a Bill—and he wished it recorded—that the Parliament of Queensland should recognise the Queensland National Bank. Certainly they should not sanction that. He had no doubt that it would suit the directors or the committee; it might suit their solicitors and other persons to use that kind of language, but he would not submit to it. He would move, as an amendment, that the words "the Queensland National Bank"

be omitted, with the view of inserting "such bank as the Government may direct," and that all the following words of the clause be left out.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he sometimes wondered when he heard his hon. friend Mr. Walsh referring to the Queensland National Bank what that institution had done to him. If he did not know that he kept his banking account at some other bank he might come to the conclusion that, whether wisely or unwisely, that institution had refused him some consideration, for the mention of the name of the Queensland National Bank seemed to the hon. gentleman worse than a red rag to a bull. But although they could appreciate the jests of the hon. gentleman occasionally, he (the Postmaster-General) thought he ought to have considered a little more before he made such a charge against that institution as he had that afternoon. People outside did not observe the peculiarities which the hon. gentleman might display when he gave utterance to his remarks. The words he had uttered were all that was recorded in *Hansard*, and it would go forth to the world that the Hon. Mr. Walsh—a gentleman who had occupied a distinguished position in the colony—had deliberately stated that the bank where the Government business was transacted was—in his opinion—not in a solvent condition. The hon. gentleman dared not make that statement outside the walls of that Chamber, because he would be at once challenged and put to proof of his assertion, or be compelled to repudiate it. It was not fair to bring such an accusation against an institution of that kind, and he felt sure that the hon. gentleman in his heart was not in earnest. He felt quite sure that the hon. gentleman merely uttered his remarks as a joke, but that was carrying the jest too far. It was only reasonable that the persons interested in the Bill should insert the name of the Queensland National Bank, that being the Government banking institution of the colony. Moreover, it was the bank that was inserted in the former Act passed in 1876, and he believed that on that occasion the Legislature took no exception to it. It was inserted for a very proper reason—because it was the bank with which the Legislature had authorised the Government to transact its financial business as being a thoroughly established national bank—as firmly established and as staple and as solvent as any institution of the kind in the Australian colonies. He himself did not deal with the institution, but he had no hesitation in saying that for it. Under the circumstances—as the provision was entirely within precedent, and as the Queensland National Bank occupied the position it did with regard to the public and the Government—he felt sure that the hon. gentleman, who, he believed, was not serious in the matter, would withdraw his amendment.

The HON. A. H. WILSON said he hoped the clause would not be opposed. The trustees had their bank account at the Queensland National Bank, and at times they might require a little accommodation. Being a private Bill, he thought the parties interested had a perfect right to insert what bank they pleased to deal with, and in this case they had inserted the name of the bank they had been in the habit of dealing with.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he did not gather from any remarks that had fallen from the Postmaster-General, or the hon. gentleman who had succeeded him in speaking, whether they meant to object to the most obnoxious words he had mentioned. He could only say that if the Postmaster-General did not object to

those words—"Queensland National Bank"—he pitied the Government; he pitied the hon. gentleman; he pitied the party he belonged to; and he regretted that things had come to such a state that they had to be governed by the Queensland National Bank—that they were now so governed or controlled by that institution that it was absolutely necessary to mention in their statutes the name of the Queensland National Bank, and give it a statutory power. He said it was something not only dangerous, but something actually awful; and he did not hesitate to charge the Postmaster-General with being an accomplice to it. It was all very well for the hon. gentleman to pose there, and stand up, and appear as a dignified and disinterested person; but he (Hon. Mr. Walsh) charged him with being the attorney of that bank. He charged him with being an accomplice to whatever was being done for good or evil in connection with that bank; and the hon. gentleman could not deny it. He (Hon. Mr. Walsh) stood there as an independent member. It did not matter to him personally whether their progress proceeded or receded; but because he loved the country it did matter to him, and he contended that the Postmaster-General, being the attorney for the Queensland National Bank, had no business whatever sitting in that Chamber, and advocating its interests. The Bill before them was entirely to the advantage of that bank. The hon. gentleman might laugh, but it was well known that he was the attorney of the bank; and so long as he was so, he (Hon. Mr. Walsh) contended that it was indecent for him to be the representative and advocate of the measure in that Chamber. Was there a single member who could gainsay that? The hon. gentleman might laugh; but they all knew it was an attribute of idiocy or wrong-doing to laugh. Was he (Hon. Mr. Walsh) doing any wrong in pointing out that the hon. gentleman was the exponent and advocate of the Bill, which was to cost the country a great deal of money? He asked hon. gentlemen whether he was doing any wrong? The hon. gentleman asked him if he could tell how much money; but he (the Postmaster-General) had a better knowledge of that than he (Hon. Mr. Walsh) had. He knew how much it would cost the country. The hon. gentleman appeared to think it a very trifling matter, but indeed it was a very important one—that they should see the Postmaster-General of the colony advocating a private Bill in that Chamber. It was his duty to be the opponent of private Bills, and to see the *bona fides* of those who introduced them; but here they found the Postmaster-General—a lawyer, hon. members must recollect—introducing a private Bill, and advocating it. He said it was wrong; but if hon. gentlemen would not fight those battles with him, he gave them warning that the day would come when they would see that he was right; and all the giggling of the Postmaster-General in trying to pass away the impropriety of his conduct would not avail. At any rate, those who succeeded him (Hon. Mr. Walsh) would have to admit that he had done his duty in protesting against the Government endeavouring to pass a private Bill through that Chamber. Having done so, he supposed that he had done all he possibly could. He knew he should get no support—he did not look for it—but he would do his duty at any rate. He should, therefore, vote against the Bill; not that he objected to the measure at all *per se*, but because he maintained that the Government had no right to pass a private measure through that Chamber.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided.

The CHAIRMAN said, there being no teller for the "Non-contents," the question was resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4—"Short title"—and the preamble having been agreed to,

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the Bill to the House without amendment.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said: I would like to understand about that last division. I fancy there was no quorum present.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: There was no division.

The HON. W. H. WALSH: I speak to a question of privilege: I think there was no quorum.

The PRESIDENT: Attention should have been called to the matter at the time.

The HON. W. H. WALSH: I am calling attention to it now, sir. When could I call attention to it before?

The PRESIDENT: If there was not a quorum present, the hon. member should have called attention to it at the time.

The HON. W. H. WALSH: I think the President is making a most extraordinary mistake; I was not in the Committee, and therefore I could not call attention to it.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Then how do you know what took place?

The HON. W. H. WALSH: I know what took place from the observations of the Postmaster-General. I believe there was no quorum present.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

SALE AND USE OF POISONS BILL.

The HON. P. MACPHERSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—I beg to move that this Order of the Day and the Bill be discharged from the paper. I do so in order to save the time of this House. I hope that, as long as I continue a member of it, I shall endeavour to save time so far as possible, and not waste it by fruitless discussion. I fear that even if the measure were passed through the House—and although the other House might be in favour of it—there will be no opportunity of passing it into law this session. I trust, however, that in another session I will be able to bring it before the House again.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at five minutes past 6 o'clock.
