

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1885

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 3 September, 1885.

Petition. — Motion for Adjournment. — Motion for Adjournment. — Formal Motion. — Postponement. — Mineralogical Lectures. — Beer Duty Bill — second reading. — Customs Duties Bill — committee. — Adjournment.

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

PETITION.

Mr. BROOKES presented a petition from the Primitive Methodist Connection of Queensland, representing 140 congregations, in favour of the Licensing Bill, and especially of the local option clauses; and moved that it be read.

Question put and passed, and petition read by the Clerk.

On the motion of Mr. BROOKES, the petition was received.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker, — Before I sit down I shall move the adjournment of the House. I intended to refer yesterday to the remarks made by the two members for South Brisbane as to the want of coal-trucks for carrying coal between Ipswich and Brisbane, but you ruled that I could not speak twice. What I was going to say is fully borne out in an article appearing to-day in the *Brisbane Courier*, and headed "Coal Shipments to Brisbane." What I am going to state is well within the recollection of the Minister for Works, and he will acknowledge that it is practically true. The difficulty with regard to coal-trucks can be easily overcome if the hon. gentleman will receive a report from some person who knows the value of certain trucks which are at present in Maryborough. At the present time there are in the town of Maryborough eighty coal-trucks, shipped from England for the Queensland Land and Coal Company. Those trucks are constructed of iron, but there is some defect, I believe, in the oiling apparatus of the trucks when they are loaded. The defect is that their construction will not allow lubricators to be put on. Well, I saw three of those trucks loaded in Maryborough, and Mr. Rodger, who was then the foreman of the locomotive shops, will fully bear out what I am now going to state. Three of the trucks were altered so that the oiling was effectual, and they did run without the bearings becoming heated. I went from Maryborough to Howard with three gentlemen when they were run, and the bearings were by no means heated—in fact they were scarcely warm. These trucks have, I believe, been offered to the Government at a very low price indeed. I think I am correct in stating that the Government of this colony have paid as much as £70 a waggon for wood waggons used in Maryborough and Brisbane—the Government finding the wheels, axles, and springs. The waggons that I refer to are complete, having wheels, axles, springs, and everything. Let any hon. gentleman go over to South Brisbane and see one of the hoppers in use there taken off the wheels and put over a ship, and see the length of time it takes to discharge. When the crutch is knocked away the door falls, but the coal does not all come out, and a man has to be there with a maul to knock the coal out. With an iron waggon it is quite different: as soon as the bar is knocked away the waggon is immediately empty. I think that the Minister for Works should take the purchase of those eighty waggons at Maryborough into his serious consideration, because Mr. Rodger assured me that the defect of those waggons could be remedied at a cost of

£3 15s. per waggon, and I am correct in stating that those waggons can now be purchased by the Government at a less cost than those which are now being manufactured for them. Now, I do not think that the Railway Department is at fault for the shortness of coal-waggons, because Mr. Curnow told me this morning that two years ago the then Commissioner for Railways (Mr. Herbert) wrote to the coal proprietors at Ipswich, asking them what they thought would be their prospective requirements for the coming year, and from a great many he received no reply at all. Therefore the charge cannot be made against the department that it is through their fault that there are so few coal-waggons. It would have been better to permit the mine-owners to do as they do in New South Wales; that is, provide the trucks and the Government the locomotive power. If that system were adopted we should be in a very much better position than we are to-day. I am speaking now of what I saw myself; and I say that, according to Mr. Rodger, who is now a servant of the Government, those trucks can be altered at a small cost, and would be of the very greatest use. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Maryborough has made the most extraordinary statement I have heard for a considerable time. He says that he believes in the coal proprietors providing their trucks, and yet at the same time he is endeavouring to force the Government to purchase trucks from a private company. It is a most extraordinary argument indeed to say that we ought to do what the Government of New South Wales are doing in this matter, and in the same breath urge the Government to buy waggons belonging to the coal company.

Mr. ANNEAR: The principle of the Government providing the waggons has already been adopted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, here is an opportunity to make a new departure if the principle is adopted, and allow this company, which was originally known as the Hurley Company, to supply their own trucks. Wherever the hon. gentleman got his information about this matter, he has not got it correctly. The hopper-waggons belonging to this coal company at Howard were offered to the Government at a certain figure, and Mr. Horniblow was instructed to go to Howard and inspect and value the waggons. He reported that the wheels and axles were defective, that the trucks had only single buffers, and that the couplings were defective, and that it would cost £16 per waggon to make the necessary alterations in them. However, he recommended the Government to give a certain price for them, and, I believe, I offered that price, but the agent of the company told me that he could not accept it because the Queensland National Bank had a lien of £6,500 on the trucks, and unless the company got that amount for them the Government could not have the waggons. Now, I do not think the Government could have acted more fairly than they have done. I knew very well that the waggons were constructed for a particular gauge and that they were almost worthless for any other; and I was desirous of meeting the company fairly and to give them the value of their waggons. A very short time after this offer was declined tenders were called for building a certain number of hopper-waggons, and the representative of the company, with a member of Parliament—not the hon. member for Maryborough—came to me and said, "We will take your offer." I replied, "You are too late; you

got my offer and refused it." That is the whole history of these waggons. I think, however, that it would be better for the country to expend £6,500 in building new hopper-waggons, than to spend it in the purchase of the waggons belonging to the company I have referred to. The hon. member for Maryborough says these iron waggons are superior to the trucks made for the Government. In answer to that I may remind him of what I have already said—namely, that it will cost £16 per waggon to make them suitable for the traffic on our railways. I think the best thing the company can do is to use their waggons themselves, as they will get their coal carried at a much lower rate by providing their own trucks. At all events, I have made up my mind that I shall not buy these hopper-waggons at any price.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I cannot understand the remarks of the hon. gentleman, although I endeavoured to follow him. He ended by saying that he is determined, while he is in office, not to buy these trucks at any price, while at the same time he stated that upon the recommendation of Mr. Horniblow he offered a certain price for them. What does he mean by that? What induced him to change his mind? I wish, however, he had given us some information on a matter that is much more important. If the Railway Department do not want these trucks, I would say do not buy them; and perhaps the hon. gentleman knows more about the matter than I do. But what I would like to know is whether it is correct, as stated by the hon. member for Maryborough, that the woodwork alone of each of the hopper-waggons made for the Government costs £70. That is a most extravagant price for the woodwork of a waggon for a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the hon. member for Maryborough speaks in reply I would like some member of the Government to make an explanation upon the point raised by the hon. member for Mulgrave. It seems to be an extraordinary thing that the Government should be paying £70 for trucks, exclusive of the cost of springs, wheels, and axles. That is the statement of the hon. member for Maryborough. I think if the Government get waggons made at that cost the sooner they stop making them the better.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The cost of hopper-waggons, including everything, is about £70 odd.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: What are the odd pounds?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The price I have mentioned includes springs and all complete. The contract price is £70 odd.

Mr. BEATTIE: Does that include the cost of wheels, axles, and springs?

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: The hon. gentleman says it does.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I would like to know what are the odd pounds? The price may be £71 or £79.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I believe the price is £75. Of course I cannot carry the figures in my head.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—The Minister for Works has endeavoured to lead the House to infer that I am advocating one thing while I should like to do another. I stated that if the principle of the coal proprietors supplying their own trucks were adopted in the first instance it would be a good principle; but since the principle of the Govern-

ment supplying the trucks has been adopted throughout the colony, I thought it would be well for the Government to purchase the waggons I have mentioned. Even if, as the hon. gentleman stated, it is true that the alterations necessary to be made in the waggons will cost £16 per waggon, they will then be cheaper than the waggons now made by the Government, because one of these iron waggons will wear out three of the wooden hopper-waggons. Of course, if the hon. gentleman is determinedly opposed to it, he will not purchase the trucks. I may, however, say that if he did purchase them they could be put on board a vessel at Maryborough and brought down here within a week.

Question put and negatived.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—At the end of the discussion on the Customs Duties Bill last night the Premier took occasion to question an assertion I made, in terms which implied that I not only made the statement knowing it to be untrue, but that I had been in the habit of making such statements. The assertion I made is contained in the following words. Speaking of the Premier, I said:—

“He has referred two or three times to the Tariff Bill I introduced myself, and characterised it as one of the smallest and most contemptible measures introduced into this House. Small and contemptible as it was, however, the hon. member got his side of the House to talk at it for three nights, night after night.”

“The PREMIER: When?”

“The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: For three nights, both in Committee of Ways and Means and in the House.”

In replying to that the Premier quoted me as having said:—

“The Opposition at that time debated his Financial Statement under similar circumstances for days, on the second reading of the Bill relating to Customs duties. He said the debate occupied three nights, and I asked him to state the time when such a thing took place.”

I rose and contradicted that as not being what I stated—

“I said nothing of the sort. I said the hon. member debated it three nights in Committee of Ways and Means and on the second reading of the bill.”

That is the statement I made. Then the Premier went on to say—

“I do not think that is exactly what the hon. member said: but even that is scarcely less accurate than his previous statement. I asked for particulars, because I knew that nothing of the kind ever happened, and because it would be convenient at once to give the statement a contradiction. The hon. gentleman is in the habit of making statements of that kind. He has done so on several occasions before, but now I have got him.”

Now, sir, I made my Financial Statement in Committee of Ways and Means on the 12th August, and ended by moving my tariff proposals, which constituted the motion before the Committee. The Financial Statement was the shortest on record; it occupied only ten minutes in delivery. A debate then took place, and lasted till the rising of the House just before tea-time, and nothing whatever except the one subject—the tariff proposals of the Government—was discussed. That was the first of the debate. The debate was adjourned until the 17th August—the debate on the Financial Statement—and the only gentleman on the other side who spoke on the general subject of finance and on the financial position of the colony was Mr. Dickson, the hon. member for Enoggera. He replied on the general statement, but all the other members who spoke occupied the whole time during that evening on the one subject—namely, the tariff arrangements of the Government. That was the next day. The proposals of the Government were carried, and they then came before the House. But before the Committee would allow the proposals of the

Government to be carried, I conceded to the wishes of a very large number who were anxious to have an expression of opinion on the subject of protection and freetrade, and consented to move formally that the House go into Committee of Ways and Means on a future occasion so as to give them an opportunity of bringing forward their proposals. I did this because they considered it unfair to debar them from having an opportunity of bringing forward their proposals counter to mine. Accordingly, on the 13th October we went into Committee of Ways and Means again, and during the whole of the 13th October there was nothing at all debated except my tariff and the proposals of the gentlemen who wished something else to be substituted. That was the next day. The formal adoption of the report came next day, but as it took only a few minutes I will take no notice of that. Then came the second reading of the Bill, which occupied but a very short time, and I will take very little notice of that also. But on the 26th October it was considered in committee, and occupied the greater part of that sitting. I have taken from *Hansard* the amount of time we were engaged in it, and I find that we were actually engaged—without counting the second reading and the odd times it came formally before the House—we were actually engaged three whole parliamentary days. Twice we were occupied with it for half-a-day, and also for two full days from the commencement to the end of the session. I have shown that my statement was absolutely correct, that on that small Tariff Bill three days were spent. But in addition to that I could have made the statement a great deal wider, because we spent actually a day and a-half on cognate proposals which were before Parliament at the same time—a Bill for the reduction of the excise duty on colonial spirits, a Bill for imposing an export duty on cedar, and a financial Bill for the formation of Treasury bonds. All those were discussed at the same time; so that the Customs Duties Bill not only took up three days, but a great part of the days which were nominally devoted to the other Bills. I will now leave the House to judge whether I was correct in the statement I made last night. And even were it not so, the Premier went far beyond what he was justified in doing in characterising the statement I made—which was capable of proof, for which some little allowance might have been made, and which I have proved to be absolutely correct from the pages of *Hansard*—the Premier went too far in characterising my statement as one of the untrue statements I was in the habit of making in this House. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER (Hon. S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman resents the flat contradiction which I gave last night as to the accuracy of a statement he made. The statement the hon. gentleman has made this afternoon is quite irrelevant to the statement which I made last evening—a fact which I suppose he knows. I complained last night that after the Financial Statement and the proposals of the Government had been fully debated in Committee of Ways and Means, and the resolutions adopted, the whole evening had been taken up on the second reading of a Bill to give effect to those proposals—a course which I said was unprecedented in the House. The hon. gentleman said that we had done the same thing ourselves. His first statement was certainly reported as he made it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: I have read what I stated, word for word.

The PREMIER: Yes; I say the statement the hon. gentleman made is reported just as I

understood him to make it, and what he said certainly conveyed to my mind that we had debated for two or three days the second reading of a Bill merely introduced to give effect to resolutions already agreed to, in precisely the same manner as was done last evening. I showed that we had done nothing of the kind—that so far from having debated the second reading of that Bill for two or three days, it was not debated for half-an-hour, or for a quarter of an hour. It was treated almost as a formal motion; that I showed, and that the hon. gentlemen does not attempt to contradict; but his answer now is, that in Committee of Ways and Means the matter was fully discussed for two or three days.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: That is the assertion I made last night and which you contradicted.

THE PREMIER: That is not the assertion I contradicted. It would have been absurd for me to have objected last night to a debate taken last week. I complained of the unusual course taken last night in again debating the proposals agreed to in Committee of Ways and Means upon the second reading of the Bill.

MR. ARCHER: Who by? Your own party?

THE PREMIER: By hon. members opposite mostly. It was quite clear how the debate was conducted, and it was quite clear that no other business was intended to be done last night. The hon. gentleman has not corrected anything I said last night in any particular. What happened was this: He made his Financial Statement and the House adjourned to a subsequent day, as it always does, for the consideration of the Statement. The debate on the Financial Statement was conducted in the ordinary manner and occupied two evenings, and by the end of the second evening the hon. gentleman's proposals were carried—I forget whether with amendments or not. Then at the request of an hon. gentleman, who supported the hon. member himself, another day was given to discuss certain proposals in Committee of Ways and Means. A day was given to discuss certain proposals made by an independent member of the House, and nobody could complain of that being done. When the Committee of Ways and Means had done its work the proceedings went on in the ordinary way, and the Bill introduced to give effect to the resolutions then passed in Committee of Ways and Means was in no way treated as a similar Bill was yesterday. It will be noticed, as I said last night, that the debate upon the second reading of the hon. gentleman's Bill could not have occupied more than ten minutes. In committee there were again some amendments moved in it by hon. members; the Bill was defectively drawn in the first place, and some amendments had to be made in it on that account. Then an amendment was moved to omit the word "acids," by an hon. member who supported the Government when he took any part at all; and a second amendment was made by the same hon. member, who might be called an independent member, but who usually supported the Government. So far from the whole of the evening being taken up in debating the resolutions over and over again, I find that on the same day the Treasury Bills Bill was read a second time; the Duty on Cedar Bill was put through committee; and the Duty on Queensland Spirits Bill was also put through committee. What I accused the hon. gentleman of last night was making a reckless statement without knowing whether it was true or not. He made a reckless statement wanting to do what he is very much in the habit of doing—saying "You're another." When any complaint is made on this side of the House he meets it by

saying, "You used to do the same." That is but a very poor argument in any case and I have proved, in this case, that it is not correct.

THE SPEAKER: I will point out to the House that the hon. member for Mulgrave was irregular in moving the adjournment of the House, and that in order that the records of the House may be uniform he should have risen to a personal explanation, the reason being that the motion for the adjournment of the House was previously put and negatived and no business had intervened up to the time the hon. member made his motion.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: A lot of business intervened, sir.

THE SPEAKER: Only notices of motion, which are not considered business.

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: How can we possibly get the House adjourned unless they are considered business?

THE SPEAKER: If the hon. member will permit me, he will see by the "Votes and Proceedings" of the House that, a motion for adjournment having been negatived, some business must intervene before a similar motion can be again put. Notices of motion do not appear in the "Votes and Proceedings" of the House as part of the record of the proceedings, but in a special place for notices of motion; and if the hon. gentleman's motion is recorded as he made it there will appear two motions following each other for the adjournment of the House. That would be something quite irregular, because some business must intervene which will appear upon the records of the House—if the hon. member understands that?

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I quite understand it.

THE SPEAKER: Some business which will appear upon the "Votes and Proceedings" as records of the House must intervene before the adjournment of the House can be again moved, after a similar motion has just been negatived. If the hon. gentleman's motion appears on the "Votes and Proceedings" as a personal explanation on the part of the hon. member it will be quite in order, but if it appears as a motion for the adjournment of the House it will be quite irregular, and will interfere with the uniformity of the "Votes and Proceedings."

THE HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I had no intention of asking the privilege of the House to make the statement I made. I made the statement as a right, and I made it as a right by moving the adjournment of the House. With all due deference to you, I think you have proved, not that I was irregular in moving the adjournment of the House, but rather that the irregularity is to be found in the way in which the business of the House is recorded in the "Votes and Proceedings." We have actually done a certain amount of business, but, according to your statement, though a certain amount of business has been done, it does not appear on the records, and according to the records it is not actually business at all. I think it is, however; and I see nothing contrary to precedent in two similar motions following each other in the records of the House. I have seen that happen dozens of times. If such business as I say undoubtedly intervened between these motions is not to be considered business, why is it that at the end of the sitting a motion for the adjournment of the House becomes necessary? We might simply disperse, because there would be no occasion for getting the House adjourned at all. Do you rule absolutely, Mr. Speaker, that this cannot be done? I have moved the adjournment of the House.

The SPEAKER: I will point to a supposition case. Supposing that I had called the formal motions, and that the motion given in the name of Mr. Kates, the hon. member for Darling Downs, was allowed to proceed as a formal motion, as it would probably be—if that hon. member's motion was then passed the hon. gentleman could have risen and moved the adjournment of the House. I desire him to understand that in no case in the proceedings of Parliament has a notice of motion ever been considered part of the business of the House. The hon. member will find on reference to the "Votes and Proceedings" of the House, which have been uniform throughout, that a notice of motion is not considered part of the business. If the hon. gentleman has been misrepresented he has a perfect right to make a personal explanation, but I do not think that the motion for the adjournment of the House having been put and negatived, and no ordinary business of the House having intervened, a motion for the adjournment of the House can be moved a second time.

Mr. ARCHER: I should like, with the permission of the House, to make a short statement touching the question in dispute. Out of the eighteen speeches made last night, no less than ten—if the Speaker may be counted as a supporter of the Government—were made from the Government side of the House.

The PREMIER: The Speaker could not have taken part in the debate last night; he was in the chair.

Mr. ARCHER: I beg the hon. Speaker's pardon. I find on looking closer at the figures that there were nine speeches made on each side of the House, and several of the speeches made by supporters of the Government were quite as long as any that were made on this side; so that his own supporters were as much to blame—if blame there be—as we were.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I do not know whether I am in order in speaking to this question—

The SPEAKER: I have already put the motion from the chair, and it will have to appear on the records in the way in which it has been proposed. But I would point out that the irregularity must not occur again.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: I was going to point out the same thing that the hon. member for Blackall has pointed out—namely, that the number of speakers on the Government side of the House last night quite equalled the number who spoke on the Opposition side; and out of the speakers on the Government side there were three Ministers. Under such circumstances I cannot conceive what right the Premier had to get up and make a complaint in the terms he used. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, on hearing the terms he made use of you would have been quite justified, I think, in calling him to order. It is your duty, I know, to call any hon. member to order. We are a good deal in the habit of allowing the less prominent members of the House to make statements against each other which should not be made; but prominent members, such as the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, should not be allowed to make such flat contradictions to each other. It is just the same as one gentleman calling another a liar. That should not be permitted, and that was done by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government last night.

The PREMIER: No, it was not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Yes, last night. The hon. gentleman said the leader of the Opposition was in the habit of making mis-statements, and that he had at last caught him.

How much stronger could he have put it without saying that the leader of the Opposition was a liar, and that he had at last caught him telling a lie? The statement made by the leader of the Opposition was perfectly correct, as was proved by *Hansard* as quoted by the Premier himself. I hope we shall have less of these imputations—less of this *tu quoque* style of argument in the future.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: There is nothing that this side of the House has done in the way of irregularity in debate that has not been exceeded by the gentlemen who now sit on the Government side of the House.

The PREMIER: Is not that *tu quoque*?

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: It would be much better if all the irregularities and acrimonies, on both sides, of former sessions were forgotten entirely.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Let us stick to the business of the House; and if the hon. gentleman does get hit occasionally by his own side, as he did last night, let him keep his temper in a better manner.

Mr. BROOKES: May I say a word or two, Mr. Speaker? The hon. member for Townsville has chosen a rather curious way to soothe the acrimonies of debate—it is like trying to extinguish a fire by pouring kerosine on it. He first objects to the *tu quoque* style of argument, and then he says that whatever irregularities his side may have been guilty of, this side has been guilty of greater. That is a very conciliatory style of speech, I must say. In my opinion it is that side that has been guilty of the greatest irregularities.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: You are too often absent to know.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH: The Premier has reiterated his defence of last night. In contradicting my statement the hon. gentleman said:—

"He said the debate occupied three nights, and I asked him to state the time when such a thing took place."

I made no such statement. My words are reported in *Hansard*, and I am quite prepared to stand by them. I corrected the hon. gentleman not only while I was speaking, in reply to his interjection, but I corrected him also when he was speaking. My words then were:—

"I said the hon. member debated it three nights in Committee of Ways and Means, and on the second reading of the Bill."

The hon. gentleman accused me of saying that he had opposed the Bill for three nights on the second reading—an assertion which I never made. Then the Premier went on to say:—

"I do not think that is exactly what the hon. member said; but even that is scarcely less accurate than his previous statement."

But the hon. gentleman has even gone further than I did. He has shown by his quotations that four nights were consumed over the Customs Duties Bill, instead of three, as I modestly estimated it. The hon. member is in the habit of making contradictions and statements of that kind, depending upon his undoubted ability to manipulate quotations, and to hunt up records and references with an expedition that is quite unequalled in the House. But I knew perfectly well that what I was stating was true; and I also knew that on looking up the records the hon. gentleman, instead of bowling me out, would be bowled out himself—which is exactly what has happened. After insisting that I had made a false statement, he has actually proved

from *Hansard* that my statement was perfectly correct, and that he has departed from the position of a gentleman. When he saw that my statement was correct, instead of withdrawing his charge he has tried to wriggle out of what he actually did say.

Question of adjournment put and negatived.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to :—

By Mr. KATES—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a Return showing all expenditure incurred by the Elections and Qualifications Committees of the 7th, 8th, and 9th Parliaments respectively, in connection with disputed elections.

POSTPONEMENT.

Upon the first Order of the Day being called,

The PREMIER said : In accordance with the promise I made the hon. member for Port Curtis yesterday, I beg to move that this and the following Orders of the Day be postponed until after consideration of General Business, Notice of Motion No. 1.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said : Mr. Speaker,—I was not present in the House when the motion for taking Thursday as a Government day and sitting on Friday evening instead of Friday morning was passed; and although I am prepared to give every facility for Government business being passed through the House, I think some consideration ought to have been shown to members so far as this week is concerned. I have an engagement for Friday night and for to-night, made previous to the motion altering the sitting days, never expecting for a moment that the motion would be made applicable to this week. I am surprised that, under the circumstances, the Premier did not make some allowance, at all events, for to-night and Friday. I would like to know what are the intentions of the Government in regard to that matter. I do not think it is fair to carry on Government business with very few members except Government supporters being present; and my case is not a solitary one, because there are plenty of members on this side of the House who have made engagements in the same way, being under the impression that the alteration would not apply to the first Thursday and Friday. Next week, probably, they would not be liable to the same engagements. I should like to know what the Government propose to do to-night and to-morrow?

The PREMIER : To-night, Mr. Speaker, we propose to go on with the business as it stands on the paper—Beer Duty Bill, second reading; Customs Duties Bill, in committee; and if that is disposed of, the Elections Bill. Notice of the motion making the alteration in the days of sitting was given last Thursday for Tuesday, so that there was no attempt to take members by surprise. As to the Thursday sittings, there is nothing unusual in that. It has been usual to do Government business on Thursdays all the session, and I do not know of any special engagements for this evening. There is to be a public meeting, I believe, somewhere, but the business of this House is of more importance than a public meeting.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH : I asked what the Government intend to do on Friday; that is of more importance than to-night. I know quite well that it has been usual to sit on Thursdays.

The PREMIER : I do not know exactly what the business is for to-morrow. I will ascertain from the Clerk what it is. I am not prepared to say, until I know what the business is, what will be done to-morrow. I intend to find out in the course of the evening.

Mr. CHUBB : Will the Premier tell us whether he intends to take the Elections Bill this week?

The PREMIER : I hope so.

Mr. CHUBB : To-morrow?

The PREMIER : I only said I hope so; I hope to get to it to-night.

Question put and passed.

MINERALOGICAL LECTURERS.

Mr. NORTON, in moving the following motion—

That the House will, on Friday, the 11th instant, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions :—

1. That it is desirable that Mineralogical Lecturers be appointed by the Government for the purpose of visiting and lecturing at the mineral fields of the colony, and explaining to the miners how the more valuable metals may be distinguished and their presence detected when found in combination with other substances.

2. That it shall be the duty of these lecturers to impart, so far as is practicable, any other information which may be of use to miners as a means for prosecuting the business of mining to the greatest advantage.

3. That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause a sum to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates to provide the expenses entailed by the above appointments.

—said : Mr. Speaker,—In speaking to this motion, I do not think it will be necessary for me to press the importance of a question of this kind, because it will be admitted by all members of the House, on both sides, that the importance of offering every facility to miners at the present time to carry on their industry with the greatest advantage is too great to be overrated. In referring to the question I would point out, in the first place, that at the time when almost every other industry in the colony has been depressed to an extraordinary degree the mining industry has been in a more prosperous condition than usual. From the statement which I referred to last night, which is published among the papers now on the table of the House—Mr. Gordon's report—it appears that the losses by sheep—wool alone—during the drought up to the end of last year, amounted to £3,829,000. In addition to that there are the losses upon cattle and other stock, so that probably at the present time the loss the colony has absolutely sustained from the effects of the drought amounts to somewhere about £4,500,000—that is in stock alone. I need scarcely point out, Mr. Speaker, that when an absolute loss of property representing an immense sum of money like that takes place, the depression which results from it cannot pass away in a few months or even a year or two. But, sir, at the same time that this enormous loss has been going on in the pastoral department, the mining industry has been much more extended and the mining product has been much larger than it has been in any other period for some considerable time. It was pointed out by the Treasurer in his Budget Speech that the return of gold for last year was 307,804 ounces, being an increase of nearly 100,000 ounces on the previous year; the return for 1883 being 212,783 ounces. Of course, the mere fact that there has been a great amount of depression throughout the colony generally tends to a certain extent to increase the produce of the mining industry, and it does it in this way : That when stations are reduced to very hard straits they cannot carry on the work that they have been accustomed to carry on, and large numbers of men usually employed on stations are discharged—necessarily discharged. Of course at such times it is difficult to find work under any conditions whatever, and numbers of these men who have been employed on stations and in other ways

in the country resort to gold-mining as a means of earning support until better times arrive, so that the number of miners is considerably increased. The result of this is that fresh discoveries are made, and the product of mining is larger in times of depression than at any other time. I think that is an argument in itself why the mining industry should be more carefully promoted than, I think, has been the case in this colony. At the present time, by the return published a short time ago, there are 4,228 European miners engaged in mining in the colony, and over 1,200 Chinese. In addition to that, the number of miners employed in other ways is 972. The value of minerals, other than gold, produced last year was £232,000; and, sir, the revenue from the gold mines, added to the other mines, amounted to over £16,000. Now, when new country is taken up it is as a rule first opened up by squatters; but their occupation is very incomplete and the population they bring very sparsely scattered. But in their steps follow miners, who in their turn are followed by large numbers of business people and others who depend for their living on the success of the miners, so that the miners have done much more than any other class of the community to promote settlement. The question which I think ought to be answered is—What has been done for the miners in return for the great benefits they have conferred on the colony?

We have two gentlemen engaged in making a geological survey of the colony—not a systematic survey, but going from place to place as occasion may demand. The next item we find more particularly in aid of the miners is the vote of £2,000 passed last year in aid of schools of mines. In addition to that it is proposed by the Government to expend a certain—or rather uncertain—sum of money on deep sinking; but these are almost the only items that appear for the special benefit of the mining community. Now, the miners are entitled to some return for the advantages they have conferred on the colony, and the colony ought to be prepared to give every assistance to them, because the more the mining industry of the colony is advanced the more the interests of the whole colony are advanced. It was during a period of depression like this that the Gympie mines broke out, and it is claimed, by an hon. gentleman more enthusiastic than I am perhaps with regard to Gympie, that it saved the colony. I believe it did a great deal at that time to raise the colony from a state of depression; and I believe the mining industry may do as much now, if not more, to help us to tide over the period of depression. The reason why I proposed this motion is, that I had placed in my hands a report showing what had been done in the same direction in New Zealand. In that colony the gold returns for last year were much less than ours. They amounted to 231,582 ounces, and in order to procure that quantity of gold over 12,000 miners were employed. The revenue from the New Zealand gold-miners was about £4,800; but I must not pass over the fact that the miners have to pay a duty—that is to say, there is an export duty on gold. Now, the report to which I referred relates to a course of lectures delivered by the professor of chemistry in the Otago University. That gentleman was appointed by the Government to lecture to the miners in different parts of the colony on such subjects as he believed would most advance their interests and improve their knowledge of the best mode of working different minerals. The subjects which, in his tour, he lectured on were:—

(1) How quartz-reefs were formed; (2) how gold came into the reefs; (3, 4, and 5) methods and appliances for saving gold, including, besides the common process in use in the colony, the roasting and chlorine

processes for extracting gold from pyrites and other sulphides, the manufacture and properties and uses of sodium amalgam, etc.; (6) the methods of testing and assaying gold-bearing minerals, quartz, tailings, pyrites, etc.; (7) copper ores, assaying the same, and copper smelting; (8) antimony and lead ores, and the metallurgy of these metals; (9) silver and tin ores, and the testing of these and reduction to the metallic state; (10) the methods of testing metallic ores generally."

Another gentleman also lectured on some occasions—a Mr. Montgomery—who had passed through the university under Professor Black, and was stated by him to be quite capable of carrying out such a course of lectures. The subjects Mr. Montgomery chose were "Reefs, mineral veins, and quartz." Of course anyone who has seen anything of mining knows that these are all subjects of the highest importance to miners. Besides the lectures delivered in the daytime, Professor Black held testing classes in the evening, which the miners were invited to attend. Speaking of these classes in the district of Reefton, he says:—

"I also conducted a testing class at Reefton, meeting every evening from 7 to 9. This class was attended by about nineteen students, consisting of mine managers, battery managers, and miners, with a few others. Seven or eight of the more enthusiastic of these spent the whole day with me analysing the various ores. In this testing class the students themselves did the work, and performed all the experiments and applied all the tests under my direction. The first part of the work of this class was the testing of solutions containing sixteen of the more important metals, including silver, lead, mercury, gold, platinum, arsenic, antimony, tin, copper, cadmium, bismuth, iron, zinc, nickel, cobalt, and manganese.

"Having mastered these solutions at two sittings we proceeded to test ores containing the above-named metals; and at this kind of work my students worked hard and with an eagerness and intelligence that surprised me. In testing the metallic ores the students themselves did all the work—pulverising the minerals, dissolving out the metals, evaporating the solutions, and precipitating them again with their appropriate reagents.

"Whilst part of the students were going through these operations the rest were taking full notes of the processes. At Reefton, besides testing the ores named above, the students analysed coal, limestone, and clay, and made a percentage analysis of copper ore, antimony ore, and iron ore, in all of which they were interested, as they occur in the district. Here also, as at all other places, the students made sodium amalgam, and reduced tungstic acid from scheelite; but the most important piece of work done at Reefton, in the estimation of the battery and mine managers, was the amalgamation of the copper plates at one operation in such a way that they preserved their silver brightness for any length of time without any tendency to form the green scum known to the miners as verdigris. They were all taken by surprise at the simplicity with which it is done. The great mistake that they had all been committing previously was in using nitric acid for cleaning the plates, and, worse still, the using of nitric acid in rubbing in the mercury on the plates."

I do not intend to read much, because there is a great deal of the report taken up by details. Professor Black then goes on to say how he carried out the process which gave the miners so much satisfaction. Further on, after referring to the different places he visited, he said:—

"In every centre my great regret on leaving was that no means were available for carrying on the work I had begun. I never, in all my thirty-five years' experience as a teacher, came in contact with students so eager to learn and so directly interested in the subjects of instruction. It is no labour to lecture to such men. The lecturer is supported by the consciousness that the audience is in full contact with him throughout. It was, however, saddening to have to leave these men forming clubs, and calling them schools of mines—in every district subscribing their £1 each—knowing as I did how helpless they would be, even with their chemicals and apparatus, unless the means of instruction in the use of these materials were sent to them. I wish especially to draw your attention as strongly as I can to the splendid opportunity which here offers itself to bring many hundreds of intelligent miners—able workers and good citizens—within the

means of technical instruction of a kind most valuable to themselves, and which cannot fail in its results to recoup the colony a thousandfold the expense of affording it. Here we have on the goldfields of Middle Island twenty mining schools spontaneously established, with their chairman and secretaries and subscribed funds, trying to help themselves to the special knowledge which they now feel to be essential to any great success in their pursuits. The machinery is already there, and it only rests with the Government to set it in motion in such a fashion as will ensure its permanency. This the Government can do by providing sufficient instruction, and fostering the movement by judiciously subsidising local efforts."

Then Mr. Black goes into an estimate of what would be the cost of undertaking the work. I would point out that on all fields where he lectured there was a good attendance of miners. In some places he lectured five or six times, and ten, I think, was the largest number of lectures delivered at any one place; and there was always a good attendance of men whom he described in every instance as anxious to learn all they possibly could; and so successful were those learners in following out the experiments which he conducted that, at the end of his labours, they were able to conduct them without his assistance. The experiments which he spoke of in his lectures were carried out by the men by themselves. He proposes that Mr. Montgomery, whom he has already referred to, should be employed the whole year at a salary of £400; hotel expenses, £150; travelling expenses, £80; apparatus and maps, £50; the total amount being £680. For six months for himself and an assistant he asks £820, or a total cost to the State of £1,500; railway travelling being free in every case. I will not go into the details of the scheme which he lays out, but following his proposal he says:—

"In order to give full effect to the instruction in geology and mineralogy and ores, it would be extremely desirable to provide a collection of typical well-selected and named specimens of 200 or 300 of the most important metallic ores. These collections would cost about £10 10s. each in London; and I believe that about twenty of them would be required on the goldfields, costing in all, landed here, about £250. Mr. Montgomery and I would undertake the distribution of these, and contributions would, from time to time, be made from the colony. These collections would form the nuclei of mineralogical museums, which would be necessary adjuncts of the local schools of mines.

"I have also respectfully to recommend that where schools of mines are in active operation Government should help them in procuring the necessary apparatus. This could be best done, I think, by Government requesting me to order from London appliances and chemicals to the value of, say £250, and then distributing these among the local schools of mines on the basis of, say, apparatus and chemicals to the value of £1 for every £1 subscribed by the local school. Mr. Montgomery and myself would manage the distribution of these as part of our duties; and it would be a great inducement to the local bodies to help themselves. I have, in recommending the scheme, to express my conviction that, if fairly carried out for three years, it will have a wonderful effect in not only greatly improving processes now in use, but also in discovering minerals of great value, of which the miners are at present in total ignorance. It will also tend to equalise the advantages of special or higher education in the large cities and on the goldfields."

The Minister to whom this report was sent, sent a telegram to Professor Black a few days afterwards, saying—

"Am much interested in your report on West Coast tour—can we not arrange to let Auckland and Northern mines have share in our lectures part of year, or must I arrange separate staff, or increase yours? Would like to include whole colony in considering ways and means. Reply."

That is an indication of the feeling which was aroused by this report. Of course there are some who may say that Professor Black's enthusiasm led him to suppose that this scheme was much more valuable and of much more consequence to the country than it was really likely to be. I

have here the last year's report on the goldfields of New Zealand, and in it reference is made to this scheme. I find it stated here:—

"A very excellent step towards familiarising the miners and residents in mining districts with ores was the establishment, a few years ago, of small cabinets or cases of minerals at some of the district survey offices. And in this connection prominent notice must be taken of the lectures and visits of Dr. Black, professor of chemistry in the Otago University, to the goldfields in Otago and West Coast, last summer. He awakened a great interest amongst the more intelligent miners, and left them with the knowledge of a few useful tests and of chemical reagents, sufficient to start them on the track of inquiry and observation with an amount of beneficial result which is sure to be felt hereafter, if not in actual discoveries, at all events in a more intelligent application of "principles" to mining. The testimony of miners from many quarters leaves no doubt of the excellent effect of Dr. Black's instructions, and of the spirit of inquiry which was awakened thereby."

Now, that is a confirmation of Mr. Black's own report of the beneficial effects which result from his lectures. His own idea appears to be that lectures of this kind can be continued for about three years, and after that time these schools of mines can be started in which a higher teaching would be carried on. In connection with that he says:—

"By that time I believe there will be a strong public feeling in favour of concentrating the schools as above. There will also be abundance of students ready to avail themselves of the advantages offered by the superior schools. I am very sanguine of the immediate success of the smaller scheme—the existence of so many local clubs ensures that, and it will be my object during the next three years to create such a feeling in favour of a further advance that the miners, as well as the local bodies, will willingly aid in every way to get provision made for the establishment of these more ambitious schools of mines."

Now, I would point out that whereas here we have started a proposal to establish schools of mines, what Mr. Black proposes is to carry out a system of lectures which would familiarise the miners with the processes which ought to be carried on, and then, when the lectures had been continued so long that a pretty general knowledge had been imparted to the miners, these schools of mines should come in. I think it will commend itself to the good sense of hon. members that the lecturing should precede the establishment of these schools of mines. Of course I know that the Minister for Mines was actuated by the best intentions in providing a sum on last year's Estimates for schools of mines. I do not know what has been done so far, but if they are established they must be established only at one or two points. Professor Black says that when the miners cannot come to the lecturers the lecturers should go to the miners, and I think the success of the experiment has been amply borne out by his report and the statements made by the miners that the lectures had been attended with very great benefit to them. Now I should like the Minister for Mines to agree with me that some system of this sort should be adopted here. It is pointed out by Mr. Black that in New Zealand the system can be carried out for £1,500 a year, he giving half his time, with one assistant; and his subordinate being employed wholly. If that can be done in New Zealand I am right in saying that for £2,000 or £3,000 a year we could carry out an efficient system of the kind. I see the Treasurer in communication with his colleague, the Minister for Works, and I have no doubt he is thinking of the cost, but I think it is far better that we should incur a cost of this sort, even if we abolished the schools of mines. A vote of £2,000 for schools of mines is of no use for establishing a higher class of schools, any one of which will cost a great deal more than the £2,000. We could not expect to do anything with that sum; but if we employ lecturers to go round

to impart a general knowledge to miners, which will enable them to detect valuable minerals which have hitherto remained undiscovered, we shall have accomplished a very valuable work indeed. At the present time we know of instances where valuable mineral products have been passed over for months and even years without any notice being taken of them whatever, and if that sort of general knowledge could be imparted to miners to enable them to detect minerals of the kind that I have referred to, then I say the prosperity of the colony would be advanced ten times more than through the formation of schools of mines. When I was last at Rockhampton, I was driving out with Mr. Perkins to Mount Morgan Gold Field, and before we got there we saw a couple of men sawing down a tree. One of the men was a great big brawny fellow, and the driver of the trap pointed out this man. He said, "That man is Gordon, who owned Mount Morgan." Well, that man knew very well that there was something in Mount Morgan. He not only had reason to believe that there was some sort of mineral in it, but he took the trouble to try and get people to test it for iron or copper. He had not the faintest idea what the mineral was that was contained in the mountain. At the time he parted with his freehold of the land, he took Mr. Morgan out there to show him what he supposed to be copper or iron, and Mr. Morgan, who had probably a keener eye for gold, had his suspicions aroused, and took samples to Rockhampton to be analysed. The result was the discovery of this mountain, which is the wonder of the age, so far as mineral formation goes. I do not mean to say that Mr. Gordon, who formerly owned the mountain, would not have discovered the mineral, but I believe that there are thousands of miners who have no more knowledge of what they find or how to look for minerals than Mr. Gordon has, and it is with a view of enabling miners to associate themselves together, and form clubs or schools—to get the few appliances by which they can test the ores—that I have introduced this motion, and I think it is one that will commend itself to the common sense of the House. Of course the Colonial Treasurer is bound to oppose it, but I would point out that, if it has no better result, the cost will be a mere fleabite in comparison to the revenue which will be returned to the country. The revenue derived from mines is at the present time large—that is to say, the indirect revenue. The revenue itself is not so very large, but the great bulk of it goes directly to the consolidated revenue, and very little return is made for it. Miners, as a body, are almost the most heavily taxed of all the labouring classes. They are taxed upon all the tools they use in carrying on their work. There is a large tax upon candles and articles of that description—larger in proportion than that borne by the ordinary class of labourers. I say that the revenue, direct and indirect, derived from the mining industry is so considerable that it ought to be the business of this House in some way to give a return to that class of men for the work which they have done. But looking at the question from a more general point of view, it is apparent to everybody that the benefit to the Government of increasing the importance and increasing the output of the class of minerals I have mentioned is so great that the mere outlay of a few thousands a year is no consideration whatever. I do not want to suggest where the money is to come from, though I can do so if the Colonial Treasurer wishes it. I think he can very easily find some way of providing the money if he is so inclined. At any rate, I am sure the Minister for Works will see that the proposal I have made is a right one, that it is good for the colony, and, in particular, is likely to prove of great

benefit to all engaged in the mining industry. Therefore I hope the hon. gentleman will give it full consideration, and be prepared to accept it in the spirit in which it is introduced. I move the motion standing in my name.

The MINISTER FOR MINES said: Mr. Speaker,—There can be no doubt that the motion moved by the hon. member for Port Curtis is one of very great importance, particularly to the mining industry, and I regret very much indeed to see such a tremendous array of empty benches.

Mr. HAMILTON: On the Government side of the House?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Most of the members for mining districts appear to be absent.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Not those who sit on this side of the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: At any rate, there is no doubt that this question is of very great importance, and one that deserves the serious consideration of the House. I believe that at the present time the mining enterprise and industry in Queensland are a long way ahead of any other industry in the colony, and that if the Government can do anything to assist that industry they should lend a helping hand. And I do not think the Government have shown any backwardness in doing that. The hon. member for Port Curtis proposes that lecturers should be appointed to proceed to the goldfields and lecture to the miners. I may be wrong, but I think we ought to have schools of mines first and lecturers afterwards. The Government have not been neglectful of the mining industry. They have made provision for schools of mines, and at the present time I do not feel justified in committing the Government to any further expenditure in that direction. It was only last night that the hon. member for Port Curtis was using very strong language and accusing the Government of profligacy and extravagance, and what does the hon. gentleman propose to do now? Why, to clap on another £5,000 to the Estimates for lecturers to enlighten the miners throughout the colony! The hon. member has quoted at considerable length from a report by Professor Black. Well, all I can say is this: That he must be a very poor professor indeed if he cannot write out a good report in his own favour; but surely the hon. gentleman does not expect us to swallow all the statements made by Mr. Black! I think that under the present circumstances, in view of the provision that the Government is making for the advancement of the mining industry, the hon. gentleman ought not to ask for this additional expenditure. He has alluded to the £2,000 which the Government have set down for a school of mines, and I can assure the hon. gentleman that we have already received applications for £3,000, and it is very possible that eventually the expenditure will be three times the amount now proposed. We cannot exactly tell the amount that will be required. The hon. gentleman, however, is not satisfied with that, but he wants to clap on another £5,000 for lecturers. I have no objection to the appointment of lecturers when the proper time arrives, but I think it is premature to make provision for them now. I am of opinion that we should in the first instance establish schools of mines, and educate miners up to a certain point, and then they would be in a position to benefit by the instructions of any lecturers who may be appointed. I hope the hon. member will see his way to withdraw this motion.

Mr. NORTON: No, I will not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I know the hon. member for Port Curtis is very headstrong, but I do not think he will succeed if he presses the motion to a division. I do not think hon. members would be doing justice to their constituents if, after the provision the Government have made for the mining industry, they should put another £5,000 on the Estimates for lecturers to proceed to the various goldfields and mining centres in the colony for the purpose of lecturing and instructing the mining population. I think, as I have already indicated, that it would be much better to first establish schools of mines and educate the miners up to a certain point, after which they would be in a far better position than they are now to profit by the knowledge that would be imparted to them by the lecturers. I hope the hon. gentleman will not press this motion to a division. If he does, the Government cannot support it. I do not intend to take up the time of the House by referring to all the points raised by the hon. gentleman. Professor Black, whose report he has quoted, is employed by the New Zealand Government as a lecturer on the minerals of that colony, and, as I have said before, Mr. Black would be a very poor professor indeed if he could not make out a report in his own favour. I hope the hon. member will be satisfied with having ventilated the question, and withdraw his motion.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—This is one of the speeches we may expect in consequence of the Financial Statement of the Colonial Treasurer. I believe that if the Minister for Mines were allowed to express his own ideas he would at once say he agreed with the motion before the House, but under the tutelage of the Treasurer he is obliged to oppose it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Treasurer did not influence me.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I only wish he had more influence over the hon. member, because then he might prevent him from spending money in the wrong direction.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I must put the hon. gentleman right. I did not say that the Treasurer had no influence over me, but that he used no influence.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: I take the correction, but I think the Treasurer has not done his duty—he should use all the influence he possesses over every member of the Government. I do not know why the hon. gentleman should have prefaced his speech by an allusion to the absence of the members representing mining constituencies, when the fact is that almost every mining member belonging to the House was in the House. If he had alluded to the absence of his own colleagues he would have been nearer the mark, because he was the only Minister on the Treasury benches. That shows the interest they take in the motion. I think—without going as far as the hon. member for Port Curtis, in wishing to establish a system of lecturing—that it is a thing worthy of consideration. There is a sum of £2,000 on the Estimates for schools of mines, and the Minister for Mines thinks that sum should be allowed to operate in the education of miners before we begin to lecture. But how are miners to be educated without masters? A school of mines implies someone to teach. Miners cannot teach each other that which they do not know themselves. I agree with the hon. member for Port Curtis that £2,000 for the establishment of schools of mines on the different goldfields of the colony is totally inadequate; it is not one-third sufficient to establish even one school of mines. If the Minister for Mines were to direct his attention to the establishment of two—or at most three—

schools of mines, and establish them well, he would be doing the mining industry and the colony good service. I am strongly inclined to think that we have been too backward all along in doing for the mining industry that which has been done for it in some of the other colonies. We have been in the habit of looking at the mining industry as the only industry that does not want encouragement, and for that reason fewer metals and minerals have been worked in this colony than would otherwise have been the case. From the little knowledge of mining I possess, and from what I have read and heard, I believe that in Queensland a larger number of metals and minerals exist, and in greater quantities, than in almost any other part of Australia; yet there is no industry which has progressed less than mining. As a general rule gold-miners have but a superficial knowledge of their profession. They look for gold in what is called likely country, but though there may be other metals in the country examined they cannot find them owing to their want of knowledge. But if some such proposition as that proposed by the hon. member for Port Curtis were taken up seriously by the Government it would be of great advantage to the colony. A motion of this kind cannot be taken up on the spur of the moment. The Government must take time to consider such a proposition, and I am quite willing, as a representative of a mining constituency—having also represented mining constituencies ever since I have been a member of this House—I am quite willing to take the promise of the Minister for Mines, that the question shall be considered probably between this and the next session. If the Treasury should be too low the Minister will have a reasonable excuse for not spending more money; but I think some of the money on the Estimates for schools of mines might very well be appropriated to some more practical purpose than buying a few books and inducing miners to come at night to what is called a school of mines to read newspapers. If the hon. gentleman would take the trouble to read up the history of the school of mines at Ballarat—if he would learn the trouble and expense which have been incurred in the establishment of the school of mines there—he would come to the conclusion to which I have come—that £2,000 spent in Queensland for all our goldfields is simply money thrown away. As I said at the outset, if we establish two or three at the most—one at Gympie, one at Charters Towers, one at Herberton, the three most promising mining centres in the colony—if we establish good schools of mines in each of those places we shall be conferring an immense benefit not only on the miners but on the people of the colony generally. We must not forget the benefit mining has been to Queensland. Looking back to the year 1867 we remember the good Gympie did to the colony at a period of general depression, but we are in the habit of forgetting that the good Gympie did then has been continued, year after year, since that time. And Gympie has not been alone. I believe we have no conception of the immense benefit conferred on the colony by the development of the mining industry and the exertions of individual miners in prospecting and discovering new fields; and if those men, whom I know to have been so energetic, had possessed the knowledge they could easily have acquired in schools of mines or by a good system of lecturing—as proposed—their exertions would have resulted in the discovery of a larger number of minerals and a much wider field for the working of those minerals than exists at the present time. I believe that in many cases

the money spent by Government and the money spent by private individuals in prospecting has been thrown away, simply from the want of knowledge on the part of the men in charge of parties prospecting and the men composing those parties. If we do no more than educate one or two dozen men in mineralogy and geology as far as it applies to practical mining we should be doing a great deal of good. I hope that although the Minister for Mines has set his face against the proposition now before the House he will seriously consider the question between now and next session, and see if something better cannot be done to educate miners than by simply placing a small sum on the Estimates for schools of mines.

The PREMIER said: Of course we know that a complete school of mines could not be established for anything like the small sum placed on the Estimates for the present year; but this is only the beginning. What we desire, and what is practical at the present time I think, is not to establish a school of mines of the elaborate character of that at Ballarat, but to afford in the principal mining centres—of which the three mentioned by the hon. member may be taken as the best samples, probably—to establish there institutions where miners who want to learn can learn. At the present time they are really debarred from getting information that would be of use to the country if they had it. We want to supply them with the means of getting that information, and that can only be done by establishing institutions where instruction can be given. The details have not yet been worked out by the Government, but a good deal will probably depend upon the advice given by the local committees. I apprehend that to be of much use we should have a course of lectures given by competent persons at such institutions. There are a good many things to be considered before that: the appliances that would be wanted; whether it would be necessary to have a lecturer in each place, or whether it would be better for the Government to undertake to pay a certain amount of remuneration to a competent mineralogist, who would also earn a considerable amount of money for himself as an assayer. That might be a good thing to do, and it might be supplemented by sending a lecturer to each place in succession. Those are matters to be worked out in detail. The Government have formed no absolute conclusion at the present time. They have waited for further information, and the assistance we expect to get from the committees in different centres. With the general scope of the hon. member's motion I agree. I believe it would be of great advantage to the community to diffuse more accurate knowledge on mineralogy. We have heard often in times past of valuable discoveries having been missed through people not knowing what they were, and which turned out to be tin, or silver, or some other valuable mineral. If we can devise a means of making the miner more competent to recognise minerals when he sees them, it will certainly be of general benefit to the colony. I believe that to be the object the hon. gentleman has in view; and though I do not think it practical to carry it out in an effective form at the present time, it may be possible later on to establish a system of instruction in this way, and nothing could be more satisfactory.

Mr. LISSNER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very sorry to hear that the Minister for Works does not approve of the motion brought in by the hon. member for Port Curtis. I think the miners of Queensland ought to be thankful to him for bringing in this motion. I hope he will not withdraw it, and I trust he will test the opinion

of the House on the matter. I think it would be a step in the right direction to employ a lecturer who would be able to attract the miners to listen to him. It is true that £2,000 is placed on the Estimates, but £2,000 will not go far to establish three schools of mines. So far as I am concerned, I should be quite willing to have the Government withdraw the £2,000 and engage a first-class lecturer to go periodically to the different mining centres. At present the mining population on our goldfields might not be large enough to warrant the establishment of schools of mines. In the present state of the Treasury I am sure we could not afford to establish mining schools in the different mining centres. A good deal has been said about the way in which the miners have been protected in the Estimates. It is said that they have been given great assistance. I see that on the Estimates there is a reward for deep sinking, but my own opinion of this reward is that it will not benefit the miners a great deal, and I take it that it is merely an advertisement on the Estimates. At Charters Towers the miners are supposed to receive assistance when they have sunk down 600 feet. Well, when a miner at Charters Towers gets down 600 feet he is generally in a position to go down further without any assistance. The trouble we have there is to get men who have means sufficient to go down 600 feet, and if the assistance to the miner is left as it now is on the Estimates the Charters Towers miner will seldom have an opportunity of troubling the Treasurer on the matter. It may suit a shaft or two in Gympie. But I am going away from the topic. What I mean to say is, that the hon. member for Port Curtis deserves the thanks of the mining community for bringing this motion before the House. The employment of a lecturer in the different mining centres—a man who could attract a sufficient number of miners to take an interest in him—might provide a nucleus for the establishment of schools of mines. In the meantime a competent man might be employed to lecture in the schools of arts in the different mining centres, and the Government would thus get an idea as to what support they would be likely to get from the miners, and as to the desirability of establishing schools of mines afterwards; and they would also get a good idea of the places where it would be most suitable to establish them. The average miner knows likely looking country very well, and can do more with the pick and shovel than the geologist, but we all know that gold-mining is not the only mining which we can carry on in this colony. We have a good many minerals as well as gold which may be productively worked, and in the meantime, for the want of knowing better, we believe gold is the best mineral to look for. I say that this is probably because we do not know better. We have other valuable minerals—silver, tin, galena, quicksilver, coal, and ever so many more—in large quantities, and they only want to be developed; and they would be developed if the miner could combine with the scientific geologist, who could point out to him things he never knew before, and be a benefit to the colony at large. I am very much in favour of the motion, and I trust the Minister for Works will reconsider his decision in the matter when he sees that mining members take such an interest in the matter; and I hope he will look upon this motion favourably.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—It is very evident that the mining representatives on this side of the House do take an interest in the matter, and I regret very much that I do not see one mining member present on the other side of the House.

An **HONOURABLE MEMBER**: There is Mr. Foxton.

Mr. HAMILTON: I only see one present on the other side of the House, and I regret also to note that they have been absent not only on this occasion, but on a previous occasion when a tax specially affecting miners came before us. I allude to the tax on machinery. If an opportunity were afforded for disseminating knowledge of this kind in the way proposed, the probability is we should not have so many rich fields lying dormant for so long as we have had in the past. That they have lain dormant was simply due to the want of information. The hon. member for Port Curtis instanced the case of Mount Morgan, but many other similar cases could be mentioned. There is the field which the hon. member for Stanthorpe represents. We know that for many years that laid untouched, the miners believing the tin to be simply black emery. There are fields which have since been discovered to be like Mount Morgan, and I have been shown—in fact, I am connected with—a claim where similar characteristics occur, and the existence of which has been known for many years, but was not imagined by anyone to be worth anything. The mere fact of these fields lying unworked is, as a matter of course, a positive loss to the colony. I can mention another instance. A friend of mine told me a day or two ago that a year or so since they were working a silver-mine at Herberton that was not paying. One day he happened to pick up some substance, of which they had been throwing a very large quantity away, imagining it to be worthless. He took it to an assayer and found that it was chloride of silver—it contained 75 percent. of silver. That was now one of the richest and best paying mines in the district. On realising that fact my friend went south and joined one of the schools of mines there. He also went over the mines at Silverton; and I may here state that he informs me that the mines there, of which we hear so much, are nothing compared with the silver-mines of Herberton. But what I want to point out is that this gentleman had to go to another colony to obtain the information he sought. A subject of this kind is peculiarly interesting to a colony like Queensland. Not only are our mining fields as rich as those of any in the other colonies, but we have a far greater variety of them. The only reason the Minister for Mines gave for not acceding to the motion was that it was inadvisable to appoint lecturers now, because we ought to have schools of mines in the first instance. But against that opinion we have the opinions of men like Professor Black and others, who assure us that the Minister for Mines is wrong. We have at present two Government geologists, and although their cost is about £2,400 a year, the benefits accruing to the colony from their labours are incalculable. By appointing lecturers of this kind we shall have, in a very short time, hundreds of embryo geologists. We have the testimony of Professor Black that geological students are ardent students, and as a matter of course they would pay special attention to the particular minerals they were likely to come across in the colony. As I said before, the probable effect of the appointment of those lecturers would be to open up stores of mining fields which are at present lying dormant simply from want of information.

Mr. FOXTON said: Mr. Speaker,—I am inclined to agree with a good deal that has fallen from the hon. member for Cook and the other hon. members who have spoken in support of the resolution. Schools of mines would be very excellent things for large mining centres,

where, only, it would pay to establish them; but where the field is small, and where there is not a large amount of capital invested, I can see that this system of lecturers travelling from place to place would be a most admirable one. It would be, in fact, a peripatetic school of mines—a school which would shift from place to place to meet the exigencies of scattered populations where there was not sufficient inducement to establish a permanent school of mines in their midst. I know from experience that one of the greatest difficulties miners and prospectors have to contend against is the fact that they are very often at a loss exactly to distinguish the particular mineral which they have found. Extraordinary delays, and sometimes considerable expense, are incurred in their attempts to obtain from metallurgists—perhaps in the southern colonies—proper assays of those particular minerals; and during the whole of that time the men are compelled to remain idle. They do not care to spend their money in the development of the mine, which may turn out to be utterly worthless, nor do they like to throw up what may turn out to be a fortune to them. They are in this unfortunate position—that all they can do is to sit down and look at their prospects. These lecturers would be able to settle a difficulty of that kind, in a great measure, at once. Without going further into the arguments adduced in support of the motion, I may say that, as the representative of a mining district which is not a very extensive one and where a long time must elapse before it can have a mining school of its own, I shall feel bound to support the resolution of the hon. member.

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—In the absence of the two other gentlemen who represent mining interests on this side I think it necessary to say a word or two on the subject before the House. I do not know anything about mining. I have lived for thirty years in Australia, and have never seen a goldfield. Perhaps I ought to be ashamed to make such a confession, but it shows how ignorant I am of the subject. Nevertheless, although I do not know anything about it scientifically or practically, the suggestions made by the hon. member for Port Curtis have certainly commended themselves to my judgment. I do think that without a very large sum of money—much larger than is already on the Estimates—we could not establish schools of mines in all the mining districts of the colony. That would necessitate a very large expenditure. Professors of the various sciences would have to be engaged—chemistry, mineralogy, geology, and so on—and schools of mines established in that way would be very costly indeed. I think the establishment of itinerant or peripatetic schools of mines—as the hon. member for Carnarvon says—by the employment of lecturers who are at the same time men of science and good speakers, would be attended with a great deal of success. The attention of miners in the various localities would be directed to the means of carrying on their profession scientifically, and a vast amount of valuable information would be imparted by the lecturers on all questions connected with minerals. This would be followed by a strong desire for the establishment of a permanent school of mines in each of the mining centres. For the reasons that have been urged in support of the motion, I trust the Minister for Works will see his way to divert—it would not be diverted, though—the amount put down for schools of mines to the appointment of lecturers as a preparatory measure. That would quite consist with the idea that it has been voted for schools of mines, for this would be the commencement of schools of mines—the nucleus, as the hon. member for Kennedy said—in the

various localities. On these grounds I feel strongly disposed to support the motion of the hon. member for Port Curtis.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—The motion brought forward by the hon. member for Port Curtis is one which should commend itself not only to the House but to the colony generally. The mineral wealth of the greater part of Northern Queensland is absolutely unknown. None of the other colonies possesses the wealth which now lies latent and undeveloped in Queensland, particularly in the northern parts, and any motion which will tend to develop or make known those riches should commend itself to the Government and to the community at large, especially seeing that the mining industry is now the only one which is not under a cloud. It is not so much dependent upon seasons as pastoral and agricultural occupations. There is one subject—one mystery or secret—connected with mining over the whole of the colonies, and whoever solves it will open the way, not only to his own fortune but to the fortunes of scores of others. Whoever discovers that secret—let him be chemist, scientific lecturer, or anything else—will deserve well at the hands of the country at large. I refer to the discovery of some means of extracting gold from tailings. Whoever can make that discovery will open up a field of labour and enterprise that has been lying idle for a great number of years. Thousands of tons of tailings are being banked up with more gold in them than was extracted in the first instance; because it is well known that these tailings, when scientifically tested, have yielded more gold, in many cases, than they did in the first place, showing that the appliances at present in use for extracting gold are very uncertain and very immature. I believe that nothing but experimenting will result in that discovery. Generally, practical miners have a certain amount of contempt for what they call scientific men, believing that the theory of geology is quite distinct from the practical working of it. I believe that is an ignorance which further knowledge will dispel. Even scientific men themselves have a great deal to learn in the fields of the North, and no doubt when scientific men go there and see things with their own eyes, they will be able, with the knowledge they possess, to open up many fields of minerals which before the miner had little knowledge of. I see that £2,000 was put on the Estimates last year for schools of mines, and that the same amount is put down for this year; but we have very little information about what has been spent or is to be spent. It is said to be a sort of nucleus for the further development of that system of educating the miners; and in connection with that, the proposal that lecturers should be appointed is one that ought to commend itself. I have reason to believe that the Treasury is not in a sufficiently opulent state just now to be very reckless of funds, but if the hon. the Treasurer could in any way combine with the schools of mines the appointment of travelling lecturers to visit the various fields, I am sure that he will deserve well of the whole mining community—especially when he is free to admit that the mining industry is the only one that is not injuriously affected in these very depressed times. I think that the miners of the North, and of Queensland in general, have to thank the hon. member for Port Curtis for the trouble he has taken in bringing the motion forward.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Port Curtis certainly deserves the thanks not only of the miners but of the whole country for bringing forward this motion. Much as has been said about the importance of

our goldfields, it is scarcely possible to overrate their importance. If it were not for the returns from our goldfields the wisdom of our politicians would long ago have vanished like thin air. It is the yield of the goldfields and the employment they have given that has stood by us in good and bad times—particularly in bad times, when the colony has come under a cloud through the mismanagement of our politicians—I do not think you can say statesmen, but politicians. And not only that, but the greater part of the prosperity enjoyed by the farmers of this colony is owing to the prosperity of the goldfields. The goldfields are the best customers of the farmers, and many a sovereign that was struck by the miner on our Northern goldfields has found its way into the pockets of the farmers living in the South. I think the hon. member for Port Curtis was rather unfortunate in the manner in which he brought the motion before the House, on account of which the Government has treated it as a separate motion. He should have brought it in as considering what was the best manner to apply the funds set down by the Government for assisting the mining population. The Government, last year, voted £2,000 for schools of mines in various parts of the colony; the same sum is put down for this year. Of course the amount voted last year lapsed. I have questioned myself often as to what the Government intended to do with this £2,000 for schools of mines—what would be established by the £2,000? To my mind the schools of arts established already in various parts of the colony are suitable, so far as the buildings and localities are concerned, for establishing classes for the instruction of miners; so that no expense in that direction is necessary. All that is required is to arrive at the best means of imparting instruction to the miners, and I think the money voted could not be expended in a better way than by appointing itinerant professors of geology and mineralogy, who, furnished with the necessary apparatus and geological collections, could visit the goldfields of the colony and give instruction; and no doubt they would be assisted by those interested in the mining districts. These professors could also inspect the various parts of the surrounding country, classify and describe the various mineral specimens and rock formations in the locality, and so impart a great amount of instruction. But it is difficult to understand how hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House can ask the Government for additional expenditure whilst they are doing their very best to cut down the propositions of the Government for increasing the revenue. Another point connected with the proposal is, that it is piecemeal legislation. Of all the industries of the colony the mineral industries are the most prosperous. Considerably over a million's worth of minerals have been exported last year, and agricultural produce, that we ought to produce ourselves, to the extent of over half-a-million, has been imported. Now, if hon. members on that side of the House would assist the Premier to dispel the hallucination and superstition against taxation that exists in the country, it would be very easy to raise a surplus of £400,000 or £500,000 to carry out great ideas. The Government could then establish a university combined with an agricultural college, a school of mines, and a training school for teachers. According to the report of the Minister for Education, I see that teachers are to be imported from England, which is a great injustice to the young men and women who devote themselves to the noble calling of teaching the young. By the hon. gentleman's own showing, the professor who delivered these lectures in New Zealand is attached to the university. I think hon.

members on the other side ought to assist to carry out the great ideas timidly thrown out by the Premier. If the hon. gentleman will modify his motion so as to consider how best to expend the money voted by the present Government he shall have my earnest support. Last year's vote has lapsed, and I do not think the Government would require much coaxing to add it to this year's vote. So long as the Government believe so much in borrowing, they cannot see that a few pounds spent on our own industries would be money well spent, and that every shilling kept in the colony instead of going out of it is money possessed by the State.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—But for one or two remarks in the speech of the Minister for Mines, I intended to give a silent vote in favour of this motion. The hon. gentleman commenced by saying he was surprised at hon. members on this side proposing additional expenditure when they were accusing the Government of extravagance. But what we accuse the Government of is extravagance in the wrong direction, whereas this would be expenditure in the right direction. Again, the hon. Minister said the Government had done a great deal for the mining industry; they had put money on the Estimates to assist in deep sinking, and for the aid of schools of mines. But the money advanced for deep sinking is a loan which the miners will have to refund if they are successful. It is not money paid out of the Treasury without any possibility of its being returned. Then with regard to the £2,000 voted last year for the school of mines, that has not been expended, and nothing has been done to carry out the objects for which it was voted; so that the miners have had very little assistance in the particular matter which is the subject of the motion of my hon. friend. I quite agree with him that we should walk before we attempt to run. It is rather putting the cart before the horse to establish schools of mines before we have these lectures delivered to the mining population. Anyone who knows anything about the study of chemistry is aware that the establishment of a school of mines would be a most expensive affair. The laboratory appliances and chemicals for experiments would cost a great deal more than the paltry sum which appears on this estimate. The proper way to proceed, as pointed out by my hon. friend, would be to have elementary lectures, followed by more advanced instruction, and ultimately by the establishment of schools of mines. I have never been in Ballarat, and do not know how the school of mines works there; but it seems to me it is more of a training college, where a person would have to spend a great deal of time and thoroughly study the subject; whereas if lectures like those suggested were given the mining population could attend, and be instructed in the elements of mineralogy, geology, and to a certain extent of chemistry, which they could then apply to practical purposes. Now, sir, hon. members in discussing this motion have confined their remarks almost entirely to the metals gold and silver. The hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Lissner, mentioned some other minerals, but no mention has been made of the one which I think is the most valuable of all to the colony, and that is coal. I believe the development of the coal industry will bring far more wealth to the colony than either gold or silver, or both together. Look at the value of the coal industry in Great Britain. The coal industry here is only in its infancy, as was said by the hon. leader of the Opposition yesterday. The output of coal now is a mere fleabite to what it will be in the course of a few years; but it eventually will be of greater importance than even gold and silver, and be productive of more material benefit to the colony. It seems to me that the

principal objection of the Minister for Mines to the motion is the question of expense. It has been pointed out that provision has been made for deep sinking, and as there is a sum on the Estimates for schools of mines, the Government think they have done enough for the present, but during the recess they will give the matter consideration and see what can be done. That is the suggestion of the Premier; but I would suggest a way in which something might be done at once. It is admitted by the Government that the £2,000 which is now voted for schools of mines is totally inadequate, and cannot be spent to any good purpose. If this motion be passed, that £2,000 can be struck off the Estimates, and can be applied to the carrying into effect of the motion of the hon. member for Port Curtis. I urge this more strongly, as the Government must not forget that, although they say they have done so much for gold-miners, they are about to impose a tax upon them in the shape of a tax upon machinery, and it would be a good thing if these lecturers were appointed, so that miners may be more speedily educated in their business and refrain from wasting their capital—on useless ventures—in machinery that will be of no use to them. For these reasons I shall support the motion.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think it is necessary to make a speech upon this subject. I shall do as I have always done, and support any proposal for the benefit of miners, from whichever side of the House it may come. I may say that there is a great want of technical knowledge of mining in this colony, and I can give an instance. Some years ago there was made a discovery of an extraordinary mixture of metals in the Wide Bay district, near Kilkivan—a conglomeration of metals of the most valuable descriptions—which has hitherto resisted all the knowledge we have at present in the colony to make it profitable. There is an immense quantity of gold and silver and other metals all together, and to this day we have not been able to work that mine. We know that this rich mineral exists, and yet we have not the technical knowledge in the colony to enable us to work it. Look again at the recent discoveries. We are now finding gold in the colony under different conditions from any in which it has been found in any other part of the world. I refer first to Mount Morgan, and secondly to the most important discovery made by the hon. member, Mr. Smyth, and some friends recently in the neighbourhood of Gympie. When we find minerals combining under such strange conditions, I think the importance of greater technical knowledge on the part of the miners must be palpable to anyone. I agree with the hon. member for Bowen that a far better use may be made of the money proposed to be expended upon schools of mines, because that sum is insufficient for the purpose for which it was originally intended, by expending it in the direction pointed out by the hon. member for Port Curtis. I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—I regret very much that owing to official duties requiring my presence elsewhere I have not had the advantage of hearing any of the speeches that have been made by hon. members on this subject, with the exception of that just made by the hon. member for Wide Bay. I am very glad indeed to see a member of the intelligence and capacity of the hon. member for Port Curtis advocating his views on a matter of this sort, and although he does not specially represent a mining district, I, as one of those who do represent a mining constituency, do not feel the least degree of

jealousy, but am glad to see him devoting his attention to a matter which so vitally affects the interests of the great mining industry. I think it is impossible to say too much in commendation of any suggestion of a practical kind that would be likely to lead to the development of the mining industry which is universally acknowledged to be about the most extensive and reliable that the colony at present possesses. It has exercised my mind very considerably for some time as to what would be the best way of utilising the £2,000 placed upon the Estimates for the purpose of establishing schools of mines as proposed by the Government, but it strikes me that the suggestion that has been made that if a portion of this £2,000—probably the whole of it—were for the time being expended in some such way as this is a very good suggestion, and probably we shall find in the adoption of a resolution of this kind the introduction of a system which I hope to see attain very considerable dimensions by-and-by. Of course the terms in which the motion has been put are vague, but I suppose it is impossible, until the whole question has been well thought over and a full discussion has taken place upon it as to what would be the best way in which to utilise the service of lecturers, to come to any definite conclusion. I think that lecturers going about at distant intervals from one mining centre to another would be but a very poor substitute for a school of mines established in a particular locality. What is wanted is not to hear a lot of information, the half of which would be forgotten almost as soon as heard, but to have demonstrations made that the miners would be able to follow, and which would make them competent to detect the presence of valuable minerals, and how best to utilise their resources when they embark in mining ventures. At the same time, everything must have a beginning, and probably in some such way as this the very best means of beginning would be ascertained. There is no doubt that in the Kennedy district, for example, there is known to be a vast extent of country which is more or less auriferous. There is an immense body of stone on the Ravenswood Gold Field which is largely impregnated with gold, and which contains also a mixture of other metals; and the difficulty that has faced the miners hitherto has been how to separate the gold from those other metals. I understand that large firms have embarked a great amount of capital in the endeavour to discover the true way by which the gold may be separated from those other metals with which they are mixed, and too much cannot be said in praise of those who have embarked their capital in an enterprise of that kind, and my sincere hope is that their enterprise will be richly rewarded. I regard the efforts of those who embark their capital in this way as more to be commended, and as doing more for the mining industry, than even the establishment of schools of mines. The more information the miners as a body can obtain as to the means by which valuable minerals may be distinguished and their presence detected when found in combination with other substances, the more likely will it be that not only the existing mineral fields will be developed, but new ones brought into existence. The mining industry, no doubt, has of late years suffered from the waste of money that has taken place in the endeavours made by men to develop the resources of mining districts, without having the requisite knowledge as to how to go to work, and I really do think that the employment of competent lecturers would do much to dissipate ignorance. There is one difficulty we shall always be confronted with in a colony like this, which is

illustrated in the case of the Mount Morgan mine. Gold will be found in places and under circumstances to which the most accomplished mineralogists are utter strangers, but, notwithstanding that, I must express my approbation of every effort that is made in the direction of affording the miner the requisite knowledge of how to go to work and expend his capital in the way most likely to be productive of profit. Probably, my hon. colleague, the Minister for Mines, will take into his consideration whether the employment of one or two competent lecturers, of the kind proposed, might not be the beginning of a system we hope to see introduced—the establishment of mining schools in all the large mining centres; and I am convinced that the benefits to be derived from the existence of schools of mines will more than compensate for the comparatively small outlay necessary to keep them going, as I hope we shall see them ere long in a state of thorough efficiency.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: I think that both sides of the House have but one desire in connection with this question, and that is, to afford the miner and the mining industry every possible encouragement, and enable miners to prospect the country with improved knowledge. When this motion was introduced by the hon. member for Port Curtis—I may say with great ability—I at once stood on the defensive, in the interests of the Treasury; and I must say that, if the claim were represented as an increase of expenditure, or with a view of establishing a new department, I should have opposed it most strenuously. I am glad to see that hon. members have very wisely considered the financial position of the country, and although they have expressed their approval of the motion, have no desire to increase the obligations of the Treasury. It is a question whether the establishment of lecturers would answer the purpose of schools of mines, and, personally, I do not think they would have the same beneficial tendency. As a tentative measure, the system might do a great deal of good in affording more immediate information than at present can be derived from the establishment of schools of mines. While this discussion has been proceeding, I have considered the source from whence the hon. gentleman intended to procure a supply of lecturers. I think he will have some difficulty in getting lecturers of any ability here; and unless he has men who are really well posted up in the science of mining I do not think that lecturers itinerating from centre to centre would be productive of that great benefit which the hon. gentleman anticipates. However, that is a matter of detail, and will no doubt receive full consideration from my hon. colleague, the Minister for Mines. The Government have a desire to encourage mining industry and to afford miners all legitimate information so as to enable them to pursue their calling with benefit to themselves. If the appointment of these lecturers will benefit the mining industry more immediately than the establishment of schools of mines, I think that as a preliminary measure the proposal to make some provision for lecturers will commend itself to the House; and so long as the expenditure under the head of schools of mines is not enlarged by the diversion of the vote to lecturers, there can, of course, be no opposition on the part of the Treasury to this sum of £2,000 or thereabouts being expended for lecturers. If the hon. gentleman who has introduced this motion agrees with this view of the case I think there will be no objection to allow the matter to go into committee, and the dedication of the money can be more conveniently dealt with there than in the motion before the House. At the same time, I would point out that there may be some difficulty in securing the

services of a sufficient number of able and skilled lecturers in this particular branch of science for the sum of £2,000 so as to be able to proceed immediately in the direction of educating the miners. If, however, the hon. gentleman agrees with the views I have expressed on the matter, there can be no objection to the motion going into committee, and there will be then full opportunity of discussing the whole subject.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very pleased to hear what has just fallen from the Colonial Treasurer. I think that the Attorney-General, who, I presume, has probably been performing his duties in court during the afternoon, could not have been present when my hon. friend the member for Port Curtis introduced this motion.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. ARCHER: I thought so. Had the hon. gentleman been here he would have had the advantage of hearing part of an elaborate report by Professor Black, of Otago, New Zealand, which was read by the hon. member for Port Curtis. Professor Black is a scientific man who has lectured a good deal to the miners in different parts of New Zealand. He takes a great interest in this matter, and recommends the appointment of lecturers in preference to the establishment of schools of mines, until the miners have been so far instructed by the lecturers as to appreciate the higher style of education to be given in the schools of mines. I think the Premier, who spoke in a vague kind of manner when addressing the House on this subject, could not have listened to the extracts my hon. friend read from Professor Black's report. Mr. Black speaks as a man having authority. He has done what the motion before us proposes should be done here, and he has seen the good effects of a system of lecturing on mining. I hope hon. members who take an interest in this matter will procure his report and read it before this question comes on for further consideration in committee. Probably they will derive more information from that report—not only as to what Mr. Black has done, but also as to the result of what he has done—than they will from any amount of talking in this House, as we are comparatively ignorant of the matter under discussion. The Colonial Treasurer mentioned that he thought it would be very difficult to procure lecturers of sufficient capacity—or, in other words, lecturers worth anything—for the money which it is said will be required. Well, this objection holds equally good in regard to schools of mines, for they require not only lecturers but a staff of teachers and a great many instruments; they would, in fact, require almost everything necessary for a chemist's laboratory. When the lecturers proposed to be appointed have informed the miners to some extent in useful knowledge, schools of mines may be established, and the miners would then be in a position to take advantage of the higher education. I only wish hon. members would possess themselves of the report made by Mr. Black. It would give them a vast amount of reliable information on this subject. If we cannot establish schools of mines at present—which I doubt—at any rate if we could, it would involve the expenditure of a great deal more than is set down on the Estimates—we should do, not the next best thing, but according to Professor Black a far better thing—namely, make provision for the appointment of lecturers. I can heartily support this motion, and I believe that £2,000 spent in the way suggested will repay the country probably better than a similar amount spent on other forms of education in the colony.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—It was at first my intention to oppose the motion of the hon.

member for Port Curtis, but since the matter has assumed a different phase from that which it had when first introduced I shall be inclined to give it my support. At the same time, while I would like to see the mining industry assisted I do not see why the agricultural industry should not be assisted also. The members of agricultural constituencies have been very modest, and, bearing in mind the unsatisfactory state of the finances, they have not come forward with similar motions in regard to the agricultural industry. I think the hon. member for Port Curtis should have refrained from bringing forward a motion of this kind, at the present time, to increase the expenditure of the colony. We find that there is a sum of £2,000 put down on the Estimates for the mining industry—for schools of mines—but there is not a single penny put down for the agricultural industry—for an agricultural college. There is also £10,000 put down for deep sinking, but nothing is down for the agricultural industry in the same direction. I find, too, that the mining industry is represented by the Minister for Mines, and that it has a separate department in the Government, but there is no such provision for agriculture. I think there should be a Minister for Agriculture appointed as well as a Minister for Mines. I would, as I have said before, have opposed the motion proposed by the hon. member for Port Curtis, because I believe we should do all we can to check additional expenditure. I am prepared to go in for thorough retrenchment, as the Colonial Treasurer will find when he introduces the Estimates. But under the altered circumstances—the member for Port Curtis having agreed that the £2,000 put down for schools of mines shall be applied to the payment of lecturers—I feel inclined to allow the motion to go into committee.

Mr. NORTON, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I was glad to hear the remarks of the Colonial Treasurer, because I was under the impression, from the way the Minister for Mines treated the motion, that it was the intention of the Government to oppose my proposition. The suggestion thrown out by the Treasurer is one that I shall be glad to adopt; at the same time I must express my regret that the Government cannot see their way to set aside a larger sum for the purpose. It has been acknowledged by every one who has spoken that the matter is a most important one; and I think, even if we went to an expenditure of £5,000 or £10,000, it would be recompensed to the Treasury within the next few years, because it would give an impetus to the mining industry which could not be given in any other way. However, I suppose "beggars cannot be choosers," and the Government supporters could have thrown out my motion if they had decided to vote against it. I am glad to be able to say that it has been treated, as I wished it to be treated by hon. members, as a motion with which politics should not be allowed to interfere. We are all agreed that by giving facilities for the acquisition of mining knowledge we are doing the best thing we can, not only to advance the interests of mining, but of the colony also. One matter which particularly called my attention to the papers I have read in connection with New Zealand was, that some four years ago, when the late Ministry were in power, I proposed that assistance should be afforded to Mr. Jack, the Government Geologist. The appointment I suggested was made, but the result is not all that could be wished, because, though Mr. Rands has been to some districts—my own among others—and made an inspection of the different fields, there is something more wanted to help the miners. His reports are useful to anyone who understands geology, but

we want matters put before the miners in such a way that those who do not understand geology may take advantage of what is put before them, when it is pointed out under what conditions minerals are likely to exist. I should not have said so much about Professor Black's report if it stood by itself, because, as the Minister for Works suggested, it is not likely that we are going to swallow anyone's report. As the hon. member said, any man could make a good report of his own doings, but in this case the annual mining report of New Zealand also refers to the same subject, and it is there stated that they have evidence of the faithfulness of Professor Black's report, from the fact of miners having communicated the good results which have followed his instructions. With that evidence we may treat Professor Black's report, though perhaps a little highly coloured, as one which can be relied upon. It is well known that large deposits of minerals exist in this country; and when a question like this is raised we should be adopting an unwise course if we decided it in the negative. Every inducement should be given for the working of those large mineral deposits which are known to exist. If we look at the effect of the opening up of mines in any district, it will be admitted at once that it has a most wonderful effect on the surrounding country. Not long ago, what is now the town of Silvertown, in New South Wales, near the border of South Australia, was discovered as a place where minerals exist to a large extent. At the time the deposit of silver was found the place was like the country in the far west of Queensland, and was used merely for sheep-walks, but there is a large town there at the present time. I do not know who is carrying out the works, but a proposal has been submitted to the Government, and has been agreed to, that a tramway should be constructed from Silvertown to the South Australian border, a distance of twelve or fourteen miles, to join the South Australian railway system; and another tramway is to be constructed between Silvertown and Menindie, on the Darling River, a distance of eighty-four miles. That is to be carried out in country which, some years ago, was nothing but a wilderness, and used only for depasturing stock. And a similar state of things would arise here from the discovery and working of mineral deposits. Now that the Government have agreed to take the matter into consideration, and we are likely to come to terms as to what shall be done, there is no occasion for me to say anything further. I pointed out when I introduced the motion that I should prefer to see the £2,000 on the Estimates for schools of mines devoted to the proposal contained in my motion, and after having said so much I need only say that I am prepared to accept what the Government are willing to give. I am glad they are prepared to let the matter go into committee; and before then I shall be glad to arrange with them as to the alteration which shall be made in the motion, in order to allow the sum of £2,000, now on the Estimates, to be devoted to the purposes for which I have asked another sum.

Question put and passed.

BEER DUTY BILL—SECOND READING.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Speaker,—During the debate upon the tariff resolutions of the Government we have been accused of not levying taxation in the direction which would be most convenient to the people of the colony—namely, upon property. The exact class of property, however, which should be subject to taxation has never been pointed out; and I am inclined to think that, whatever form of

property we might propose to tax at the present time, it would be said, "Oh, that is not the class of property which should be taxed; it is some other class." I am therefore inclined also to think that the present Bill, which is most certainly a tax upon a certain class of property, will not be wholly accepted by hon. members of the House, although if they apply to it their investigation of its incidence they will observe that it is directly a tax upon property, and upon property which pays no other tax whatever. But I am not sufficiently sanguine to believe that this measure—which I consider to be a thoroughly good and sound fiscal measure—I say I am not sufficiently sanguine to believe that it will commend itself to the approval of hon. members opposite. They will probably say, "It is not the class of property which should be taxed." Unfortunately, I have not been able, after attentive observation to the debate we have lately had, to arrive at what particular class of property it is which hon. members would concur in taxing, or which they think should be compelled to contribute to revenue. However, this excise duty upon colonial beer is seriously a measure which should commend itself to every hon. gentleman in the House. It is a fair tax upon the colonial brewer, who is not only not subjected to any taxation upon his property at the present time, but who enjoys special facilities which those engaged in no other industry in the colony enjoy. In view of that fact, and for the purpose of obtaining a proper supervision over the breweries in this colony, the introduction of this excise duty is not only a beneficial measure in a revenue sense, but is also a salutary tax in a social sense. The objection may be raised that if we increase the excise duty we should also increase the import duty upon the imported article. I hold that to be fallacious. We do not want to increase the cost to the consumer. By this taxation we are not increasing the cost of beer to the consumer.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes, you are.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Hon. members may say so, but they probably do not know that the large margin of profit on colonial beer is quite sufficient to cover the duty without increasing the cost to the consumer. But if we were to charge an additional duty upon imported beer we should then be charging the consumer directly, because if the consumer of colonial beer now wishes to give it up and go in for the imported beer, he would have to pay an increased price for it, and we have no desire to charge him more for it than he has had to pay heretofore. The excise duty we propose upon colonial beer will furnish no excuse to the retailer for increasing its cost to the consumer when we consider the large margin of profits made in this industry. If we proposed to increase the duty upon the imported article we would necessarily increase the cost to the consumer, inasmuch as the consumer, if driven by the excise duty now proposed from the colonial article, must necessarily consume the imported article at a higher rate of duty. That is, I consider, a perfectly defensible position for us to take up in this matter—that we do not increase the cost of beer itself to the consumer; and I am convinced of this, that even on the colonial article the ordinary competition of trade will be such as to prevent the publicans from increasing—as I believe they threaten to do—the cost of this beverage to those who consume it. I have already stated that the brewers of this colony are a class who have made fortunes—I am quite justified in using the word—they have made large fortunes indeed in this manufacture, not

only in Queensland, but throughout Australia. In this country they are exceptionally favoured in this respect—for they obtain one of the commodities they use in their manufacture—namely, malt—at the minimum rate of import duty of 6d. per bushel, whereas in Victoria that article alone is liable to a duty of 3s. a bushel. But that is not by any means the only advantage which brewers in this colony have. Every distiller, every publican, and every wine and spirit merchant in the colony has to pay for registration, and has paid for the registration of his premises for years, whereas the brewers have been entirely exempt from any registration whatever. They are further favoured by special privileges upon the railroads of the colony. Under the railway tariff at the present time, imported beer in wood has to be paid for at the rate of 7d. per ton per mile for the first 75 miles, and at 5d. per ton per mile beyond that distance. The colonial article has only to pay 5d. per ton per mile throughout, so that at once, for the first 75 miles it is carried, there is a bonus of 2d. per ton per mile, or 12s. 6d. for any journey exceeding 75 miles. There are also further privileges in connection with the return of empty packing which I will not delay the House by entering into. I do not think that there has ever been any difference of opinion upon the question as to whether spirits are a legitimate article for taxation. No hon. member of this House, whatever his views may be upon the question of taxation, has ever repudiated the principle that spirits are in themselves a fair object for contributing to the revenues of the State. If hon. gentlemen view the question of beer alone in connection with its alcoholic qualities, they will find that the proposed duty is infinitely less than what it ought to bear in proportion to the quantity of spirit it contains. I have it from very good authority that every hogshead of beer containing 52 gallons—supposing it contains 9 per cent. of proof spirit, which is about the average strength—would contain $4\frac{1}{2}$ gallons of proof spirit. Under the new tariff, supposing the spirit to be free from the beer, it would pay £2 8s. duty, whereas the hogshead of beer containing the spirit pays, under the excise proposed, only 12s. 9d. The department this morning had a sample of colonial beer—I will not give the name of the brewer, as it would be invidious to do so—analysed. The beer was brewed in the neighbourhood of Brisbane, and it was found to contain 12 per cent. of proof spirit. Such beer contains, in every hogshead of 52 gallons, $6\frac{1}{2}$ gallons of proof spirit. Under the new tariff of 12s. per gallon on proof spirit this would be subject to a duty of £3 15s. I think I have established my position that beer ought to bear a duty; and the duty we propose to levy upon it is of that small character that it is a great deal below the amount of duty with which, considering the amount of proof spirit it contains, it is fairly chargeable. I need not take up the time of the House in going through the calculations again; hon. gentlemen will find them printed in the Financial Statement. I may say that a duty of 3d. per gallon amounts to something under $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pint, or less than $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per glass; and as, I believe, colonial beer is sold at 6d. a glass it follows that there is an immense profit made in the manufacture of the article between the cost price and the price at which it is sold to the retailer. That has already been sufficiently demonstrated, and therefore, without further taking up the time of hon. members, I will briefly indicate what are the principles contained in the Bill now in their hands. In imposing a duty of this sort we desire to collect it in such a manner that it will be attended with the least expense possible. We

do not desire that there should be a large array of revenue officers, or that the brewers should be subjected to establishing bonded warehouses on their premises or to any other inconvenience. Our intention is to adopt the Victorian system of collecting the duty by stamps, the character of which will be found in the clauses of the Bill. It is intended that the brewers shall enter into a bond in proportion to the quantity of beer periodically manufactured by them, and that they shall be supplied with beer duty stamps according to the different contents of the vessels, from the hoghead downwards, to be fixed thereon. It will be the duty of the sub-inspector to periodically visit the breweries. Possibly in the case of large establishments in the city of Brisbane it may necessitate an inspector being continually on the premises, but in the case of smaller breweries a periodical visitation will be made when the beer is being sent out to the customers of the brewery, and it will be the duty of the inspector to see that the duty stamps are cancelled before the beer leaves the premises of the brewer. The books will be open to the examination of the inspector, and the brewer will have to make a declaration at the end of each month as to the quantity of beer that he has brewed, which will be corroborated by the balance of stamps in his possession, of which he will have to render an account. That will save a considerable amount of trouble both to the brewers and to the revenue branch of the Treasury, inasmuch as no money will have to pass except in payment for the duty stamps. Then it is intended that brewers shall be registered. The first registration will take place immediately after the Act comes into operation, and the registration of the existing brewers will carry them over until January, 1887. It is intended that the registration shall be an annual one, commencing in the month of January; but the first registration will extend over a period of fifteen months. The fee has been fixed at £25. That has been considered a fair amount which the brewers ought to pay for registration. The amount is small. Indeed, I have been found fault with by several for having fixed it so low; and it has been asserted that the fee should be, at any rate, £100. But there is no desire on the part of the Government in introducing this measure to saddle the smaller brewers with a large immediate expense for registration which it might be inconvenient to them to bear; and therefore I think that £25 will be considered a very moderate amount to pay for that purpose. The 11th clause of the Bill provides that—

“Beer shall not be removed from a brewery for consumption or sale except in hogsheads, half-hogsheads, or barrels, or in vessels of such smaller size as may be approved by the chief inspector.

“Any beer found in a brewery or removed therefrom in vessels of a size not approved by the chief inspector shall be forfeited, and may be seized by any inspector or officer of police.”

The 12th clause refers to the books that are to be kept by the brewer, which I have previously mentioned, and which are to be kept open in the daytime for the inspection of any inspector, who may take extracts therefrom or transcripts thereof. At the end of every month the entries in the books are to be verified by solemn declaration of the person by whom or under whose directions they were made. Then there is a penalty for not keeping books or not making entries. The 17th clause relates to the beer duty stamps, which I have mentioned; and there is a penalty provided for not stamping casks or other vessels containing beer sent out for consumption. I have hitherto referred to the mode of dealing with beer in wood. In the case of beer in bottle it is intended that stamps shall be affixed to the carter's delivery book, which

shall be cancelled by the inspector at the time when the carter removes the beer from the brewery. Then there is a provision that the Minister shall cause permits for the removal of the beer to be prepared, a sufficient supply of which are to be kept on hand by each inspector. By clause 25 the inspector has power to examine vehicles or other conveyances by which beer is removed from the brewery, to see that the packages have been stamped in conformity with the Act; and there is a penalty for removing beer in unstamped casks or packages, also for evasion of duty, and a very proper penalty for forging stamps. The 29th clause provides that—

“When any beer has from any cause become unfit for consumption, a brewer may sell the same for manufacturing purposes, and such beer may, under a permit from an inspector, be removed from the brewery without affixing thereon the stamps hereby required. Provided that such beer must be removed in casks containing not less than twenty-five gallons each, and having the nature of the contents plainly marked on the outside thereof.”

Then it is provided that all casks shall be branded with the name of the brewer, and that brewers may purchase beer from one another. There is a drawback to be allowed on spoilt beer, and persons drawing beer from unstamped vessels will be liable to a penalty. The inspector of breweries is to be at liberty to inspect breweries, warehouses, and other places where he has reason to believe beer is stored; also houses licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors; and any person who obstructs, resists, or molests him in the performance of his duty will be liable to a penalty not exceeding £100. There is a drawback allowed on exported beer, and under clause 38 the Governor in Council has power to make regulations. Under clause 39 a percentage is imposed for breaches of the Act and regulations, and clause 40 defines the mode of procedure. The Bill has been framed on very simple lines, Mr. Speaker, and, as I have already stated, it is chiefly desired, while imposing this tax upon this class of property, which is well able to bear it, that its collection shall be as economical as possible. I believe, sir, that a very considerable amount of revenue will accrue to the State from this measure. I also believe that a very great improvement in the quality and character of the beer brewed in this colony will be observable as a result of it, because I am sure that it is not salutary that these large brewing establishments should be carried on unrecognised by the law, and that neither the State nor the public can get any exact information as to the character or extent of their transactions. Information—even statistical information—as to the amount of beer brewed in the colony has been very jealously given, has been frequently refused; and on this ground alone I consider that the manufacturing industries of the colony ought, at any rate, to be recognised by the State, and that the extent of their transactions and manufactures should be easily obtainable. I do not think it necessary at the present time to enter very fully into the details of this measure. The beer industry has now reached very considerable dimensions. There are nineteen breweries in the colony at the present time, and their product is estimated, at the very lowest computation, to be nearly 4,000,000 gallons per annum. The profits from this industry are extremely large. Several of these establishments have formed themselves into syndicates and copartnerships—into limited liability companies I may say, if “syndicate” is looked upon as an objectionable term. I do not say it in an objectionable sense; I simply mean the co-operation of people possessing capital, who by their union can conduct large institutions of this kind to a more satisfactory and profitable issue than one individual possessing small capital. I say that these

large institutions have become limited liability companies; and when we read their periodical balance-sheets and see the large amounts of dividends which they are periodically distributing amongst their shareholders, we may fairly arrive at the conclusion that the industry should be taxed; and I do not think any member of this House will have the hardihood to say that a manufacturing industry which has attained to such immense dimensions, and is conducted under such very profitable conditions, should longer remain exempt from contributing a fair quota to the necessities of the State. I say again, Mr. Speaker, that even if there had been no necessity for increasing the revenue at the present time I consider that the breweries of the colony should be brought under the cognisance of the Government, and the most effectual way of placing them in that position is by making them contribute to the revenue of the colony. I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very pleased to hear the light and airy manner in which the Treasurer has introduced this Bill into this House, but I may say as an introduction to what will follow that I look upon his remarks as showing that he knows nothing at all as to where this tax will fall. If he is right in the statement that he made here to-night then every person who has ever spoken or written on political economy is clean wrong from first to last. He began a preliminary flourish by stating that this is a tax upon property, although he admitted that it was a tax which would not meet the approval of those who believe in a tax upon property. I begin, sir, by denying *in toto* that it is a tax upon property.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: What is property?

Mr. ARCHER: No doubt the registration fee required to be paid by the brewers in the first instance will be a tax on property, but the duty on beer is by no means a tax on property and will not diminish the profits of the brewer one iota. Every farthing of that tax will come out of the profits of those who drink beer; and the whole of that long introduction to which the hon. gentleman treated us can only have its foundation in the fact that he differs from everyone who has ever studied or written about political economy, or else he would never have given utterance to such ideas. Property, as it was spoken of the other night in connection with the question of taxing it, is an accumulated amount of property held in possession. Well, beer is not accumulated property.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Breweries are.

Mr. ARCHER: Brewing beer is exactly the same as making boots. You gain if you can sell for more than it costs to make, and you lose if you cannot sell for that. It is like any other industry in the country—it has to depend upon the demand in the country for it. Then the hon. gentleman said something about this not being a tax that would fall on the consumer, because there was no intention to increase the tax on imported beer. I must confess that I do not quite understand the hon. gentleman; I cannot follow his reasoning. He argued from that fact that the proposed taxation of beer will not increase the price of beer, whereas if the tax had been imposed upon both beer manufactured in the colony and imported beer it would have raised the price. But by imposing a tax on one or the other you raise the price of both. How you can separate the two things I cannot understand.

The PREMIER: Have you never heard of competition in trade?

Mr. ARCHER: We will come to the question of competition and large profits by-and-by; but I insist that imposing an extra duty on English beer would not be a tax upon property either. What the Treasurer is now doing is this: He is taxing the beer of the country, which is chiefly retailed in glasses, while he will not tax English beer, which is consumed by people who pay more for their beer than those who drink colonial beer. The people who usually drink colonial beer are those who, being thirsty from work or from walking about the streets, turn into a public-house and take a glass of it. English beer is really consumed by people who pay more for it. The Treasurer himself is apparently one of these, for he says a glass of beer costs 6d., while you can go into the best hotel in Brisbane and get a glass of beer for 3d.—even a “long-sleever,” I believe, though I have never drunk one. If the Treasurer were right in saying that the colonial beer was sold at 6d. a glass, then the brewers would be making fortunes. The Colonial Treasurer says the brewers carry on their business under greater advantages than any other class in the community. Well, even supposing they pay no fee, I do not see that they have any special advantage. A man may make a pair of boots or a steam-engine without paying any fee. That is the first hint I have had from the Treasurer that we make part of our revenue by taxing people for carrying on an industry.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Or for succeeding in it.

Mr. ARCHER: We do, of course, license publicans, because we do not allow anyone to enter into competition with them except under certain conditions. The publican must have a house of a certain kind, and he is licensed to use it, but I am not aware that anyone in the country is taxed for carrying on an industry; and in that respect the brewers are the same as anyone else. A duty on beer is perfectly justifiable if the general voice of the people says it should be imposed; but I say that beer is not a good article for taxing, and I deny that at the present time anything ought to be taxed more than it is at present. If colonial beer is to be taxed, it will only be fair to raise the duty on the imported article, so as to make those who, like myself, drink the superior class of beer, pay something towards the increased revenue. The hon. gentleman also spoke of the low duty on malt—6d. a bushel—and said that in Victoria it is much higher. I believe that in Victoria they no longer import English malt, because they can produce it themselves, and the English article cannot be imported at a profit. I am told that in Queensland the barley grown is not suitable for malt. England and Ireland, from their moist climate, produce barley that is hardly to be matched for malting purposes, because it contains the proper quantity of moisture, but the climate of Queensland I am informed is too dry. I am sorry it is so, because otherwise it would enable farmers profitably to vary their crops. If the hon. gentleman increases the duty on malt he will simply increase the price of beer to the man who drinks it, and that man, as has been said over and over again here, is the working man who goes in for a drink when he is thirsty. Another thing the hon. member mentioned was simply absurd. He said the brewers had their goods carried at a very low rate on the railways, but that is a concession, not to the brewers, but to the people inland who drink beer. Of course, if the brewer can send it up the country cheaply he can sell it cheaply; if he had to pay a higher railway fare, the people who drink it would have to pay for it. Does the hon. member think the brewers pay the railway fare? The only advantage is to the people, who get cheaper beer. It

is absurd to bring a thing like that forward in a serious argument. In fact, the Colonial Treasurer seems to be in such a benighted state as to fancy that it is the importer who pays taxes, and not the consumer. Another reason why the hon. Treasurer thinks colonial beer is an appropriate article to be taxed is that the brewers make large profits. If that is the case, it will soon remedy itself, if the hon. member does not insist on passing this Bill; if he does insist I do not think it will find its remedy. If the hon. member wants to see the profits of brewers reduced, let him leave it to the ordinary law of supply and demand. If breweries pay so remarkably well, capital will be invested in them; they will be pitted against each other, and will have to lower their prices to such a scale as simply to return bare interest on the money. That is the experience with every business all over the world—with every business. People invest their money in businesses that are seen to pay well, and by-and-by the supply becomes equal to the demand and prices go down. That is the way the large profits of the breweries, if there are any, will be reduced. A Bill of this kind will simply have the effect it had in Victoria, of shutting up the small breweries, and confining the trade to the large ones. Instead of reducing the profits of the large breweries, it will increase them, since it will increase their trade, and the brewers will charge their customers the duty. As for the Utopian idea of the hon. member, that by taxing the manufacture of beer he will improve its quality, I think we may dismiss that from our minds. The brewers are very respectable men, no doubt, but, like all other tradesmen, they will try and get their profits. I should fancy they would do it by supplying an inferior article. In one way they might improve it, and that was by adding more water, and so making it less deleterious to consumers. I am certain that they will not improve it in any other way. That is a result which is not at all likely to occur, because it may be taken as a fixed rule that the brewers will have the same profit out of the beer when they pay 3d. a gallon duty as they have now. In fact, it is the first time I have ever heard it seriously stated by any statesman that a tax would fall upon the manufacturers and not upon the consumers. I do not think that the hon. Treasurer has expressed one single opinion in introducing this Bill which cannot be very easily met and refuted. Those statements, of course, were only a mere flourish. I also take exception to the manner in which this duty is to be collected; and I think collecting it by means of stamps will be rather confusing. I, of course, object to the whole thing. I think it is a mistake to tax beer, and consequently I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill. I do not think the manner proposed is the easiest one for collecting the tax. Does the hon. gentleman expect brewers to purchase these stamps by the gross and affix them to the barrels?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. ARCHER: It is a very queer way to make men pay duty before they get their profit.

The PREMIER: They need not buy the stamps till they want them.

Mr. ARCHER: Men cannot be continually running about getting a few stamps, whenever they want them. What number of inspectors will have to be appointed if they are to see to all the duties that are to be performed under this Bill? A brewer cannot take beer out without an inspector; he cannot do anything without an inspector. Will hours have to be allotted to the different brewers during which they will have to remove the beer? Removing beer is not like removing spirits out of bond. A man can remove spirits enough out of bond in one

hour to last a month; but beer is a thing that is removed continually; and will regulations be made by which each brewer will have a certain hour in the day allowed him for delivery? I see brewers' carts going about the whole day, from morning to night.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Their convenience will be studied.

Mr. ARCHER: I do not see how that can be without appointing a number of inspectors, which will be absurdly large, for the collection of the duty. I see on reading the Bill that there is to be a charge for the use of Her Majesty, on all beer, of 3d. a gallon, and there are many other clauses which are probably copies of some provisions in other Bills of the kind. I really think, sir, it is a very clumsy and inconvenient means of collecting this duty. There are three large breweries in the city, and how can they possibly carry on their business, unless they are allowed to continue sending out beer from early morning till late in the afternoon? The matter of these stamps has probably been well talked over; but a brewer will undoubtedly have to keep a large stock of them in his possession; and men in business like to pay for a thing at the time it is wanted. In taking spirits out of bond the duty is not paid until they are delivered. The hon. gentleman stated in his speech that some beers had been sampled, and it was found that they contained a certain amount of spirit. I would like to know if that was bottled beer, or beer in the cask; and whether it was the ordinary colonial beer that is retailed all over the country.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It was ordinary bottled beer.

Mr. ARCHER: It contains more spirit than I thought it did. However, there is an admirable way of reducing that by the addition of water. We ought to encourage the drinking of such light beer as is made in the colonies, and discourage the drinking of spirits; by which means we are far more likely to see men sober. I like to see a hard-working man enjoy a glass of beer; it is such a real pleasure to him; and I should like him to have it as cheap as possible. It will be a great deal cheaper if the hon. gentleman will not interfere with the trade of the breweries. He will ruin the small brewers, and the trade will simply be in the hands of large capitalists who can afford to pay the duty, and who will run every public-house for themselves. That will be one of the probable results of the Bill. I do not believe beer to be a good subject for taxation, and if the hon. gentleman fancies that it will have any good effect I hope that he will banish that idea from his mind. I am perfectly certain that he is the only person in the House who fancies that a tax upon the manufacture of beer is a property tax. I certainly disagree with him in three things—I disagree with the Colonial Treasurer in thinking that taxation is necessary; I disagree with him as to the manner of imposing the tax; and I disagree with the articles which are to be taxed: therefore I shall certainly vote against the Bill.

Mr. HORWITZ said: I would like an explanation from the Colonial Treasurer in reference to this Bill he has put before us. We have got a small brewery in Warwick but we have got no inspector there, and I would like to know in what manner that brewery can be kept open if it can only deliver beer when an inspector is there. I think the Bill has simply been brought forward to crush the small brewer for the benefit of the large one. As I have said, there is a small brewery in Warwick; but there is also one in Roma, and if it will cost the country £300 or £400 a year to maintain

1885—20

inspectors for each of those breweries, then the tax will not be worth while collecting. I do not object so much to the tax of 3d. a gallon as to breaking up of the small breweries, and if the Colonial Treasurer can give me any explanation upon that point I may reconsider my determination; but if he cannot I certainly shall oppose the Bill. The hon. member for Blackall has told us that barley cannot be grown here as well as in England or Ireland, but I differ from him on that point.

Mr. ARCHER: I said I had been told so. I know nothing about it myself.

Mr. HORWITZ: I accept the hon. member's explanation, but I can inform the House that barley can be grown just as well on the Darling Downs as in Great Britain, and I think it would have been well if the Treasurer, instead of imposing this duty of 3d. a gallon upon beer, had come down with a proposition to put 2s. or 3s. upon malt, which at present only pays 6d. per bushel. That would have been a much surer way of collecting additional taxation. But, referring to what I said before, I would point out that under this Bill the brewer will not have the same freedom as he formerly had. If he gets a few orders he will not be able to deliver his beer unless the excise officer is present, and it is well known to every business man in this House that a brewer, whenever he gets an order, sends out his beer at once. I am told that the casks will be stamped, but a great deal of forgery may take place under such a system. I therefore cannot see my way clear, considering the loose manner in which the Bill has been brought up, to support it. I am very glad to hear from some hon. members that we have at least one industry from which large profits are made. I regard that as a very good thing, and hope we shall have other industries of the same kind. I disapprove of this Bill; and unless some more satisfactory explanation is given by the Colonial Treasurer I cannot see my way clear to vote for the second reading.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: From the remarks made by the hon. member for Blackall, one would think that the brewer made very small profits, but we have only to compare what the colonial brewer sells beer at, and what it is sold at in England, to see what large profits are made here. I have been making some inquiries, and I am told the brewer charges in this colony £5 per hogshead of 56 gallons, and you can buy the same quantity of English beer for £4.

Mr. ARCHER: That is not a fact.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I am told on the best authority that the colonial beer is charged at £5; some say £5 10s., but I am taking the lowest price, and that you can buy, in bond, English beer at £4 per hogshead. Here is a difference at once of 20 per cent. in favour of the colonial brewer without taking carriage into consideration at all. English beer has to pay a very heavy freight, and yet it can be sold at a cheaper rate than the colonial beer. There must, therefore, be a very considerable profit upon the latter article. Now, by adding the duty to the English beer you increase it to £5 17s. 6d. a hogshead—only 17s. 6d. more than the colonial beer is sold at. I do not know what members here think, but I am told that people outside who drink beer prefer English to colonial beer. The hon. member for Blackall has said that the duty must be paid by the consumer. Now, I am in a position to say that this is impossible, because if the publican or brewer attempts to charge his customers an extra price for the beer, they will simply drink English beer, because it is as cheap. Then the hon. member for Blackall referred to this duty

having the effect of weakening the colonial beer. Well, that will not alarm me very much; the weaker it is made the better. But still I do not think there is any fear in that respect, because there are nineteen breweries in the colony which have to compete one with the other, and there is no fear of reducing the quality of the beer so long as there is such competition. There is yet one other argument. There is a very large consumption of beer in this colony, and there is a great deal of crime throughout the country caused by the drinking of beer, and yet that same beer pays nothing to the consolidated revenue to compensate for the great amount of money which has to be paid to keep down crime. Beer sends people to Woogaroo; beer sends people to St. Helena; and the colony has to pay for all the injury it does, without getting any return. Therefore, I say, instead of putting on 3d. per gallon, it would be a very good thing indeed if the Government had proposed to put on 6d. a gallon duty. We all know that Mr. Gladstone said that whenever he wanted to raise a good pot of money, he could put an extra penny per gallon upon beer.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Yes; and that put him out of power. He fell over it.

Mr. MACFARLANE: He wanted to fall, as shown by the fact that he was in a position to maintain his position. However, our Government is not going to fall over a beer barrel. I do not think it is worth while to discuss the matter on the second reading; and I did not intend to take up the time of the House so long, but I wished to refer to one or two arguments of the hon. member for Blackall.

Mr. JESSOP said: Mr. Speaker,—I would like to contradict a statement made by the hon. member who has just sat down, as to the price of beer. The hon. gentleman told us that colonial beer is being sold at £5 10s. a hogshead; but I may inform him that it has been delivered in Dalby for £4 10s., inclusive of the cost of carriage for 150 miles from Brisbane to Dalby. Under the new taxation there will be an increase in the price of £1 7s. 6d. I object to the taxation of beer, and I think it is a great shame that a great industry like the beer industry should be injured in any way. Why not tax English beer in the same way as it is proposed to tax the colonial article? There are a good many reasons why this measure should not pass. Brewers may increase the price of beer, but I cannot see how the hotel-keepers, who are fairly taxed now, can make an extra charge in retailing it at per glass, unless they have smaller glasses. I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill, and shall have something further to say on the subject when the Bill gets into committee.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—As I understood the Colonial Treasurer, when he introduced the proposals contained in this Bill on a previous occasion, he stated that he expected to realise £43,000 from this tax on beer. I think those are the figures he made use of—that he saw that of the £93,000 to be raised by additional taxation, the duty on beer would produce £43,000. It appears to me, and I think it must be patent to everybody, that the bulk of the new taxes is to be raised from the labouring or the working man. The sum of £43,000 is to be obtained by an excise duty on a commodity most largely used by the working classes of the community. I think nobody can deny that. Nobody will, I think, deny that the charge that the incidence of this taxation will fall on the labouring man is a correct one, and therefore it cannot be cavilled at even by the Minister for Lands, who said last night that no

member on this side of the House—myself in particular—can be a friend of the working man. I think I am as good a friend to the working man as the hon. gentleman, and am quite prepared to go before any working man's constituency in the colony to prove my contention. This Bill is almost a transcript of a Victorian Act brought into force in 1880, and subsequently renewed for a short period of a few months and then abandoned, the only difference being that the excise duty in this case is in excess of that charged in Victoria, and that there are some obnoxious elements in this Bill which are not contained in the Victorian statute. I would like to know from the Colonial Treasurer—of course he cannot tell us to-night, but he may do so when we go into committee on the Bill—what will be the cost in the first instance of bringing the measure into operation—that is to say, what will be the amount of salaries to be paid to the officers who will be required to carry out its provisions; and, in short, what will be the whole cost of collecting the duty? I would like to know from him if he has taken into consideration the additional expense that will be entailed on brewers when the measure becomes law and is in operation? Has he considered that the imposition of this excise duty will render it necessary for brewers, whether they are joint-stock companies or private individuals, to have an increased staff of clerks in order to comply with the conditions contained in the Bill? The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that what I have said will be the immediate effect of this measure. But it will have another effect consequent upon that—one that has been pointed out on previous occasions, and alluded to to-night by more than one hon. member—namely, that it will simply lead to the brewing business in this colony falling into the hands of small corporations. The hon. member for Warwick has pointed that out, and I am sure the hon. member for Rosewood, who is a practical brewer, knows as well as I do that that will be the effect of this Bill. Corporations may be restricted to smaller profits than have hitherto been obtained, but they will be compensated for that to some extent when the smaller businesses are swept away. On the other hand, the Bill will be a great danger and evil. It will, as I have said, destroy the business of the smaller brewers; and it will also do a great damage as regards the cost of beer to the consumer. The Colonial Treasurer—I think, rather stupidly, if I may be pardoned for using such a remark with regard to such a very astute person as the hon. gentleman—gave as one reason why beer should be taxed that brewers were making money—the industry is a profitable one and therefore it must be taxed. I am not sure that this is not consistent with the general policy of the Government, because it seems to me that the policy which has been pursued by the present Administration has been that when they saw an industry that was prosperous they made an attempt to injure that industry and destroy it. They destroyed the sugar industry in that way, and they practically attempted to, destroy the pastoral industry, and now they are attempting to destroy another industry for the reason given by the Colonial Treasurer—that it is prosperous. That is the reason given by the hon. gentleman. It is not the reason given by me, for I should be very sorry to give any such reason for taxation. The hon. gentleman went further and made a most absurd assertion, which has been partially alluded to by the hon. member for Blackall, and which was to the effect that he went into an elaborate calculation and found that a certain amount of alcohol was contained in beer, and therefore that beer was let off very cheaply by the tax proposed. The same remark, as has been

pointed out to me by an hon. member on this side of the House, would apply to potatoes. If analysed, potatoes would be found to contain a certain amount of alcohol, and therefore, on the differential scale proposed by the Treasurer, potatoes should be taxed according to the proportion of alcohol they contain. I believe there are very few things—very few vegetables, at any rate—that do not contain some alcohol. We know perfectly well that spirit is easily obtained from potatoes, maize, rice, and many other products that may be mentioned; so that if the alcoholic test is to be applied to beer in this manner it may just as well be applied to other articles. I do not intend to delay the House at the present time, because I am certain that the Bill will be seriously debated in committee. It appears to be a measure that strikes at one of our principal industries. And while on that point I would say this, in reference to the utter inconsistency of the fiscal policy of the Government: On the one hand, in order to pander to a certain portion of the colony which returns members who support the Government, they put an import duty on timber—a duty which materially affects all men not immediately connected with the timber trade, which strikes home again to the heart of the working man—and on the other hand they put an excise duty on a product which employs a large amount of labour; and if this Bill becomes law it will lead to the closing of the small breweries and throwing the men who work in them out of employment. There is the inconsistency on the part of the Government. On the one hand their policy is protective, and on the other it is *quasi* freetrade; that is to say, it puts an impost on an article produced in the colony so as to place it on a level with what is imported from other countries. These glaring inconsistencies should be exposed. No doubt the Premier will say, as he said last night, that nobody has a right to discuss anything beyond beer in a Beer Duty Bill, but he must bear in mind that the Colonial Treasurer—in a sort of happy-go-lucky style, which had a “Mieawber” touch in it, hoping for something to turn up—talked generally on the financial position of the colony; therefore, unless the Premier is prepared to chastigate his eldest disciple he must not chastise the Opposition. I trust the measure as it stands will never be allowed to get through committee; and I believe, from what has fallen from the hon. member for Warwick and the opinion held by other members on the Government side, that the question will be fully discussed then. If the question goes to a vote I shall oppose the second reading, because I consider the Bill provides for an unjust tax and throws the weight of taxation on the portion of the community least able to bear it. I believe that it is not necessary, a reason which has been given over and over again; that the deficiency could be made up by retrenchment, or by a tax directed against property and not against a commodity consumed almost entirely by the working classes of the colony.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—The Bill under consideration is an innovation in our fiscal policy. I believe hon. members must be struck with the difficulties to be encountered in altering the fiscal policy of the country; and I believe those difficulties are greater in this colony, because our fiscal policy hitherto has been based on no principle whatever except that of raising revenue. No Government can be carried on without revenue, and revenue means taxation; but in a method of taxation the raising of the necessary revenue is not the only consideration which should guide the Government. In considering the method of raising revenue, regard

should be had to our industrial development. Knowing that we cannot do without taxes for carrying on the Government of the country, they ought to be so imposed as least to interfere with the development of our industries, and we must commence to understand that the industries of the country are its life. A good many people may differ from this view. They believe that to import an article cheap is the chief consideration of any State; but countries which have acted to some extent on this principle have been forced to consider taxation from an industrial point of view. From this point of view I think the method of taxing proposed in this Bill is not very judicious. Every fermented or spirituous liquor is a legitimate article for taxation, and a tax on colonial beer in course of manufacture might be approved; but to tax the finished article when being sent out is rather a clumsy way of raising revenue. In places where large experience has been had as to the best method of raising revenue, the duties on beer are raised before it is fermented, an allowance being made for that which is used for home consumption. Where that system is adopted the beer can be sent out at any time without the excise officer sitting under the nose, as it were, of the brewer. I would like to see the duty reduced by one-half, and collected before the beer enters into fermentation, and I would also like to see a higher duty levied on imported malt, which can very well stand a duty of 2s. 6d. or 3s., instead of 6d. as now. Such an impost would considerably benefit the farmers and would be an inducement to them to grow barley for the production of malt. It is all nonsense to say that it cannot be grown here on account of the meteorological conditions. I admit that malt cannot be made well during the very hottest months of the summer, but there is ample time in the cool season of the year to make a very superior malt. Brewers, in order to escape the taxation upon malt, would turn their attention to the production of malt in the colony. Such a tax as that would conduce to the encouragement of our own industries, and for the few shillings or pounds the Government would lose by such a process the country would be largely benefited; the loss to the Government would be infinitesimal compared with the gain to the country. The hon. Treasurer might well except beer of a very low alcoholic strength, such as lager beer. Lager beer is fermented at a very low temperature. It also contains less fusil oil, and is, therefore, not so narcotic as English beer; and being fermented at a low temperature there are no acetic or other acids found in it; and, besides, liquor fermented at a low temperature produces a much more wholesome spirit than liquor fermented at a high temperature. Under the method of manufacture in England beer must contain a large amount of alcohol in order that it may keep, but lager beer requires a lower alcoholic strength, in some cases not so much as 6 per cent. Such a course of taxation as I suggest would be of benefit in another way, because teetotallers would in this way attain their object far surer than by all the teetotal lectures they could bring into the field. It is open to doubt whether this proposed duty will bring about such a monopoly as it is said it will. I hope, at any rate, that the Government will take such action as will prevent such a monopoly. They can introduce a clause in the Licensing Bill to the effect that no company or no private individual shall have more than one public-house, or that they should pay double for every second license. This would break up the monopoly. The member for Balonne is somewhat in error when he says that potatoes and maize contain spirit. They contain a

substance which can be converted into sugar and that can afterwards be converted into spirit; but as they are they do not contain any spirit whatever. I would recommend the Government, before this Bill is passed, to carefully consider the method of taxing the beer. I approve of taxing the beer, but I do not approve of the method proposed here. Whenever we put a burden upon ourselves, it ought not to be imposed in such a manner as to injure our own industries, but should be levied in such a way as to protect our industries, so that, even if the Treasury lost a few shillings, it would benefit the country by pounds.

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I agree with the hon. member for Rosewood that we ought not to tax our industries—that is, we ought not to impose any taxes injurious to the industries of the colony generally. I approve of the Government fiscal policy as enunciated recently by the Colonial Treasurer, because it is to protect our native industries, and I do not think the taxation proposed in this measure forms any exception. It is curious to hear the various reasons given by hon. members against the method of taxation contained in this Bill. It is objected to, in the first place, because it is additional taxation, and that they consider is not desirable. It has been very clearly proved, however, that we do require a measure of additional taxation, in order to stop the leak that is now found to exist, so far as revenue and expenditure are concerned. The incidence of this taxation is objected to in two or three ways. The Treasurer tells us it will fall upon the brewers; the hon. member for Dalby, I think, tells us that it will fall upon the hotel-keeper; the hon. member for Balonne assures us that it will fall upon the poor man, with whom he has the deepest and profoundest sympathy; the hon. member for Blackall thinks it will fall upon the poor man also, but he was very ingenious in the latter part of his argument in proving that the effect of it would be that the brewer would put water in his beer, so that it would not fall upon anybody. In fact, we have here something wonderful achieved by the Treasurer in the imposition of taxation, which will raise £42,000 a year, and will fall upon no one. The only effect of it will be that more water will be consumed by the labouring men. I am a believer in water—plenty of water outside and inside in a hot country like this. I believe that the less alcohol a man consumes in Australia the better. This is one of my infirmities, perhaps, as will be seen from the blue ribbon in my coat. As to the cost of collection, some hon. gentlemen said that there would have to be an army of men employed at £300 a year, or something like that. This must be considered as highly hyperbolic; the hon. gentleman of course does not really mean that there will be any such number of men employed at such an enormous salary for carrying out this Bill. No doubt in great breweries such as we have in Brisbane some men will be constantly there; but the smaller breweries in various parts of the country will be easily managed. They could be looked after by men at the rate of about 10s. a day, or the collection of the duty might be entrusted to Civil servants who would be allowed some addition to their stipends for this purpose. We are going to raise £42,000 a year by fresh taxation, and it will not hurt anyone. It will not hurt the poor man: it will only give him a little more water in his beer. It will not hurt the brewer, because he will put more water into his beer. It will not hurt the hotel-keeper, or add to the enormous amount of taxation to which the poor man is already subjected. I can therefore see no objection to the Beer Bill. Indeed, it is the most ingenious Bill I ever heard of. It is the grandest measure of taxation ever

conceived by any Treasurer in any part of the world. It should be a cause for great rejoicing that we can increase our revenue by £42,000 a year, and that the tax will fall on nobody and cost very little in the collection. I do not believe the beer will cost the poor man a farthing more than it does now. The hon. member for Blackall drew a delightful picture of the working man drinking his beer. I like to see the working man with his coat off and his shirt-sleeves rolled up, driving a plough, or cutting down timber, or wielding the axe. I do not like to see the working man in a public-house. It is the last place he should go into, and the longer he remains outside of it the stronger he will be for labour, and the more cheerfully will he go home to his family. I like to see the working man sitting down in his own house. I do not even believe in clubs for working men. I believe they should go home to their wives and children—to a cheerful home, with books to read, and tea and water to drink in moderation, and plenty of good beef-steaks, and all the rest of it; and the less he spends in the public-house, and the more wages he takes home on a Saturday night, the better. That is my view of the question. I do not care to look at the working man in a public-house, or elsewhere, drinking beer—unless he can get this wonderful lager beer we have heard of. I am sure we are all greatly indebted to the hon. member for Rosewood for the interesting account he has given us of it. I am almost inclined to think that I could drink lager beer myself, and still wear the blue ribbon on my coat—though I do not intend to try the experiment. I am exceedingly pleased with the measure, and after what we have heard on all sides it will, I am sure, commend itself to the good sense of every member of the House.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for South Brisbane says he can see no objection to this Bill. I never heard him raise any objection to any measure introduced by the Government. He has made the grand discovery that, although he is in favour of encouraging native industry, putting this tax on beer is actually an encouragement to a native industry. But he has not told us how it is going to have that effect. The hon. gentleman tells us very facetiously that he believes in plenty of water, within and without, and appeals to the blue ribbon on his coat to show that those are his principles. I always thought the blue ribbon indicated that there was once a time when the wearer of it took very little water inside and very little outside—that he drank beer and something much stronger. The blue ribbon is an indication that the man was once a drunkard but has now become a teetotaler. It is only lately that the hon. gentleman has worn it; he must have been over sixty years considering the matter before adopting it; but better late than never. The Colonial Treasurer has told us that he thinks there ought to be a tax put upon beer, because it is a tax upon property; but he did not explain how he arrived at that conclusion. It requires very little argument to prove that it is not a tax upon property. He has also told us that because the brewers, as he supposes, make large profits, therefore they should be taxed. No doubt the men who make the largest profits ought to pay the heaviest taxes, for they ought to pay in proportion to the protection they receive. But it does not necessarily follow from that that brewers ought to be taxed more than anybody else. I am not quite certain that brewers do make large profits. Some do, no doubt, just as some drapers make large profits; but will the Colonial Treasurer tax the drapers on that account? Some drapers

have failed; so have some brewers. Many squatters have made large fortunes, and many have failed. I might go through every industry in the colony with the same result—some are making fortunes and some are not. I think the hon. gentleman will find, if he makes a stricter inquiry into the matter, that there are as many fortunes lost in brewing as are made. No doubt men who possess long-established breweries make a good deal of money, but it is no proof that, because one or two brewers in the colony make a fortune, therefore brewing as a trade is a profitable one. The hon. gentleman also thinks that this tax will fall upon the brewers, and that is another reason why he considers the tax should be imposed. Several other hon. members seem to be under the same impression, and that the men who consume the beer will have to pay nothing extra. That is entirely opposed to all ideas of political economy. If you put a tax upon any article consumed by people the tax must ultimately fall upon those who consume it. Let the hon. gentleman glance at the experience of Victoria, where a similar tax, only a penny less per gallon, was imposed four years ago. Indeed, I believe the Bill now before us is almost a transcript of the Victorian Act passed by the Berry Government. It was introduced as an emergency measure for a few months, renewed for twelve months, and then allowed to lapse. The result of that measure, imposing a duty of only 2d. per gallon, was that colonial beer, which was sold before at 3d. a pint, actually cost the consumer 4d. a pint while the tax was in operation. The experience of Victoria is entirely against the Colonial Treasurer's idea that the tax will fall on the brewers. That is a fact that can be easily substantiated. It is not a matter of ancient history. The Act was passed so recently as, I believe, 1880, was afterwards renewed for twelve months, and was then allowed to lapse. There is another point with reference to the experience of Victoria, when that colony was in a somewhat similar position to ours at the present time: That out of the number of breweries—nearly 100—in existence at the time this tax was imposed, 19 were shut up—that is, all the small breweries were shut up; the larger ones were able to carry on. That will just be the result here. I know that there are members of this House, who to-night will vote for the second reading of this Bill, who would not like to see any industry closed up, but they are actually closing up an industry by the vote they will give. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the smaller breweries of the colony will be closed. I do not know how many there are; we have only nineteen altogether, and if you close three, four, or five of those we shall be depriving a certain number of working men of employment. I do not think hon. members would like to do that; nevertheless that will be the result of their vote. The question has been raised by some speakers of putting a tax upon malt and hops. There is a tax upon malt already, although not a very high one; and the experience of brewers in Queensland, as far as I can ascertain, is that they are not able to make malt here on account of the heat—that during only three or four months of the year can malt be made with advantage in Queensland. Therefore, to put a higher tax upon malt than exists at present would not have the effect which hon. members intend—that is, to increase the making of malt in the colony and consequently benefit the agricultural interest. If the climate was suitable for the making of malt, it would be well to put a higher rate upon imported malt; but with the climate that we have, and the experience of our brewers pointing in the

direction it does, it would be very improper to increase the duty. There is a tax already upon malt, hops, and brewers' crystals, which are imported. I do not know how it is, but Queensland sugar-makers do not make a sufficient quantity of brewers' crystals of approved quality, and therefore that article is imported and taxed at the rate of £5 per ton; so that brewers are taxed upon the three chief articles of their consumption. If hon. members have no intention of injuring an industry which has sprung up in the face of competition, from the imported article, and it is determined to put a tax of 3d. per gallon on colonial beer, they ought at least to put a corresponding tax upon the imported article so as not to injure the industry. At the same time the hon. the Colonial Treasurer would reach a higher class of consumers, because, as a general rule, people who drink the imported article are in a superior position, financially, to those who drink the native article. The hon. the Treasurer told us, in the course of the debate a week ago, that the number of gallons of colonial beer consumed per annum was something like 3,500,000; and if this is at once compared with the quantity of imported beer consumed it will be seen that colonial beer is drunk by the greater number of people—that is, by the working classes. I think the consumption of imported beer during the last two or three years has been about 850,000 gallons—about one-fourth the quantity of colonial beer consumed; therefore, it will be much better if we are able, in committee, to impose an equal tax upon imported beer, so that if the duty imposed by the Bill is carried the two articles may stand in the same proportion as they do now. Less injury would be done, and I am certain that the Treasurer would lose nothing by it—perhaps it might be some little gain. But there is one thing which hon. members may be certain of, and that is that whatever tax is imposed it will fall upon the consumer. They need not deceive themselves by thinking that they will get at the brewer by putting a tax upon beer. If they want to get at the brewer because he makes large profits they must do so in another way—that is, either by an income tax or a property tax, and not by putting a tax upon an article which he produces for general consumption.

Mr. KATES said: Mr. Speaker,—I quite agree with the concluding remarks of the hon. member for Townsville, in which he says that a corresponding duty ought to be imposed upon imported beer, whether in wood or glass. I think that would be a very judicious mode of taxation, and I shall be prepared to support such an amendment in committee if the hon. gentleman proposes it. But that is not my object in rising at this time. I rise for the purpose of putting the hon. member for Blackall, as well as the hon. member for Townsville, right in connection with the remarks they made concerning the information they said they had received with regard to colonial barley. I think it is a libel on the agricultural resources of this colony to say that we cannot produce malting barley as good as any that can be grown in any other part of the world. I know, from experience, that in 1880 we produced on the Darling Downs 30,000 bushels of barley. In 1881 it rose to 42,000 bushels; but because it fell into the hands of perhaps an incompetent maltster, or because a few parcels were sent to the one solitary malting establishment in the colony at that time, the whole of the barley of the colony has been condemned. I know for a fact, Mr. Speaker, that a parcel of colonial barley sent to Sydney was sold there at 4s. 6d. a bushel. At that time ordinary feeding barley was selling at 2s. 9d. or 3s., and the price realised—4s. 6d.—

shows that the barley had been purchased for malting purposes. At the time I refer to the barley industry was in its infancy in this colony; the farmers had had very little experience of it, and did not take as good care of it as they would have done if they had known more about it. But it is the same with all colonial industries. Take the case of wool. Thirty or forty years ago the wool grown here was of such a coarse nature that it was almost unsaleable in the London and Continental markets; but it has so much improved since that time that it is considered the finest wool in the world. Again, when the sugar industry was in its infancy here the sugar manufactured was of very poor quality, but it has now improved to such an extent as to be equal to any sugar in the world. The same may be said of wheat. Fifteen years ago, wheat grown on the Darling Downs was condemned; flour made from that wheat was also condemned, but now we find that flour made on the Darling Downs—especially roller-made flour—supersedes the imported article in all parts of the colony. I believe, sir, that it would be the same with barley; and if the tax on imported malt was raised from 6d. to 2s. 6d. a bushel it would be a very wise step. It would increase barley growing in this colony, and would in other respects tend to raise our farming industry. I have risen chiefly for the purpose of putting the hon. members for Blackall and Townsville right when they said that they had been informed that the barley grown in the colony was not fit for malting. I maintain that the barley we produce, if freshly malted and not allowed to become weevily before malting, is as good as any that ever was imported. And as I said before, if, when the Bill gets into committee, any hon. member will propose an amendment to put a corresponding duty upon imported beer, I shall be very willing to support it.

The ATTORNEY - GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not rise to take any part in the discussion on this Bill, but simply to make a statement of facts as deposed to by others who have had as good an opportunity of knowing as those who have spoken in this House on the subject of the tax or excise duty that was imposed upon beer in 1880 in Victoria. The hon. member for Townsville stated that the result of the imposition of that excise duty was that the cost of beer was increased to the consumer. I hold in my hand, sir, a report written by an officer of the Excise Department in this colony who was employed in a similar capacity in Victoria at the time that duty was imposed, and this is what he says about it:—

“This tax fell upon the brewers in the first instance. They had to find the capital to purchase the stamps. In many cases brewers would charge the publican with the duty on the beer he received. Many publicans were under the brewers' will (being the owners of the licensed houses), and had to submit to the charge. Still the duty made no difference to the public, for they got their beer at the same prices as before the duty was imposed. As a matter of fact, the publican could afford it. He buys his beer from his brewer at £4 per hogshead, or at the rate of 2½d. per pint, and retails it to the public at 6d. per pint, or 3d. per half-pint glass.”

Testimony of that kind, coming from one who had such means of knowing what the effect of the excise duty in Victoria was as regards the consumer, is entitled to very considerable weight, and ought to count for something as against those who say that the effect of the duty was to increase the cost of beer to the poor man in Victoria. I have not the slightest doubt that other reasons than those assigned operated to cause the repeal of the excise duty in Victoria.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker,—I was very glad to see the hon. gentleman get up, although I was rather disappointed to find that he was not prepared to give us any of his own experience on

this subject. I think when the hon. member produced a certain document handed to him by the Treasurer he should have given us a little more information as to whether the statements in that paper were reliable or not. It seems very strange to me that the hon. the Treasurer, having that document in his possession, did not refer to it himself if he attached any importance to it. I should like to know whether we are to attach more importance to what I may call an anonymous document than to the evidence given us by several hon. members on this side, who tell us that the effect of the excise duty in Victoria was to increase the price of the glass of beer to the working man. I do not know whether the Attorney-General is a blue-ribbon man, and takes those cordials so dear to the stomachs of the temperance people, or whether he is one of those who believe that when the working man pays 3d. for a glass of beer he has a right to get beer. The hon. member for South Brisbane asserted that it would be no harm if the working man got half beer and half water. I think the working man would very strongly object to pay for water at the price of beer. However, the hon. gentleman—who, I hear, has nearly sixty years' experience as a non-teetotaler—has very likely come to the conclusion that it would have been a great deal better for him if he had taken his beer half-and-half with water.

Mr. JORDAN: I must beg to be allowed to state that I have had sixty years' experience practically as a teetotaler—all my life.

Mr. BLACK: When the hon. member has had as long an experience as a blue-ribbon man as he has had of temperance, his experience will be worth something. He is only a novice as a blue-ribbon man. Now, there is no doubt that this additional taxation will be imposed; but it is the duty of the House to consider proposals emanating from either side which will tend to improve the measure. I do not think any proposal has been made which would be more equitable than the imposition of an increased duty on imported beer. Since a necessity has arisen for additional taxation—which I maintain would have been quite unnecessary under proper management—it should be our endeavour, when the Bill gets into committee, to make the additional taxation as equitable as possible. I still protest against the real necessities of the greater portion of the people being taxed whilst those people who could well have afforded additional taxation are comparatively exempt. If the Colonial Treasurer will increase the revenue—which I am sure he will badly want before twelve months have elapsed—by putting an increased duty of 3d. a gallon on imported beer, he will certainly have my support, and, I can see, the support of several members on both sides of the House.

Mr. MOREHEAD: There should be an excise duty on gingerbeer.

Mr. BLACK: Yes; that reminds me of a source of revenue that would be very acceptable to all classes of the community. We have had a great many lectures lately, emanating chiefly from what is called the blue-ribbon party of Queensland—a party which, I can assure the House, has my deepest sympathy—as long as they do not carry it too far. But I think there is a limit of endurance beyond which they cannot expect the people of the colony to suffer the domineering spirit they seem likely to assume. So long as they endeavour to carry out their principles, both in this Bill and the Licensing Bill when it comes on, in a moderate way, I feel sure they will have the support of a majority of the House and the country; but I warn them

not to go too far. But I wish to draw the attention of the Colonial Treasurer to a means of increasing the taxation which I think has entirely escaped his notice. We have been told that no less than 3,500,000 gallons of colonial beer are consumed annually, and we are also told that there is a large and increasing portion of the population who are opposed to beer, wine, and spirits, and consume nothing but temperance drinks. Now, I do not think it is equitable that those who consider fermented and spirituous drinks a necessity of their lives should have to bear the preponderance of the taxation. There is a beverage which might very well stand a slight taxation, and that is what is known as waters—lemonade, ginger-beer, ginger-ale, soda water, and the rest. If 3,500,000 gallons of colonial beer are consumed there must be nearly the same quantity of those waters consumed, and I would point out that there is no branch of the licensed victualler's trade which gives such big profits. If the Colonial Treasurer were to impose a tax of 3d. a bottle he would derive a very considerable revenue, and I am sure the public would not be called upon to pay more than the 6d. a bottle they are charged now. From every point of view it would be a very equitable tax; the article is undoubtedly a luxury. I am informed that the wholesale price of these beverages is something like 2s. a dozen, whereas the retail price is 6s. a dozen. There is also an import duty on the imported waters; and now we are on the subject of providing revenue, which will not press unnecessarily severely upon any one class in the community, I think this article which is produced in the colony could very well stand the small amount of taxation I referred to.

Question put, and the House divided :—

AYES, 23.

Messrs. Griffith, Dutton, Moreton, Dickson, Miles, Rutledge, Fraser, Brookes, Isambert, Jordan, Annear, White, Kates, Mellor, Wakefield, Bailey, Grimes, Foote, Salkeld, Beattie, Midgley, Macfarlane, and Higson.

NOES, 14.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Morehead, Norton, Chubb, Hamilton, Ferguson, Palmer, Lissner, Horwitz, Macrossan, Black, Jessop, and Lalor.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL—COMMITTEE.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the Chairman leave the chair, and that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Bill.

The Hon. Sir T. McILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the Government might just as well adjourn the House now. This is the first time that Thursday night has not been regarded as a private members' night, and we have attended to business very well. In fact, the rule has always been that no fresh business shall be taken after 9 o'clock.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the hon. gentleman might allow us to go into committee. I am quite prepared not to press the schedules of the Bill this evening, and they are the only part that will draw any discussion. I should like to make some progress with the Bill; but, in deference to the wishes of hon. gentlemen opposite, I will not go on with the schedules.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that it is time we adjourned, as we have had a very important discussion to-night. The hon. gentleman asks us to go on with the formal

part of the Bill; but I do not think that any part of the Bill should be considered formal. There is a great deal to discuss, and I shall decidedly call for a division, and vote against your leaving the chair.

Question put, and the House divided :—

AYES, 22.

Messrs. Griffith, Rutledge, Miles, Dickson, Dutton, Moreton, Fraser, Brookes, Isambert, Jordan, Annear, Bailey, Foote, Kates, Mellor, Wakefield, White, Grimes, Salkeld, Macfarlane, Higson, and Horwitz.

NOES, 12.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Morehead, Norton, Lissner, Hamilton, Palmer, Ferguson, Macrossan, Black, Jessop, and Lalor.

Question resolved in the affirmative; and the House went into Committee.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1, as follows :—

"Upon the importation of the goods mentioned in the schedule to this Act into Queensland, whether by sea or land, there shall be levied, collected, and paid to Her Majesty in lieu of the Customs duty (if any) now levied upon the importation of such goods, duty at the rates in the said schedule set forth, and such duty shall be payable also upon any of such goods which are now in any bonded warehouse."

Mr. ARCHER asked if it was absolutely necessary to have such an involved phrase in the Bill as the following—"Upon the importation of the goods mentioned in the schedule to this Act into Queensland." Should it not rather run, "Upon the importation into Queensland," etc.?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said was better to follow the phraseology of previous Acts.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2 passed as printed.

On clause 3—

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member for Bundamba had circulated an amendment which he intended to move after clause 2, but it would come in better after clause 5; so he proposed to go on with clause 3.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would ask if the Colonial Treasurer had any right to deal with the amendment of another hon. member? He took it he had not.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. member had asked his permission to bring in the amendment after clause 5.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN: Does the hon. gentleman accept the piloting of this new clause

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No.

Mr. MOREHEAD: He is only its stepfather.

Question put.

Mr. MOREHEAD said there was an amendment circulated among hon. members which the hon. member for Bundamba had stated he intended to move as a new clause to follow clause 2. That was distinctly shown by the paper in the hands of the Committee. If the amendment did not follow clause 2 he would like to have the ruling of the Chairman as to whether the Colonial Treasurer was right in arranging with the hon. member for Bundamba that it should come in after clause 5 or 7.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the position was simply this: That the hon. member for Bundamba before leaving requested that he might have an opportunity of discussing his proposed amendment, and he assented. He did not, of course, intend to accept it in any part of the Bill. The hon. gentleman, however, had left the Chamber under the impression that his amendment would be discussed at the appropriate time,

which was after clause 5. He (Mr. Dickson) would therefore ask the Committee to allow the hon. gentleman to introduce it at a later part of the Bill.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he wanted to know the actual position of the Committee in reference to the proposed amendment. He did not know that the hon. member for Bundanba had any more right to leave that Chamber when he had an amendment to propose than any other member. He asked whether it was not wrong for the Colonial Treasurer to go on in the way he was going, and ignoring as it were the amendment which the hon. member for Bundanba proposed to insert after clause 2.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would point out that the hon. member for Bundanba was not precluded by not being present from moving his amendment. He could move it at any time, although it was printed on the paper that it was to follow clause 2. There was nothing in the rules of the House to prevent him moving it at any subsequent part of the Bill.

Mr. MOREHEAD said if that was the case, why should the Colonial Treasurer have mentioned the matter in the way he had done? He was evidently frightened of the portly member for Bundanba. Of course the Colonial Treasurer would like obstruction to come from the Opposition side of the House in order to enable his supporter to come in at a later period and move the new clause which he wished to have inserted in the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3, 4, and 5 passed as printed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he thought they ought to go on with the consideration of the Bill, because it was quite evident that the supposed concession made by the Colonial Treasurer was not to suit the Committee but to suit the hon. member for Bundanba. Supposing the Committee had passed the whole of those clauses as far as the schedule, which was not an impossibility, how would the hon. member for Bundanba introduce his amendment? It was not very late, and he (Mr. Morehead) was quite prepared to go on with the Bill, but that was what the Treasurer dared not do; he was too much afraid of the hon. member for Bundanba and the Ipswich influence, because the Government, to a certain extent, was dependent for its existence upon the members for Bundanba and Ipswich, and so dared not quarrel with them. That was the reason the Colonial Treasurer agreed to stop at clause 5. First he told the Committee that the amendment to be proposed by the hon. member for Bundanba should follow clause 7 instead of clause 2, and that it was a mistake to have it stated in the printed copy circulated among hon. members that it was to follow clause 2. Afterwards he stated that the hon. member might move it at any time. The real reason for stopping at clause 5 was not a desire to ease the labours of the Committee, but to suit the hon. member for Bundanba, who, he believed, was a little bit angry at not having received an appointment in the Cabinet, and had to be tenderly treated by the Government in consequence. However, as he (Mr. Morehead) had said, he was quite prepared to go on with the business and let the charge of obstruction lie upon the head of the Government.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I have ascertained that there is only one motion on the paper for to-morrow—namely, a motion by the hon. member for Townsville. That is the only private business. I do not suppose the House will desire to go on with Government business a fourth day in the week, and I do not think it would be fair to ask it. Therefore, as I understand the hon. member for Townsville is not anxious to proceed with his motion to-morrow, with the permission of the House I will move that the House do now adjourn till Tuesday next. It is proposed on Tuesday to go on with the Revenue Bills in committee. The Customs Duty Bill will be taken first and then the Beer Bill.

Question put and passed; and the House adjourned at ten minutes past 10 o'clock until Tuesday next.