Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 1885

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 8 *September*, 1885.

Message from the Governor.—Questions.—Emu Park Railway.—Formal Motion.—Customs Duties Bill—committee.—Adjournment.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from his Excellency the Governor, intimating that the Royal assent had been given to the Crown Lands Act of 1884 Amendment Bill.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. DONALDSON asked the Colonial Secretary—

What steps (if any) have been taken with regard to the reduction of the charges for Press telegrams within the colony?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. W. Griffith) replied—

On the 10th January, 1884, it was determined by the Governor in Council that the rates for Press messages between Brisbane and Sydney should be at once reduced to the following :—

For 10 words	2s.
For every additional word up to 16 ...	2d.
Over 16 words and up to 100	3s.
For every additional 100 words or part of 100 words	3s.

And that the rate for inland Press messages should be reduced as soon as arrangements had been made for additional wires and staff to the following :—

For 50 words or under	1s.
Every additional 50 words or part of 50 words	1s.

It was reported to the Government by the officers of the Post and Telegraph Department that the additional inland Press messages to be expected at this reduced rate could not be transmitted without additional wires being stretched from Brisbane to Gympie, Brisbane to Charleville, Helidon to Toowoomba (two wires), and Bowen to Townsville, and new lines being constructed from Brisbane to Helidon, and Toowoomba to Dalby, involving the construction of 125 miles of new line and the stretching of 769 miles of additional wire at an estimated expenditure of £13,650, and the employment of ten additional operators.

The amount of £13,650 is included in the amount voted on Loan last year for telegraph extensions, but the extra wires, except that from Bowen to Townsville, have, for various reasons, not yet been stretched.

As soon as the necessary wires are available the authorised reduction will come into operation.

Mr. ISAMBERT asked the Colonial Treasurer—

1. In what manner is the money of our loans, contracted in London, remitted to the Treasury here?

2. Is the money for the payment of annual interest on our loans remitted from here to London?

3. Or is this payment of interest effected with the money borrowed in London?

4. How much actual cash of the last loan of £2,500,000 does the Treasurer expect will be remitted to the Treasury here?

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson) replied—

1. By the sale of the Colonial Treasurer's drafts on London.

2. No.

3. Payment of interest in London is made from the proceeds of loans, the Loan Fund being recouped in the colony out of revenue.

4. Probably about £1,000,000.

EMU PARK RAILWAY.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions, namely:—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Rockhampton to Emu Park, *viâ* Lake's Creek, as laid upon the table of the House on Tuesday, the 1st instant.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS, in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Rockhampton to Emu Park, *viâ* Lake's Creek, as laid upon the table of the House on Tuesday, the 1st instant.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

—said there was a difference of opinion as to what route the line should take, as there was in the case of all railways that had ever come before the House; and seeing that the hon. member for Blackall had presented a petition in favour of what was known as the Yaamba road route, he proposed to read the Chief Engineer's report on the subject, which would put the Committee in possession of all the information in the hands of the Government. Mr. Ballard, in referring to his memorandum of even date, reporting upon the route *viâ* Yaamba, said:—

"I have the honour to report upon the route *viâ* Lake's Creek. This route commences at the corner of the Police Reserve, North Rockhampton, opposite and in a line with the Fitzroy Suspension Bridge. It runs thence eastwards along the Lake's Creek road for 2½ miles to the Lake's Creek Hotel; thence following the same road south-east to the Bush Inn at 5½ miles; thence makes a sharp turn to 7 miles upon the road from Rockhampton to Emu Park, and thence along that road north-east to 18 miles, leaving Cawarral Station about a quarter-mile to the right at about 17 miles. From 18 miles to Emu Park there are two routes, as will be seen upon the last sheet of the Parliamentary plans and sections herewith sent, the one making a circuit to the north and joining the Yaamba road route at about 22 miles, and thence by the same route into Emu Park, making a total distance of about 29 miles to the same spot as shown on the Yaamba road survey. The other route, and the one which I recommend, runs nearly straight from the 18-mile peg to Emu Park, making a total distance of about 25 miles, passing through the mangrove swamps situated to the south of the township. This route is clearly shown upon the last sheet of the Parliamentary plans and sections herewith submitted, and will be nearly 5 miles shorter than the Yaamba road route. From the 18-mile peg on this route it would be about 11 miles due north to Yeppoon and about 7 miles north-east to Emu Park. The ruling gradient upon the route *viâ* Lake's Creek is 1 in 50, the same as on the Yaamba road route. The relative quantity of steep gradients upon the various routes is as follows—namely, Yaamba road route, 743 chains; Lake's Creek route, 610 chains; Lake's Creek alternative line, 272 chains. In the computation I have included all gradients of 1 in 66 and sharper. The worst grade upon the Lake's Creek route would be 33 chains of 1 in 50 at or about 19 miles and 76 chains; of 1 in 66 and 1 in 53 at about 23 miles; but the shortest or alternative line presents no obstacle in the shape of gradients worse than 1 in 66 for 60 chains between 18 and 19 miles. The sharpest curve upon the Lake's Creek route would be one of 6 chains radius. There are also five of 10 chains radius and all the rest are very flat, but if the alternative route is taken there will be no sharp curve at all, and only two indeed of ten (10) chains radius. I have the honour to report in favour of the route *viâ* Lake's Creek, taking either of the alternative lines shown upon the last page of the plans and sections as infinitely preferable to the route *viâ* Yaamba road; but I recommend that the alternative line, reaching Emu Park in a distance of about 25 miles, be adopted for the following reasons, namely:—

"1. That the distance is about 4½ miles shorter than the Yaamba road route.

"2. That the gradients and curves are easy and infinitely better than the Yaamba road route or any other route.

"3. That the traffic capacity would be greater and the working expenses less by this route than by any other.

"4. That the cost of construction and land to be purchased would be considerably less, involving a saving of at least £15,000.

"I forward herewith the Parliamentary plans, and sections, and book of reference in duplicate. I also enclose a diagram showing a section of the gradients over each of the routes under consideration, and a small general map upon which I have sketched the Yaamba road route in blue, and the Lake's Creek routes in red. The alternative line, which I recommend across the mangrove swamps, may admit of slight deviations for the purpose of cheapening cost of construction, and the length may therefore be somewhat increased upon the permanent survey; but the total distance of the permanent survey will not be likely to exceed 26 miles."

That was Mr. Ballard's report, and accompanying it was a small map showing the different routes mentioned. He would add nothing further except that the line would be a great acquisition to the people of Rockhampton and those located along the Central Railway. As a watering-place Emu Park was too well known to require anything to be said in its favour by him. Moreover, there was a large quantity of Government land undisposed of along the line, which was not usually the case. They had been in the habit of selling the land and making a railway afterwards, but on the present occasion there were 30,000 or 40,000 acres along the line, besides a quantity at the township of Hewittville, which would realise a large price. As the hon. member for Blackall had presented a petition to the House on the subject, he would be able, no doubt, to express an opinion as to the proper route. He (the Minister for Works) believed the route recommended by the Chief Engineer was the proper one, because it was shorter; it would be easier to construct and work, and be less costly than the other. He should be glad to give any further information to the Committee if such were required.

Mr. ARCHER said that, as the hon. gentleman had referred to the petition presented by him, he might state that it was signed by a large body of his constituents, who desired that the railway should go by a different route. But by the courtesy of the Minister for Works he had been accorded the privilege of looking over the report of the Chief Engineer, and had informed his constituents that there was not the slightest chance of the plans being altered by Parliament in the way suggested by the petition. Considering the difference in price, he should have to be able to show very good cause why the plans should be altered before he would presume to offer any objection to them. He knew the country traversed by the different routes. He was aware that the difficulties of the Yaamba route were greater than those of the other, besides which, the distance was longer. While agreeing with the Engineer's report, he might state that it would be well for the Minister for Works to take into his consideration

a line which a good many of his constituents would like to have constructed. Mount Wheeler, one of the chief mining centres near Rockhampton, and the village of Cawarral, were left at some distance to the west of the line. He did not think the distance from a point in the Lake's Creek route, which was called the half-way house, was more than three and a-half miles from the township of Cawarral, which was not far from Mount Wheeler. A branch of three or four miles in that locality might be constructed with advantage; and he hoped the Minister for Works would take the matter into his consideration and have a survey made. The Engineer, Mr. Ballard, had already talked of such a thing as being necessary when the mines of Mount Wheeler became developed, and the hon. gentleman would find on inquiry that such a branch line would not only add to the traffic of the line now under consideration, but would be of immense benefit to the miners and farmers along that part of the line. He concurred in what the hon. gentleman said relative to the existence of Government land along the line, and he hoped that he would carry out his promise and see that the line was finished before the land was sold, as it would materially help to recoup the colony for the expense incurred in the construction of the line. As far as his personal knowledge went he had nothing to say against the proposed route; in fact, it would be difficult to say anything against it after reading the Engineer's report. He hoped the Minister for Works would remember, however, that the construction of the branch line of four or five miles, which had been suggested, would add immensely to the value of the line under consideration.

Mr. FERGUSON said he was pleased to find that the survey of the line was so satisfactory, not only to the people of Rockhampton, who were more directly interested in it, but to the colony as a whole. When he moved in the House for a survey of that line—about two years ago—it was understood that the distance by railway from Rockhampton to Emu Park would be over thirty miles. That was the general understanding, but it was now found by the plans and survey before the Committee that the length of the line would be only a little over twenty-five miles. That was a great saving in the route discovered by the Engineer, Mr. Ballard. It was a saving of four and a-half miles each way, or nine miles for the trip, which would mean a large saving of expense and time, and was worth a great deal, both to the people of Rockhampton and to the colony as a whole. By the route discovered by Mr. Ballard it would be found that the line could be constructed with easier grades and easier curves, and would cost much less than by any other route surveyed. From the 8-mile peg, or eight miles from Rockhampton, the balance of the line went through Crown land, and at Emu Park—facing the sea, where the terminus would be—the land could be sold and the money would go far towards paying the cost of the construction of the line. I need not say any more about that; but with reference to branch lines the hon. member for Blackall referred to a line to Cawarral. There was no doubt such a line would be of great use to the people settled along there, and would increase the traffic on the Emu Park line. But there was another branch line which was quite as necessary as that, and if a survey was made of one there ought also to be a survey made of the other. He referred to a line from the 18-mile peg to Yeppoon, which would be a distance of eleven miles—level country all the way, and a very good class of country as well. No doubt such a branch line would be constructed at some future day, and the Government should reserve any land that belonged to the Crown along the route. He had nothing further to say about the proposed line to Emu Park, the report upon which was so satisfactory that he thought no member of the Committee could have a word to say against it.

Mr. HIGSON said he could scarcely add anything to what had been said. The route chosen for the line, he felt sure, would give satisfaction to all the inhabitants of Rockhampton. He knew both routes surveyed, and the route proposed was the shorter by four or five miles. A greater number of people would be likely to settle along the line, because a saving of four or five miles each way would mean a considerable saving of time in travelling. He would urge that there might be a survey made of a line as far as Mount Wheeler — some three or four miles—and if such a line were made it would greatly increase the traffic on the Emu Park line. Further, in a short time it might be found necessary to survey a line to Yeppoon, and that line would also increase the traffic on the Emu Park railway. He was satisfied that the line to Emu Park would be one of the most profitable lines that could be constructed. It would require no borrowed money to construct it, as there was enough unalienated land along the route to defray the cost of construction. He was sure the plans before the Committee would be satisfactory to the inhabitants of Rockhampton and to the colony.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that the hon. member for Rockhampton (Mr. Ferguson), in concluding his remarks upon the proposed railway, said that no member of the Committee could have a word to say against it. That certainly was looking at it from a very strong Rockhampton point of view. No doubt, if they were to go in for making lines—mere pleasure lines to convey people down to the seaside to bathe—there could not be much said against it. From what they had heard from the Minister for Works, in proposing the line, and from Mr. Ballard's report, there could be no doubt that the best line was selected, both as to distance, grades, and curves; but he was inclined to think that there were many lines which could be made in the colony which would be of far more use and benefit to the colony than the line proposed and which the hon. member had stated not a word could be said against. If it was left to him (Mr. Macrossan) he could say a great many words against it. He would much sooner make a line to convey the agricultural produce of the district to market than to convey people a distance of thirty miles to bathe. The majority of the people interested in the construction of the line could go to Emu Park to bathe now—in a buggy or a spring cart—quite as conveniently, though perhaps not so quickly, as if the proposed line were constructed. They had been told that there was a great deal of Government land along the line, and that if that land was sold it would pay for the cost of its construction. He would like, however, to know what was the quality of the land, as he found by a map that most of it was described as pastoral land, and pastoral land about Rockhampton could not be very valuable. They had been told by the hon. member for Rockhampton a long time ago, when he moved in the matter first, that the land at Emu Park itself, if sold, would pay for the construction of the line. He would be glad to hear from the Minister for Works what anticipations he had on that subject, because if that statement was correct there could not be a great deal said against the line. The Minister for Works had not told them what the cost of the line would be—either the total cost or the cost per mile—and he should have told them that. If he expected to make as much out of the sales of land at Emu Park as would make the line there would be very little to say against it; but if he expected to have recourse to the sale of land along the line to

supplement that he would have to set the machinery of proclamation in motion by making little townships along the line, because the Government had precluded themselves from selling it unless it was proclaimed townships.

Mr. NORTON: Make one big one.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN: Or make one big one, as suggested by the hon. member for Port Curtis. There were other lines spoken of in connection with the one before them. The hon. member for Blackall said he hoped they would have a survey made to Cawarral—a branch line to feed the Emu Park line. The junior member for Rockhampton said about the same thing, though in somewhat different words. He mentioned Mount Wheeler instead of Cawarral. The hon. member for Rockhampton mentioned another branch line which should be made, and if all were made there would be forty miles of line instead of twenty-five. The Minister for Works must set a very high value upon the land at Emu Park if he expected it would pay for the making of forty miles of railway. Then, after it was made what were his expectations as to its paying? He had not told them a word about that. He had simply read Mr. Ballard's report as to the alternative or rival routes. He had not said a word as to the likelihood of the line paying or its cost. He hoped the hon. gentleman would tell the Committee what was the estimated cost of the line and what he expected to get from it when constructed. If he expected that the pleasure-seekers would pay the working expenses and interest upon the cost of construction very few people would have a word to say against it, but he (Mr. Macrossan) was very doubtful upon that point.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said that in proposing the adoption of the plans he had omitted to state Mr. Ballard's estimate of the cost of construction. Mr. Ballard put down the cost at £3,500 per mile. The hon. member must know perfectly well that no engineer could state any certain amount until all the preliminaries were settled; the present was simply a Parliamentary survey. As to the returns from the line, he need only refer the hon. member to the Sandgate Railway. That line was before the House for several years, and some hon. members always asserted that it would be a non-paying line. He believed the Emu Park line would be as successful as the Sandgate line had been—that it would be very profitable. He might also add that there was a very large quantity of Government land—some 30,000 or 40,000 acres—along the proposed line, together with a considerable quantity of unsold township lands. He had not the slightest doubt that the land in the township would realise from £15,000 to £20,000, and that was something towards the cost of the line. As hon. members knew, there was a large amount of settlement along the Central line, and it was very desirable that they and the inhabitants of Rockhampton should have some means of getting to a place of summer resort. Of all hon. members, the very last whom he expected to oppose the line was the hon. member for Townsville. He might add that from the 18-mile peg into the township of Hewittville was all Government land, and no land would have to be paid for at the township. With the permission of the Committee he would amend the resolution by the insertion of the words "alternative line" after the words "Lake's Creek."

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Minister for Works must have misunderstood him. He did not oppose the line, but was simply asking for information. At the same time he should prefer, as he said before, a line carrying agricultural or some other produce to market, to a line carrying mere pleasure-seekers to the seaside. As to comparing the Emu Park line with the Sandgate line the comparison was utterly absurd. The Sandgate line was made to a watering-place already established, and the distance was very little more than one-half the distance from Rockhampton to Emu Park; and much less than one-half if the branches, as suggested by hon. members connected with the district, were carried out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he was under the impression that there were nearly as many inhabitants at Emu Park now as there were at Sandgate when that line was made. He could not, of course, say what revenue would be derived from the line, but he was perfectly satisfied that the line would be a profitable one.

Mr. MOREHEAD asked the Minister for Works to give the Committee some information as to the present population of Emu Park. The hon. gentleman had stated that the population was about as large as that of Sandgate. Perhaps he would next tell them that the population of Rockhampton was as large as that of Brisbane. Was there a resident population of 100 at Emu Park for whom they were asked to construct that railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he had only paid one visit to Emu Park, and he saw a very large number of people there. As to the resident population, he could not be expected to carry the figures of every township in the colony in his head.

Mr. HIGSON said he could supply a little information as to the population of Emu Park and the price of land there. He was certain that the land would realise a great deal more than the Minister for Works anticipated. He knew of half-acre blocks there for which £300 each had been refused, and the Government had in its possession much better land than that. As to the population, he had known an average of over fifty visitors at Emu Park for two months together, besides the residents. When he left Rockhampton to come to Brisbane he was interviewed by nine different business men there who wanted him to get the Minister for Lands to put some land up for sale at Emu Park, as they wanted to build houses to reside there.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that was really too delightful. They were getting the information by degrees. Parliament was asked to commit the country to an expenditure which would amount to not less than £130,000 before it was all over—for the cost of the line would not be less than £5,000 a mile; and the Minister for Works, on being asked to state the number of people residing at Emu Park, told the Committee that he had only been there once, when he saw a large number of people. Perhaps they went there to see the wonderful Minister for Works—the ymight have been curious to see what manner of man he was. Then came the hon. member, Mr. Higson, who told them he had seen fifty visitors staying there, and that nine other people at Rockhampton were waiting for the railway to be made so that they might go and build shops there. If it was not a serious matter, it would be a joking matter. The Committee was asked to expend considerably over £100,000 to provide for a possible fifty people who might be living at Emu Park, and for nine others who might go there after the railway was made. It was altogether too absurd, and he trusted the Committee would not consent to such a monstrous scheme. He should vote against the resolution, if he divided alone, as he objected to the country's money being wasted in that reckless fashion. Why, every small watering-place in the colony

would demand a railway if they were going to spend money in that way! Rockhampton had not one-sixth the population of Brisbane; and the Sandgate line, he believed, was not paying so very well after all. In fact, he believed it was not paying, and how much better chance had the proposed line to Emu Park, which was double the length, of paying? He hoped that the Committee would consider that view of the question—the financial view of it—and that they would not make a railway simply for the purpose of increasing the value of land held by certain syndicates in Rockhampton. He believed that that was the object in view—that the line should be made at the expense of the State for the ultimate benefit of the owners of land at Emu Park. They were told also by the hon. member, Mr. Higson, that half-an-acre of land at Emu Park would be worth £300, and if that were so it would not attract the kind of settlement which would make the railway pay. It could only be bought by wealthy people.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is the very settlement that will pay.

Mr. MOREHEAD: The only way in which it would pay, as far as he could see from the remarks of the Minister for Works, was by selling land. He hoped the hon. gentleman had squared the Minister for Lands as far as that was concerned. At any rate, he thought that making railways for purely speculative purposes, to enhance the value of either public or private land, was a very bad policy to be adopted by that Committee or by the country, and very uncertain also in the results. He should, for the reasons he had given, oppose the motion. There was no settlement at either end of the proposed line to warrant such an enormous expenditure, and there had been nothing shown by the Minister for Works in any remarks he had made which would indicate that, if the railway were constructed, population would be so increased at each end as to enable the speculation to be a paying one.

Mr. FERGUSON said the hon. member who had just spoken was not in the Committee when the Minister for Works gave an explanation respecting the railway. He had only come in at the end of the debate, and had made statements which he could not carry out by facts. It was altogether a random speech he had made from commencement to end. He (Mr. Ferguson) had been to Emu Park scores of times, and had seen hundreds of people there on many occasions. Hundreds of people went from Rockhampton to that place on a visit in the summer time. As to the amount of land at Emu Park, from inquiries he had made at the Lands Office he found that there was a township reserve of 24,000 acres, with a frontage of two miles to the sea—the very pick of the place—still to be alienated, and it would be sold by auction. He presented a petition to the hon. the Minister for Lands the other day, signed by a large number of Rockhampton people, asking for some of that land to be put up for sale, and he (Mr. Ferguson) knew that the price it would fetch was a sufficient guarantee for making the line. It would go a long way towards paying the expense of it. As to the syndicates the hon. member had mentioned, he did not know of any. The hon. member had more to do with syndicates than he had, and perhaps knew of some; but he (Mr. Ferguson) did not know of a single syndicate in the neighbourhood of Rockhampton who had any expectation of making a profit out of land by the construction of the proposed railway. If the hon. member was aware of it he was not. As to the route of the line the Engineer had simply done justice. He surveyed two different routes, reported faithfully on both, and the result was the adoption of the line now proposed to be carried out, which was the proper one. He could not see any grounds whatever for the remarks made by the hon. member for Balonne.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was not so well acquainted with Emu Park as the hon. member was, but he was utterly opposed to spending so much public money for the proposed railway. There was considerable division of opinion amongst those who agreed as to the propriety of making the line at all with regard to the direction it should take, and therefore he was quite justified in calling attention to the facts of the case and expressing his firm belief that the line was to be made to benefit certain individuals. Only the other day a man—a leading constituent of the hon. member for Blackall—was in town, and he did not hold at all with the line being taken in the direction it was for speculative purposes. At any rate, he (Mr. Morehead) opposed it on the broad grounds that it was not in any way necessary, and that the money which would be wasted on it, as he held, would be much better applied in developing their railway system in other directions.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he understood that the question they were now discussing was not whether a railway should be made from Rockhampton to Emu Park—that was decided last December—but whether the route proposed was the right one for the line to go. He believed in the affirmative of both propositions. He considered it a very proper thing to make a railway from Rockhampton to Emu Park. He did not see any reason why the North and the South should have their railways extended to the coast, and the Central districts should be left out. He believed that it was as good a railway as any that was included in the list attached to the ten-million loan. And as to whether the route proposed was the best one, Mr. Ballard's report decided that. It was shorter than the other, and much less costly. That was the only information they had before them, and he thought they should adopt the motion submitted by the Minister for Works.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the people of Rockhampton were to be congratulated on getting a railway to the seaside. The objection to those railways was that they were a departure from their usual railway policy. The chief railway policy was to construct railways to the setting sun, and the proposed line was objected to inasmuch as it was a departure from that one-horse idea. It was constructing railways for the accommodation of the people, and he thought the Government could not go wrong in constructing railways where there was population. They had seen that wherever they had done so the revenue from the lines was increasing, but it was when they were extended into regions out west, where no population existed, that those portions of their railways were a serious tax upon the revenue returns. There was a good deal in what the hon. member for Townsville had said, and it ought to open the eyes of the Government with regard to their railway policy in connection with the ten-million loan. He said that the people would not be satisfied with the railways included in that loan. Some time ago he (Mr. Isambert) had the honour of introducing a deputation from Rosewood to the hon. the Minister for Works, asking for railway extension, and he said that the railway policy of the Government being closed for the next five years he could not grant their request; and when he was asked for assistance which would enable the people to make railways for themselves he assured them that the Government would offer them every facility for doing so; but up to the

present time they had never stated what those facilities were. Then he noticed that that morning the hon. member for Moreton, Mr. Wakefield, had introduced a deputation for a similar object, and they had very small hopes held out to them—just as small as he had. He understood that those people offered the same as the Rosewood people did—that they were prepared to provide the money for making the railway if the Government would afford them some guarantee or facility for doing so. There were a great many districts which wanted railways, and the inhabitants of which had more confidence in the districts than the Government had. The Government ought to bring in such a Bill that if they could not help the people they would not stand in the way of their helping themselves. He had been told by an hon. member that the idea of private people constructing railways with every possible safeguard could not be entertained, because the credit of the colony was pledged to the English creditor; but he hoped it was not the case that the Government of the colony was in the hands of the Lombard-street money-grubbers. He hoped the Government would bring in a measure to enable private people to help themselves.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said the subject of branch railways was one that would occupy a good deal of attention in the House during the next few years, and he would like to see some means adopted whereby the system of local self-government could be applied to railways as well as roads. Railways were the best roads that could be constructed, and people interested should be called upon by taxation or otherwise to guarantee the payment of the line if they had confidence in the district. He believed that in many cases the inhabitants would be willing to submit to taxation to provide working expenses and interest on the cost of construction in the case of a line not paying. From the agriculture carried on by the people inhabiting the Rosewood Scrub he believed they were entitled to a railway, and he thought they would be willing to guarantee the line against loss. The ten-million loan had been swallowed up by lines already authorised, and private lines would have to be constructed by private enterprise.

Mr. NORTON said he did not agree with the hon. leader of the Opposition that the question of the line being constructed had been discussed when the Loan Bill was passed.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: I said "decided."

Mr. NORTON said there was as little discussion on the lines as he had ever heard on any railway proposals—simply because hon. members on the other side would not discuss them, while the members on the Opposition side were quite willing to go into the fullest discussion. The Minister for Works gave very little information with regard to them—less, perhaps, than had ever been given as to any other railways. For his own part he did not see why the people of Rockhampton should not have a line to the seaside as well as the people of Brisbane, but he thought there were many other lines which should have been brought forward first. It had been stated in a cloudy sort of way that the sale of the Government land along the railway would realise almost enough to pay the cost of the line; but they knew very well that when the Treasurer got the money he would stick to it—it would not go to pay the cost of railways provided for by loan. The line would be made with borrowed money, and there was not the slightest chance of its being repaid. He would like to ask the Minister for Works when the plans of the trunk line from Bundaberg to Gladstone would be laid on the table?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I believe the Parliamentary plan of the line is on the way down now.

Mr. NORTON: Then am I to understand that the plans will be submitted to Parliament for approval before the session ends?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is another question altogether.

Mr. NORTON said he was very sorry the hon. member evaded his question. If the approval of the House were given to the plans it would not compel the Minister to go on with the line at once, and he hoped the approval of the House to the plans now before them would not compel the Minister to go on with that line at once. The hon. member had given him authority to tell his constituents that the plans would probably be presented to the House during the present session, and it was important that something should be done about it, because it was one of the trunk lines of the colony and not by any means a party line. The line now before them was a pleasure line pure and simple, and the people of Rockhampton not only could get to Emu Park in other ways but they had several other places where they could go for bathing places or sanatoriums. It was not fair to the rest of the colony that lines of greater importance should be postponed till those intended merely for pleasure had been constructed. It was perfectly impossible that the line could be be made to pay.

Mr. BLACK said he was very glad to see that what had occurred was only what he anticipated last session, when the bunch of railways passed through the committee—that hon. gentlemen, in course of time, would find out that their happiness and that of their constituents had not entirely been secured by suddenly voting such a very large sum of money, the expenditure of which must necessarily involve some four or five years. It was quite evident that the different constituencies were now finding out that the fact of their not participating in the railway expenditure of the future had left them in a very unfortunate position. Hardly a week elapsed without their hearing of a deputation waiting upon the Minister for Works.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not send for them.

Mr. BLACK: They came whether the hon. gentleman sent for them or not. He had to receive them, and he (Mr. Black) was very glad to find that he received them in a very deferential manner now. The attention of the hon. gentleman, and of the colony, was being directed to the fact that any district, which happened to be omitted from the schedule of the £7,000,000 which was to be devoted to railway construction, stood a very poor chance now, or for the next four or five years, of getting its legitimate wants supplied. That was becoming more and more evident. They had heard the hon. member for Rosewood that day, and the hon. member for Moreton also, referring to some scheme which might receive favour, by which certain districts might be allowed to have a voice in the construction of local railways. The hon. member for Moreton had suggested that the residents would be willing to be actually taxed for the construction of those railways. However much he would like to see the Government willing to carry out some scheme of the sort, he was very much afraid that any project which might be suggested would not be received with favour. Those people who were debarred from the benefits of railway communication with the different centres of population would strongly object to being taxed, in addition to already being taxed as they were for the general railway system of the colony. However, he believed that the Minister for Works and

the Government had held out hopes to some of those deputations that any proposal that they might make would be, at all events, entertained, and possibly formally received. He would be very glad if the Government would inform the Committee before the end of the session whether they were really inclined to entertain such a project favourably. In connection with the railway now before the Committee, he thought it was as fair a one as any which was submitted in that schedule. He would go further than that, and say that it was still more justifiable than many of those lines. In Brisbane—which was, of course, the capital, and where a large population was settling down—the wants of the people were being very well attended to. But the people in Brisbane were not satisfied with the one railway that had been constructed at the expense of the colony—that to Sandgate. There was another railway going down to Southport, which, he supposed, would be completed before very long. There was also another railway to another watering-place—Cleveland; and if Brisbane were entitled—and he was not prepared to say she was not—to three different railways to three different watering-places, surely the town which was second in importance, or third perhaps—as he believed Townsville had taken precedence lately—was entitled to one. He certainly thought that in Rockhampton, with the great disadvantages she possessed as to climate, the people should have some facility for health's sake of getting to a watering-place. Judging from the plans before them, the railway was not likely to be a very expensive one. He was informed that the land at Emu Park was of a very valuable character, and of a very suitable description for a watering-place, and, consequently, he was certainly inclined to vote for the adoption of the plans and specifications with the object of proceeding with its construction at once. He believed that the hon. member for Rockhampton was fully acquainted with the qualifications of the proposed watering-place at Emu Park, and he knew, from the knowledge he acquired from several visitors to Rockhampton, that it was a line that was universally approved of, and that all the people in the district were anxiously waiting to see it commenced. He thought, also, that it would be a profitable line; although he did not mean to say that there were not, perhaps, other railways in the colony that would take precedence over it. Considering all the objects of railway construction in the colony—of encouraging people to settle down in the belief that if the resources of their district progressed sufficiently they would be entitled to a proportion of the expenditure of loan money—he thought the Committee would be acting unwisely if they refused to pass the plans of the proposed railway.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that, from what had fallen from the hon. gentleman who had just spoken, it appeared that his argument was that a watering-place should be provided for Rockhampton because Brisbane had three. He denied that Brisbane had three railways that could properly be termed railways to watering-places. He appealed to the hon. gentleman's own speech at the opening of the Beenleigh extension to Logan Village, in which he said, and the leader of the Opposition said also, that the line would tap large centres of population, which would be still more fully settled upon if the line were made. Therefore, he contended that the line from Brisbane to Southport was not simply a railway to a watering-place, and he did not think that the arguments of the hon. member for Mackay would hold for a moment. He did not think that in the present state of their finances they should be called upon to vote a large sum of money for a railway which was eminently one of luxury. He would willingly vote a sum of money for a railway to Port Alma, which would be a paying one and benefit the whole colony; but the people of Rockhampton would not have that, because they thought it would affect the value of city properties. They thought the holders of land in Rockhampton would be prejudicially affected by taking the railway down to one of the finest ports in Australia. He did not think that city property there would deteriorate in value; he thought, on the contrary, the railway would enhance its value. They were now asked to vote a sum of money simply to provide a luxury for the people of Rockhampton, and the taxpayers of the colony would have to pay it. He, as the representative of an outside district, protested against any such charge being made on the revenue of the colony. Where would it end? Rockhampton would next want a branch line to Yeppoon, and the argument then would be: Brisbane had three watering places, why should not Rockhampton have two? The present was not a time when they should be asked to lavish money on luxuries. They would have enough to do to look after their necessities in years to come if the present state of affairs continued. There was no necessity for the railway having been brought forward as it had been, and he hoped the Minister for Works would not take steps immediately to construct that railway. Having regard for the highly critical state of the colony at the present time—and no one knew the straits it was in better than the Minister for Works—why should they be asked to "chuck" away £120,000 on a railway for the sybarites of Rockhampton? As to saying that it would be a paying line, he denied that that railway would pay for many years to come. The Minister for Works would surely not tell them that the Sandgate line was paying? He would ask him that now. Would the hon. gentleman say that that line was paying? If he analysed the figures he would see that that line was not such a speculative undertaking on the part of the Government. The broad grounds of his objection were that the present was no time to waste money that they had borrowed in undertakings which would not be remunerative. He said that if they were to waste their money in that way the time would come when it would be pointed out against them that, instead of using the money which had been lent to them in developing their resources, they were wasting it in that frivolous way by constructing railways to watering-places from towns that were not of the first importance even in Queensland.

Mr. SHERIDAN said it had been remarked that the wealth of a country was its population, and he could not see why it would not pay any country very well to afford the means for population to reach the seaside and preserve their health, and, for sanitary reasons, enjoy the benefit which seaside residence gave to the population. Therefore he said the railway to Emu Park would be a great benefit to the country. His object in rising was not simply to say that he would vote for the adoption of the plans and sections, but to take exception to what fell from the hon. member for Mackay with regard to the first, second, and third towns of the colony. He would remind him—and he was quite sure that facts would bear out what he was going to say—that the second town in the colony was Maryborough. Maryborough had a larger population than Rockhampton or Townsville, and it had a large number of industries. It had foundries and various other industries and resources that scarcely any other district had. It had gold and other minerals, and, as he had before stated, it had a population

that was several hundreds in excess of either Rockhampton or Townsville. He did not make those remarks with a view of conveying any slight to Rockhampton or Townsville. On the contrary, he wished them to progress, and even surpass Maryborough; but he believed Maryborough took the lead next to Brisbane. He was surprised at the hon. member for Mackay making such statements in regard to the leading towns of the colony.

Mr. BLACK said he wished to explain to the hon. member, who was so sensitive about Maryborough, that when he referred to the precedence which one town might claim over another, he meant from a revenue point of view.

Mr. SHERIDAN said it was true that the revenue collected in Rockhampton and Townsville was much in excess of that collected in Maryborough, but it should be borne in mind that on the greater portion of dutiable goods consumed in Maryborough the duty was paid in Brisbane. The way to estimate the revenue provided was according to the number of the population. Divide the revenue collected in Brisbane proportionately to population among the other towns of the colony, and it would be found that the revenue collected in Maryborough was much in excess of the other towns which had been named.

Mr. JORDAN said he agreed with the hon. member for Maryborough in saying that the wealth of a country was in its population. It struck him as an absurdity that they were to spend ten millions of money in making railways for the miserable handful of population they had. He had no hesitation in saying that they could not expend ten millions of money profitably unless they increased the population to a very large extent. He was very glad that the proposed railway was to be made, more especially when they took into consideration the statement that a great deal of the country through which it passed was suitable land for settlement. That was something which pleased him. He did not know how many lines of railway they had had before them during the present and past sessions; and in every case it had been stated without hesitation, by the Minister for Works, that there was a considerable quantity of land in the hands of the Government that was suitable for settlement. He was pleased at that because it entirely dispelled the ridiculous statements he had heard from time to time that there was no more land suitable for settlement by a farming population. He was very glad the Emu Park line was to be constructed, for another reason—because it would clear out of the way an obstacle which he understood existed in reference to the South Brisbane Railway. The hon. member for Mackay said the wants of the South had been carefully attended to but they had heard nothing about the extension of the South Brisbane branch of the Southern and Western Railway. The plans they knew nothing about. They had asked for them again and again, but they could not get them, and he understood that it was necessary some plans from the North should be dealt with first. He was glad they had got one set of plans from the North at last, because it cleared out of the way one obstacle to the extension of the South Brisbane Railway branch. He wished to take the opportunity of saying that his constituents were highly dissatisfied that the wants of the people in South Brisbane were being ignored to a great extent. Fifteen or sixteen years ago they expected that the great railway which was first made was to be extended from Ipswich to the capital of the colony, and that it was to go *viâ* South Brisbane; but by some jerrymandering, which he did not pretend to understand—by some skilful manipulation—that line was brought into North Brisbane at a very much increased cost. The people of South Brisbane considered they had a claim on that ground, and the late Government had conceded that claim by making the branch of the Southern and Western Railway to South Brisbane. Now they had the railways to the Tweed, the Logan, and to Tambourine, all in course of construction, and a very large passenger traffic would spring up in connection with them, but there was no possibility of the passengers reaching town except by taking a very long route indeed—down Stanley street, over the bridge, and then into Brisbane. A long time ago a very influential deputation waited upon the Minister for Works and got a promise that the South Brisbane Branch would be extended into Melbourne street; but they were now given to understand that there was a possibility of that idea not being carried out. His constituents were much annoyed about it. Possibly they had been treated so because some of them were not very loyal supporters of the Government. He wanted to satisfy his constituents, and should very much like to see the plans of the extension of the South Brisbane line into Melbourne street laid on the table of the House. Now that the plans of the Emu Park line had been laid on the table one difficulty had been cleared out of the way, and he should like to have an assurance that the extension to Melbourne street was actually going to take place. He was afraid he should be asking the Minister for Works questions again, in spite of the possibility that he might be considered very obtrusive and impertinent, as to when they would have the plans of the South Brisbane extension laid on the table of the House. Perhaps the hon. gentleman would be kind enough to tell them that they would be the next submitted to the Committee. If so, he would be satisfied.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said he did not know how many times he had told the hon. member for South Brisbane that it was the intention of the Government to extend the South Brisbane Railway into Melbourne street. He could not, however, say when the work would be commenced; the hon. member would have to wait till the plans were prepared.

Mr. JORDAN: They are prepared.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are not prepared.

Mr. JORDAN: I have seen them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said the most important thing in the whole affair had not yet been prepared—namely, information as to the value of the land that would have to be resumed. If the hon. gentleman thought he was going to rush him into that matter he was greatly mistaken. He (the Minister for Works) wanted to ascertain the area and value of the land to be resumed. Rome was not built in a day, and the Railway Department could not do all the work they had in hand at once. Let hon. members look at the plans already laid on the table, and they would see what an amount of work they had to do. He would like to see some of those plans cleared away before introducing many more.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would call the attention of the Minister for Works to one point in connection with the railway before the Committee. How did the hon. gentleman propose to meet the deficiency that would be created, seeing that the estimated cost of the proposed line was in excess of the amount set down in the Loan Act of 1884? In asking that question he would also allude to the only railway, the plans, sections, and book of reference of which had been passed by the Committee—namely, the Isis branch railway. The amount set down

for that line in the Loan Act of 1884 was £20,000. The hon. gentleman told the Committee the other night that the line, inclusive of buildings, etc., would cost £39,000, or almost double the amount voted by the House for that purpose. How did the hon. gentleman propose to make up that deficiency? He (Mr. Morehead) would now advert to the railway under discussion. The amount provided in the Loan Act of 1884 for that line was £64,000, and the estimated cost now put before the Committee was £87,500, which was an increase of nearly 33⅓ per cent. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the decision arrived at by the Committee in passing the Loan Act of 1884 was, that the amount to be borrowed should be allocated amongst certain lines, on a certain basis, they found that, in the case of the Isis branch line, it would cost about double the amount sanctioned by the Committee, and they were now asked to authorise the expenditure of a sum for the Emu Park railway, which was one-third in excess of the amount voted in the Loan Act of 1884. If sums of money were to be voted in excess of the amount allocated under that Act, somebody must suffer—some districts must suffer. Therefore, hon. gentlemen interested in railways would have to bestir themselves while it was yet day, before the night came, when no man could work. He thought hon. members could hardly have looked at the Loan Act, when they so readily voted £39,000 the other night for the Isis branch railway. He believed that the sum of £87,000, which the hon. gentleman said would be the cost of the Emu Park railway, would in no way meet the cost of that line, as he had it on good authority that the line would cost nearer £5,000 a mile than £3,500. The Minister for Works had administered a very severe reprimand to the hon. member for South Brisbane on the subject of compensation for land through which it was expected the extension of the South Brisbane line would pass. Had the hon. gentleman given the Committee any estimate of the amount of compensation that would have to be paid for land to be resumed for the Emu Park railway? He (Mr. Morehead) repeated that if they were to vote sums of money for railways in excess of the amount provided in the Loan Act—if money was to be wasted in the way it would be done in connection with the two lines so far brought before the Committee—then those who came in at the tail of the hunt would have nothing left for their railways. He would like to know from the Minister for Works how it was proposed to make up the extra money required for the construction of the works mentioned over and above the sum voted in the Loan Act of 1884?

Question, as amended, put, and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 34.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Chubb, Aland, Brookes, Foote, Black, Macrossan, Rutledge, White, Groom, Jordan, Wakefield, Bailey, Beattie, Buckland, Sheridan, Higson, Smyth, Mellor, Salkeld, Ferguson, Dickson, Macfarlane, Miles, Griffith, Dutton, Moreton, Kates, Isambert, Campbell, Wallace, Annear, and Scott.

NOES, 5.

Messrs. Norton, Govett, Hamilton, Morehead, and Nelson.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the resolution to the House.

The resolution was adopted.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to :—

By Mr. CHUBB—

That there be laid upon the table of the House all Correspondence between the Minister for Mines and the Bowen Gold Prospecting Association with reference to a subsidy of £400 for gold prospecting.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee, further to consider this Bill.

On clause 6, as follows :—

"When goods are imported into Queensland which, in the opinion of the Collector of Customs, certified by him to the Colonial Treasurer, are a substitute for known dutiable goods liable to a fixed rate of duty, or possess properties substantially the same as those of such dutiable goods, the Governor may by Order in Council direct that a duty be levied on such goods at the same rate as that payable on such dutiable goods or any less rate specified in the Order in Council.

"Every such Order in Council shall be published in the *Gazette* and one other newspaper published in Queensland, and a copy thereof shall be kept exhibited in the long-room or other public place in every Custom-house; and a copy of every such Order in Council shall be forthwith laid before both Houses of Parliament."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not think it necessary to make any further comment upon that clause. It had been fully explained on the second reading of the Bill, and also when the resolutions were before the Committee of Ways and Means, and he understood it had received the favourable comment of the hon. member who led the Opposition. It would be seen from the 2nd paragraph of the clause that a copy of every Order in Council levying such a duty as was proposed was to be laid before both Houses of Parliament, and, further, that it was to be published in the *Gazette* and in one other newspaper published in Queensland, and a copy was to be exhibited in the long-room or other public place in every Custom-house.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that on a former occasion the Colonial Treasurer, in speaking about the clause at present under discussion, told them that it was similar to the law existing in New South Wales; but was it not a fact that in New South Wales there was an appeal from the decision of the Collector of Customs? The clause proposed gave the Collector of Customs power to decide what goods were substituted for other goods that were dutiable. He believed the same thing existed in New South Wales, but if he was not mistaken there was an appeal there from the decision of the Collector of Customs, who was sometimes put right on the matter—the appeal was sometimes successful. It was scarcely right that they should put such an arbitrary power into the hands of the Collector of Customs, who certainly acted solely and wholly in the interests of the Government of the day. It would be much better if the power were put into the hands of some disinterested person. He thought that in New South Wales there were three commissioners who were appointed to decide in cases of appeal whether the Collector of Customs was right in his decision or not. Perhaps the Colonial Treasurer would be able to inform the Committee how the case stood in New South Wales?

Mr. SHERIDAN said that under the Customs Act cases of that description might be referred to those commissioners. They frequently had been referred to those commissioners. It applied to Queensland as well as New South Wales.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the wording of the New South Wales Act was as follows—clause 133 :—

"Whenever any article of merchandise then unknown to the Collector is imported which in the opinion of the Collector or of the commissioners is apparently a substitute for any known dutiable article or is apparently designed to evade duty but possesses properties in the whole or in part which can be used or were intended to be applied for a similar purpose as such dutiable article it shall be lawful for the Governor to direct that a duty be levied on such article at a rate to be fixed in proportion to the degree in which such unknown article

approximates in its qualities or uses to such dutiable article and such rate thus fixed shall be published in a Treasury order in the *Gazette* and one other newspaper published in Sydney and exhibited in the long-room or other public place in the Custom-house. And a copy of all such orders shall without unnecessary delay be laid before both Houses of Parliament."

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition: There is more than that.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That is the whole of the clause.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said he had no doubt that was the whole of the clause, but if the Treasurer read the whole of the Act he would find that there was a power given, outside of the Act, to decide upon the Collector's decisions. It was like a court of appeal, and sometimes the Collector was incorrect in his decision. He had the information on the very best authority.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the Colonial Secretary had pointed out to him that under the 30th section of their own Customs Regulation Act there was an appeal to the Governor in Council. The clause said :—

"In case any such master, owner, merchant, importer, shipper, exporter, or agent shall feel himself aggrieved by the determination of the Collector or Treasurer in any of the cases aforesaid, or have any ground of complaint against any officer in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by such officer in or about the execution of his duty, such person shall upon an application in writing to the Governor in Council, to be made within one week after such determination, which application shall state the substance of his complaint or the reasons of his dissatisfaction with such determination, be entitled to have the facts and circumstances of such complaint or determination inquired into."

And then the Governor in Council appointed persons to inquire into it.

Mr. MOREHEAD said it must be perfectly well known to the Colonial Treasurer that there was a board of advice or reference—or a board of appeal as it might be called—consisting of three commissioners, in New South Wales, two of whom he could name; and to those persons cases in which the decision of the Collector of Customs was disputed were referred. Did the hon. gentleman mean to tell him that there was the same opportunity for appeal in this colony?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Then who are the gentlemen who form the board of advice?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that the hon. gentleman was perfectly correct in stating that there were commissioners in New South Wales to whom such an appeal could be made, but under the 24th clause of the Customs Regulations Act of New South Wales their decision was to be subject to the disallowance of the Governor in Council. So that the appeal rested virtually with the Governor in Council. The same power he had pointed out existed in this colony under the 30th clause of the Queensland Act which he had just quoted.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he differed from the hon. gentleman. The same power did not exist here. There was a filtering process to be gone through in New South Wales. There was a middle board or body to be referred to before the question had to be decided by the Governor in Council. According to the rule laid down by the Colonial Treasurer—if he understood him rightly—the appeal under the present Bill would have to be made direct to the Governor in Council. An appeal to the Executive Council against a decision arrived at by a member of the Executive Council himself was not likely to be of much avail. In New South Wales, a reference was to be made to a body of gentlemen who stood between the Collector of Customs and the final appeal. There the question to be decided was the difference between the decision arrived at by the Collector of Customs and the decision arrived at by the commissioners. That was the question that was decided by the Governor in Council, and it was vastly different from the state of affairs proposed under the present Bill. It was a very much improved state of affairs, and it would be a good thing if the Colonial Treasurer would introduce into the measure an amendment so as to make the law similar to that prevailing in New South Wales.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not think any benefit would accrue to the public from the appointment of commissioners. On the contrary, the administration of the department would only be rendered more cumbersome. It was not desirable to inflict any unnecessary work upon the people who had business with the Customs Department. The present system had worked very well, and no complaints had been made, nor had any case of hardship occurred. Hon. members seemed to ignore the fact that the object of the clause was simply to legalise what was being done by the department at the present time, and which might furnish matter for litigation at any moment. It was not introducing any new practice into the department. No doubt was entertained as to the propriety of the charges that were being made, still it was open to the public to challenge them at any moment, and subject the department to a great deal of inconvenience.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said that at first he had a good deal of sympathy with the clause, and thought it was greatly wanted. The more it was investigated, however, the more he found that it did not contain those good qualities which the Colonial Treasurer believed it to possess. The hon. gentleman said its object was simply to legalise what was the actual practice in the Customs Department at the present time, but he forgot that he was putting the Collector of Customs in the position of a judge of the Supreme Court. Under the existing system both the Collector and the importers knew that they had the fear of the law before them. If the Collector made an improper decision the law could be appealed to, and the Collector, knowing that, was induced to act with a great deal of judiciousness. The effect of the clause would be to put an immense power into the Collector's hands—a power that certainly ought not to be given him. The Collector of Customs would have to decide, without an appeal to the law courts, certain things which he decided before with an appeal to the law courts; and very strong reasons indeed ought to be given before they altered the existing law in that respect. Look at the evidence of the power given to the Collector of Customs :—

"When goods are imported into Queensland which, in the opinion of the Collector of Customs, certified by him to the Colonial Treasurer, are a substitute for known dutiable goods liable to a fixed rate of duty."

Parliament, in imposing a duty upon a certain specific article, never intended that every other imported article which might be used for the same purpose should be subject to the same duty. Supposing, for instance, Parliament imposed a duty of 1s. a bushel on maize, an article which was used for horse-feed, it did not follow that an import duty of 1s. a bushel should be charged on oats, because they also were horse-feed. And yet that was what would be done if the clause were allowed to become law. The Colonial Treasurer would say, "Oats are used as horse-feed in the same way as maize; I will ask the Government to issue an Order in Council putting a duty of 1s. a bushel on oats." It would be giving a power to the Treasurer and to the Collector of Customs that was never

contemplated by Parliament. The clause, he thought after full consideration, was a most objectionable one. It was not the ease and comfort of the Collector of Customs, or of Ministers, that should be considered, but the ease and comfort of the public—of the merchants and importers. Supposing certain articles had been imported year after year, and the importers had laid out a good deal of money in establishing a connection for them, and supposing the Treasurer were to suddenly come down with a tariff of that kind, he might cripple a long-standing trade, or even stop it entirely. It was necessary that an importer should know exactly what his expenses were—the amount of duty he had to pay. Under that clause, if a merchant imported goods at 5 per cent *ad valorem* duty, he might find, after the goods were landed, that he had to pay a different tariff altogether; and that took away from his certainty. Parliament was the body to change the tariff; and to give such undefined but evidently very large powers to the Government and the Collector of Customs was objectionable. It would be far better to bear the existing evils, especially as, according to the Treasurer, no complaints had been made and no hardships incurred. The only effect of the clause would be to remove a very wholesome check—that was, an appeal to the Supreme Court if the merchant thought the Collector of Customs was not acting according to law.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it might be inferred from the speech of the hon. gentleman that the Government intended to make a sudden change in the tariff.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: What I said was that it would give them power to do so.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said all that was intended was to legalise the action of the department in regard to commodities that were of an uncertain character. He had pointed out, when in Committee of Ways and Means, that there was a growing difficulty in the department, owing to the increased importation of articles used as substitutes for other articles on which a higher rate of duty was charged; and unless those articles were exactly defined in the schedule, at any moment the decision of the Collector of Customs might be objected to. The clause had been found of great advantage in New South Wales, and had not been attended with those disastrous results anticipated by the leader of the Opposition. It was certainly not desirable that the Collector of Customs should continue to perform that particular duty without feeling sure of the legal ground on which he stood. He had introduced the clause with the object of conferring upon the Collector of Customs the right to decide as to the value of those commodities, and to save him from the perplexity which must continue so long as the matter remained in a state of uncertainty. The best argument he could use was the advantages which had been felt in New South Wales—where there was much larger trade, and where no doubt a much larger number of articles of an uncertain character had to be dealt with—from the operation of a similar clause, which had been commented upon by the Comptroller of Customs of that colony in a memorandum that he read to hon. members on the first night that the resolutions were considered in Committee of Ways and Means. It would not affect the tariff at the present time. It was not with that view that he introduced the clause, but because he considered it a salutary one. Of course hon. members of the Opposition were always averse to entrusting plenary powers to the Governor in Council. They had a wholesome dread of that until they assumed the responsibilities of office themselves, when their opinions in that direction underwent quite a change. However, they need not imagine that under the clause the Government were going to make a crusade against all the importers in the colony with a view to disturb the ordinary course of trade. He submitted that the clause was a very salutary one—that it would do a great deal of good in the direction of maintaining fair play, and not give advantages to importers who encouraged the speculative manufacture of goods for the purpose of introducing them at a lower rate of duty than the known articles. It would do a great amount of good by checking that unfair speculative trade which was now being daily enlarged.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said if the Treasurer would take the statement which had been published illustrative of the operation of the clause, and tell the Committee on which of the items the Collector of Customs had got into difficulties, they would be able to understand the matter better. He had looked down the first column—from "almond cakes" to "Chinese flour"—while the Treasurer was speaking, and he could not see any difficulty in dealing with the articles mentioned. Supposing, for instance, that the Collector of Customs came to the conclusion that all those articles should pay, not *ad valorem*, but fixed duties, the same as were payable on the articles in the second column he believed the Committee would say he was perfectly justified in doing so. At any rate, he was quite sure that nobody who imported those articles would ever dream of appealing to law to upset the decision. He was certain that no man who imported "almond cakes" would appeal against the decision of the Collector of Customs if he held that they should pay duty as "biscuits"; and the same with regard to "anchovy paste" being classed as "preserved fish." He would like to know where the difficulty came in, because, reading down the list, the matter seemed as plain as possible. He knew that difficulties had arisen at times, but they could not have arisen in regard to the articles mentioned in the list.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said difficulties had arisen in regard to the items mentioned. Although no one in his senses would imagine that they furnished any ground whatever for doubt or dispute, yet some of them had formed the subject of most voluminous correspondence with the Treasury. For instance, under the head of "preparations of soap" there were soap powder, borax soap, and several things of that sort which served all the practical purposes of soap in the prepared form, and which had been admitted at *ad valorem*. Then there was "chocolate and milk": it would be said at once that that should pay duty as "chocolate," but it was of a different character to the solid chocolate upon which a duty of 4d. per lb. could be levied, and therefore it was admitted at *ad valorem*. He could not go through the whole list, not having had experience of the whole of the details, but that was a fair sample of the perplexity that had arisen in connection with the admission of several of those articles. He could only say, in reply to the hon. the leader of the Opposition, that there had been frequent appeals made to the Treasury in regard to similar articles concerning the duty demanded by the Collector of Customs.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Why do you allow an appeal in such cases?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It was his duty to receive any representations sent to him to see that no injustice was unwittingly perpetrated upon any member of the public.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he would like to see the correspondence the hon. gentleman had referred to as having taken place respecting some of the items mentioned. He thought the Collector of Customs was very much wanting in firmness—he was sorry to say so—if he could not decide such matters at once. There need be no difficulty whatever about nine-tenths of the articles enumerated on the list if the Collector of Customs just put his foot down, said what his decision was, and that if the importer did not like it he could go to law. The matter was too absurd. He objected, with the leader of the Opposition, to the 6th clause, because it distinctly took away from any importer the right of appeal which existed at the present time. He was to be left solely at the mercy of the Collector of Customs and the Colonial Treasurer, for an appeal to the Governor in Council would be only an appeal to the Colonial Treasurer again. He did not see why the Treasurer should not adopt the system in existence in New South Wales—that was to have a middle board of commissioners to whom an importer could appeal against the decision of the Collector of Customs. If the commissioners agreed with the Collector there the matter ended; but if there was any difference of opinion an appeal would lie to the Governor in Council, and then and only then was the Treasurer brought in to offer his opinion or to decide the matter; and even after that decision was given he believed the party could appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Governor in Council. There all those rights were left in the hands of the subject, but it was proposed by the clause to take away every one of them. There would be no appeal whatever except the nominal one to the Governor in Council, so that after the Collector of Customs and the Treasurer had given their decision the unfortunate importer must give up all hope. He did not think that they should be called upon—by a Liberal Government—to pass legislation that lessened the rights of the subject as that clause most distinctly did. It was putting utterly despotic power in the hands of the Treasurer and the Government for the time being. There was an amount of freedom before, because, as the hon. the leader of the Opposition had pointed out, there was always the right of appeal to the Supreme Court—the Collector of Customs had that before his eyes and so had the importer—but now the Collector was to be placed in the position almost of an absolute monarch who could do just as he pleased. It was certainly not a step in the right direction. He did not see why they should make the Customs Regulations any stricter than they were at present, or why the liberty of the importer should be more trammelled than at present. He hoped that the Treasurer would see his way to let the existing state of things continue, or, failing that, that he would adopt the system that prevailed in New South Wales.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the clause in the Customs Regulations Act of New South Wales relating to this question said:—

"Whenever any article of merchandise then unknown to the collector is imported, which in the opinion of the collector or of the commissioners is apparently a substitute for any known dutiable goods," etc.

They did not do there what was proposed to be done here, which was to give power to the Collector of Customs and the Government to raise the duty upon articles that at present came into the market paying *ad valorem* to fixed duties. That was not the intention nor the effect of the New South Wales Act. The power there was only given in case of articles previously unknown to the Collector of Customs, and it would not be a bad thing to give that power to the Collector here. The Parliament in New South Wales fixed the articles on which duties were to be paid, and then they made provision against the introduction of other articles made in imitation of those on which duties were charged. What was now proposed was to give the Collector of Customs power to revise the tariff. The Colonial Treasurer had referred to preparations of soap. Now, that probably did not convey any very clear idea to the minds of any hon. member, and the Colonial Treasurer should have explained it to the Committee. The man who introduced that article had been selling it for a number of years; he had established a good trade; and his right to introduce the article without paying specific duty had never been challenged, or at any rate the Collector of Customs had been frightened to go to law on the subject. The Colonial Treasurer now came and tried to get at that man by a side-wind. That was not a fair way to treat Parliament. When they were revising a tariff they ought to know what they were about. If the man was right in getting his goods by only paying the *ad valorem* duty, it was not fair he should be made to pay a duty the House never intended to impose. He (Sir T. McIlwraith) believed the whole clause was framed with the view of getting at one or two men; and if that were the case, why should not the specific articles be put in the tariff so that they might know what they were doing?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could assure the Committee there was no intention on the part of the Government of harassing any one or two men. He had simply mentioned those cases because correspondence had come to him in the Treasury with regard to them. The hon. member had made a good point in saying that the 133rd clause of the New South Wales Act only gave the Comptroller of Customs authority in cases where articles were imported previously unknown to him; but the working of the Act did not bear out that view. He would read again to the Committee an extract from a report made to the Colonial Treasurer of New South Wales by the Comptroller of Customs with regard to the effect of that clause, and it would be seen that most of the articles mentioned were by no means new, although they had afforded an opportunity for evading the Customs. The Comptroller of Customs said:—

"The 133rd section of the Customs Regulation Act has been of great value in the first collection of duties imposed by the tariff. Without this clause, and by a literal reading of items chargeable with duty as imposed by Parliament, the purposes and intentions of such taxation might be evaded by misdescription of entry, or by disguising the articles. The effect of the clause has been to impose a check, and the advantage of that check will become speedily apparent if its action is withdrawn. The amount of Customs duty saved by the operation of the clause is negative in character, but we have daily illustrations of its value; and even though so short a time has elapsed since doubt has been thrown on the validity of the clause in question, I have been threatened with claims for the refund of duties charged (I think fairly) under its provisions. I give a few of the items under which the 133rd section has been made to apply:—Acid, acetic, as opposing duty on vinegar; beer, condensed, ditto on beer; benzine, ditto on turpentine; Japans (various), ditto on varnish; candy, ditto on sugar; cartridges containing shot, ditto on shot; cartridges containing powder, ditto on powder; casements, ditto on sashes; castorine, ditto on castor oil; chicory root, ditto on chicory; chillies, ground, ditto on spices; chocolate creams, ditto on confectionery; chocolate sticks, ditto on chocolate; chromes, ditto on paints; cigarettes, ditto on cigars; fruits, canned, ditto on preserves. I will not risk becoming wearisome by continuing the list, which I am sure might be extended to more than 200 separate articles to which frequent additions are made."

Now, none of those articles could be classed as having been new to the Comptroller of Customs.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the hon. member had only proved that in New

South Wales the Comptroller of Customs had gone a long way beyond the law, and that should simply make the Committee careful about the power they put in the hands of the Government by an indefinite clause. The position of the Government was very good at present. They had actually raised duty on all those articles, and none of the importers had taken advantage of their right to appeal to a court of law. That showed that the Government had been collecting the duties fairly. So far as he could see, there had been no hardship; and if there had been nervousness on the part of the Treasurer or the Collector of Customs lest they should be obliged to appear in a law court, that was only what they must expect to undergo in the performance of their duty. A man now, who imported any article, knew what duty he had to pay; but if they gave the proposed power to the Collector of Customs no merchant was safe. At the present time the merchant knew that if any action was taken by the Collector he had an appeal to the law.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that since the adjournment for tea he had given consideration to the arguments made use of by hon. members regarding the absence of any appeal, under the clause before the Committee, to the Governor in Council, and while he did not see the dangers which were represented as likely to accrue to the community through the absence of such appeal, yet, with a view of protecting the public he had consulted with the Premier, and with his assistance a clause had been printed, which he intended, with the permission of the Committee, to add to clause 6. It would be observed that the original clause said:—

"6. When goods are imported into Queensland which, in the opinion of the Collector of Customs, certified by him to the Colonial Treasurer, are a substitute for known dutiable goods liable to a fixed rate of duty, or possess properties substantially the same as those of such dutiable goods, the Governor may by Order in Council direct that a duty be levied on such goods at the same rate as that payable on such dutiable goods or any less rate specified in the Order in Council."

He now proposed to amend the clause by providing that instead of the Governor in Council issuing the orders the Minister should do so, and the following addition would be proposed to follow at the end of the clause:—

"If any importer or other person by whom duty is payable in respect of any such goods disputes the correctness of the rate of duty so determined by the Treasurer, he may appeal from the Treasurer's order in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as are prescribed by the thirtieth section of the Customs Act of 1873. And therefore the same proceedings shall be had and taken as are prescribed with respect to appeals under the provisions of that section."

Hon. members would notice that it was necessary to substitute "Minister" for "Governor in Council," inasmuch as no appeal could be made from an order of the Council. It was the Minister who would direct or approve of the action of the Collector, and upon the action of the Minister an appeal could be made directly to the Governor in Council. If hon. gentlemen would refer to the 30th section of the Customs Act of 1873 they would find in what manner an appeal would be conducted. The section said:—

"In case any such master, owner, merchant, importer, shipper, exporter, or agent shall feel himself aggrieved by the determination of the Collector or Treasurer in any of the cases aforesaid, or have any ground of complaint against any officer in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by such officer in or about the execution of his duty, such person shall, upon an application in writing to the Governor in Council, to be made within one week after such determination, which application shall state the substance of his complaint or the reasons of his dissatisfaction with such determination, be entitled to have the facts and circumstances of such complaint or determination inquired into."

He thought that would be an improvement on the proposed scheme. It certainly relieved the public from any apprehension of any arbitrary conduct on the part of the Collector of Customs or the Treasurer in judging of the value of imported goods. If hon. members would consult their copy of the Bill and follow him he would point out the alterations proposed to be made. In the 31st line it was proposed to omit the word "Governor" and insert the word "Treasurer"; in the same line to omit the words "in Council" and insert "under his hand"; in the 34th line to omit the words "in Council"; in the 35th line to omit the words "in Council"; in the 38th line to omit the words "in Council"; and at the end of the clause to add the amendment which he had moved.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the scheme of the Government was changed with regard to the clause before the Committee. What was proposed to be done now was to provide that the Collector of Customs should report to the Treasurer, who would make an order, and from that order the importer had the right of appeal to the Governor in Council, who was to appoint two persons to inquire into the subject-matter of such appeal. There was still some vagueness about the matter. Of course the Governor in Council was supposed to be guided by the report of the persons appointed to investigate the complaint.

Mr. CHUBB said he was glad the amendment had been introduced, because it was quite clear that the Treasurer was a little in error when he said the Customs Act gave the right of appeal. It was perfectly clear that the right given by the Customs Act would not apply in cases that might arise under the 6th clause of that Bill. He had intended to call attention to that fact immediately the Committee resumed, but the Treasurer had anticipated him, and he was glad to see the hon. gentleman introduce the amendment.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he would like to hear the Treasurer explain the amendment a little more fully. What improvement was it upon the present law? They were now making a change in the law, and they ought to make it clearer. Supposing, under the present circumstances, the Collector of Customs or Treasurer came to a certain decision with regard to the amount of duty to be levied on certain goods, then, according to the amendment, the importer might appeal from that decision to the Governor in Council. That was the law at the present time. Then what improvement was made by the amendment? There was not the slightest difference in the two provisions as far as he could see.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that upon the Treasurer issuing an order under his hand it would be at once publicly announced what was the action taken with regard to certain articles, which at the present time was undetermined or unknown. It would also enable the Collector of Customs to know that he was acting on safe ground and that his action was confirmed. Under the original Act there was a doubt whether the right of appeal could be maintained. He was quite willing that the right of appeal should be maintained, and, without wishing to alter the existing law with regard to the right of appeal, he thought it was well that the articles concerning which doubts had arisen should be known to the public as bearing a specific rate of duty.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he understood that by the action proposed to be taken under that clause the public would know

sooner than they did under the present law that certain articles would be subjected to a certain duty by the Treasurer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that virtually the law would remain exactly as it was now without the amendment. But there was another aspect of the question. That amendment might lead to something worse. At the present time they had certain fixed duties, and those would appear as the tariff of the colony; then they would have running alongside that tariff certain Orders in Council, or orders of the Treasurer, which would not have the same effect as the tariff but which might be appealed from. Now, was it worth while to make a confusion in the law which would give so very little advantage to the public? The information the Treasurer wanted to convey to the public was that he would take certain action when certain things were introduced. There would then be, as he (Sir Thomas McIlwraith) had said, two tariffs—one the tariff of the land, another the tariff or orders of the Treasurer, which might be appealed from to the Governor in Council. That would be an inconvenience. The Treasurer would certainly gain by the proposal, but he would be creating confusion in the tariff. He hoped the hon. gentleman understood what he meant—namely, that there would be really two tariffs, one of which had received the sanction of Parliament, and the other the tariff of the Colonial Treasurer, which might be appealed from to the Governor in Council.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not follow the hon. gentleman. His argument was very ingeniously put. There were not, however, two tariffs. The tariff would not in any way be altered, but a classification of the articles which might be affected by that tariff would be at once laid before the public. The tariff fixed duties which were payable upon a certain commodity. Commodities which were introduced into the colony would either have to pay the fixed duty imposed upon the goods for which they were substitutes or would be admitted on payment of the *ad valorem* duty. Instead of establishing a new tariff the amendment would simply enable them to make a classification of the substituted goods as they arrived, and they would, as he had said, either be admitted on the fixed duty payable on the known commodity or at the *ad valorem* duty. The tariff would remain unaltered, but the classification would be made more intelligible.

Mr. CHUBB said in that case the last line of clause 6 would have to be altered, because it said "or any less rate specified in the Order in Council." It gave the Treasurer power to make the rate less than the tariff.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was obliged to the hon. gentleman for pointing out the defect in the clause. The intention was not to alter the duties fixed on goods, but to define whether goods should come in under the fixed rates or under *ad valorem* duty; and he was willing to omit the words "or any less rate specified in the Order in Council."

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that if the clause was passed it would have to be worded in a peculiar way so as to draw the attention of importers to the fact that certain duties were levied but were subject to appeal to the Governor in Council. There were two classes of duties—one fixed by law, the other by the Treasurer on the Orders in Council. The law said that all sorts of preserved fish and so on, as shown in the second column of the list of articles, were subject to certain fixed duties; but alongside were the orders of the Treasury to say that almond cakes and so on were to be taken as the articles in the adjoining column opposite which they were placed. They would have to appear as points not absolutely fixed—not the tariff of the colony, but the practice of the Treasurer in levying duties. Was it worth while for the small amount of good that would result to have such a cumbrous system? The Colonial Treasurer had told them that the clause was introduced for the purpose of getting over a small departmental inconvenience; but a great public inconvenience was being substituted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the clause might be taken as an excellent interpretation clause in the interests of the mercantile community. The hon. member for Blackall, having had experience of the department, could bear him out in saying that it would do away with a good deal of misrepresentation.

Amendment put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the words "under his hand" were substituted for the words "in Council," in the 31st line.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the words "or any less rate specified in the Order in Council" were omitted.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the words "in Council" were omitted from lines 35 and 38.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the following be added to the clause:—

> If any importer or other person by whom duty is payable in respect of any such goods disputes the correctness of the rate of duty so determined by the Treasurer, he may appeal from the Treasurer's order in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as are prescribed by the 30th section of the Customs Act of 1873. And therefore the same proceedings shall be had and taken as are prescribed with respect to appeals under the provisions of that section.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that the new paragraph should read, "subject to the same conditions as are prescribed by the 30th and subsequent sections of the Customs Act of 1873."

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Those sections are consequent upon the 30th section.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, and 36th sections dealt with those appeals. The clause should not cite the section at all, but simply say "as prescribed by the Customs Act of 1873."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought it better to cite the section, and it would certainly be more convenient, as the Customs Act was a very long one.

Mr. CHUBB said the point was that the 30th section did not include the whole procedure. There was only one mode of appeal in the Customs Act, and if the clause said, "as are prescribed by the Customs Act of 1873," it would include the whole of the procedure.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said it was really immaterial. The clause indicated the section in the Act in which the mode of appeal was described.

Mr. CHUBB: It does not.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that what happened after the appeal was made to the Governor in Council was set out in the following sections which were dependent upon the 30th section.

Amendment agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 7, as follows:—

> "When any goods, which in a raw or unmanufactured state would be liable to a lower rate of duty on importation, are before importation subjected to

any treatment which, in the opinion of the Collector of Customs, certified by him to the Colonial Treasurer and confirmed by the Colonial Treasurer, has been applied by way of partial conversion, or preparation for the conversion, of such goods into an article of merchandise which would be liable on importation to a higher rate of duty, but so that the goods cannot fairly be charged with such higher rate, then such goods shall be liable on importation into Queensland to duty at a rate equal to one-half of the duty which would be chargeable upon the article of merchandise into which they have been so partially converted or prepared to be converted."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the clause had also been explained on a previous occasion, and in Committee of Ways and Means. It referred to goods arriving in the colony in a partially manufactured state. He had given the instance of pork, which arrived salted, and was received with an *ad valorem* duty of something less than ½d. per pound, and after being subjected to a process of smoking in the colony it virtually became bacon, which paid an import duty of 2d. per pound. The intention of the clause was, without disparaging the introduction of an article for manufacture here, to have a duty upon a partially manufactured article more approximate to the value of the article into which it was to be manufactured. He admitted at once that the clause introduced a new tariff, and would require a new classification. For instance, they could not charge upon pork in salt the fixed duty charged upon bacon. By the clause, if passed, it was intended that it should be charged at half the rate charged upon bacon—namely, 1d. per pound.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he thought the clause would be very useful, but he would like to know how the Treasurer came to the conclusion that half the duty should be charged. In some cases the process undertaken with partially manufactured articles would go a long way towards their conversion into the dutiable articles, but in other cases the process might go only a small way. In what way did the Treasurer come to charge half the duty of the dutiable article in all cases?

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was thought the margin of half the duty would be a sufficient encouragement to cover the cost of manufacture in the colony. They had not had a very large experience of articles that would come under the clause, which was introduced with a view of preparing for a large quantity of goods of that character coming in. The actual duty paid on salt pork to which he had referred was ¾d. They thought that duty might be fairly raised to 1d. without diminishing the industry, as the odd penny would allow a sufficient margin to operate upon. He could not say that the calculation was mathematically correct; at the same time it was made in a spirit of fair play which should commend itself to the Committee.

Mr. PALMER said he scarcely thought the clause was framed simply for the purpose of providing a duty on salt pork, and it would be advisable to enlighten the Committee on other articles which the clause would affect, as was done with clause 6. There was rope-making, for instance—how would the importation of hemp be affected? And articles used in paper-making, and a good many other manufactures, would be affected by it. On all that the Committee ought to have some enlightenment, and then they would understand the clause a good deal better than they did at present.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he would take the case of tobacco, which paid a duty of 2s. 6d. per pound. Supposing a manufacturer outside the colony worked up tobacco into the last stage before it became cigars, so that only one process remained to be gone through before it became the finished article—if it was to be charged only one-half the duty of imported cigars, 5s., it would get into the colony on paying only 2s. 6d. per pound. Then there was the case of coffee. The ordinary manufactured coffee of commerce paid 6d. per pound. Supposing coffee was imported in such a state that it only required some small process to make it into the ordinary coffee of commerce, it would get in at the rate of 3d., whereas the duty on raw coffee was 4d. per pound. In that case there would be a decrease instead of an increase in the duty. The late Government endeavoured to get at the same result that the Colonial Treasurer was now aiming at, but they considered each article on its own merits. For instance, there was a duty of 3d. a pound on stearine candles, and the manufacturers evaded the duty by importing the stearine—which paid a good deal less—and made the candles in the colony. Under that clause, stearine would have to pay only 1½d. a pound, which was a good deal too little. Could not some means be devised by which the judgment of the Colonial Treasurer might be exercised in fixing the duties on the different articles? In two of the instances he had mentioned the operation of the clause would result in a distinct loss to the Treasury. Partially manufactured coffee would pay a lower rate of duty than raw coffee, and tobacco manufactured very nearly to the extent of the finished cigar would get in at the same duty as ordinary tobacco.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman had not been particularly happy in the cases he had selected, and had furnished him with an excellent argument for the clause they had just passed. If tobacco or coffee came into the colony in a partially manufactured state they would be at once caught by clause 6. The Collector having certified that they were substitutes for the fully prepared article, they would at once be classed as cigars and coffee, and charged accordingly. With regard to the remark of the hon. member for Burke, there were several other articles in addition to pork that would be affected by the clause, but pork was the chief article. Pulp fruit was imported in large quantities at ½d. duty, as against jam, which was charged at the rate of 1d. per pound. That might fairly be increased to one-half of the charge for jam. Then there was lemon-peel, dried, which paid a very small *ad valorem* rate, as against candied peel which was charged 2d. per pound. Lately there had been a lot of lemon-peel introduced in a pickled form, which by some further process of manufacture was converted into candied peel, which paid a duty of 2d. per pound. The list was not a large one, and the clause would enable them to fix a reasonable rate of duty on the articles which came under it.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said the Colonial Treasurer would more easily meet the objection that had been raised by omitting all reference to duty at one-half, and putting in the power to appeal, the same as existed in the other clause. In some cases the revenue would lose by fixing the duty at one-half that on the manufactured article, and in other cases the duty would be increased too much. By leaving out the one-half and giving the power to appeal, it would make the matter fair for the Treasury, and fair for the importer also. With regard to the importation of pulp fruit, the hon. gentleman should have told the Committee that although it only pays one-eighth of a penny per pound, as compared with jam, which pays 1d. per pound, the article is almost entirely manufactured in the colony. The hon. gentleman should also have told them

that there were factories here now which were not in existence twelve or eighteen months ago, which employed a large number of hands; and they consumed, in the continued manufacture of the article, a very large amount of dutiable goods which fully compensated for the difference between ½d. on pulp fruit and 1d. on jams. All the tins and all the cases were made here, there was a duty on the timber, and there was also the value of the labour. If the hon. gentleman would only look around he would see that it was a benefit to the colony that pulp fruit should come in at ½d. He (Mr. Macrossan) was certain that the country gained more by it than by the imported article at 1d. He thought the suggestion he had made would meet the case entirely.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the argument of the hon. member for Townsville reversed what was advocated by the leader of the Opposition when dealing with the 6th clause. The hon. gentleman objected then to the Treasurer or Collector of Customs framing a separate and distinct tariff, and he (the Colonial Treasurer) thought it was far better that the tariff itself should be definite, although a classification of the goods might be made from time to time. They had passed the 6th clause in that form. There had been no alteration in the tariff, but power of classification was given. But in the 7th clause there was, as he had said, a distinct change in the tariff, and instead of leaving the matter in the hands of the Collector or of the Treasurer, it was better that the rate should be determined. He thought that one-half of the duty would be quite sufficient to protect the revenue, and at the same time it would not be at all oppressive, or in any way discouraging to the unmanufactured or partially manufactured commodity. He quite admitted the benefits that accrued from the establishment of industries such as the hon. member for Townsville had referred to, and he had endeavoured to encourage them by admitting the unmanufactured article at a lower rate of duty than the manufactured. It had been brought in under stringent conditions that it should not enter into consumption until it had undergone a further process of manufacture; and he was of opinion that even if it had to come in under the 7th clause the increased duty would not be at all oppressive. However, if they were to have the clause in the Bill, it would be better to have the duty fixed than to leave it to the Government of the day to determine what it should be.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said in that case it would be better to increase the duty on each article. That would be framing a new tariff.

Mr. ISAMBERT said in considering the tariff it was the duty of the Government not so much to see that the revenue was protected, as that the general interests of the country were protected, and its industries encouraged. The industries of a country were its life; without industries any country would soon come to the ground. With regard to pulp fruit it must be remembered that before it became an article of consumption it was reduced by nearly one-half, and, therefore, charging a duty on it at the rate proposed was very nearly the same as was paid when it was manufactured. If the importation of such fruit would interfere with the fruit producers of the colony it would be wrong to admit it at so low a rate, but so far from such being the case he believed that it rather served them. The variety of fruit grown in Queensland that was suitable for manufacture into jam was very limited, and the introduction of pulp fruit—choice fruit to which the public were accustomed—not only encouraged the establishment of jam factories here, but at the same time offered a sure market for the surplus fruit of the colony that would not be sold in shops for ordinary consumption. Therefore it was decidedly serving their farmers and fruit-growers instead of acting against them. Moreover, if jam was imported from the other colonies, ten to one that the sugar so imported in the jam would be a foreign product, while, on the other hand, if the jam was manufactured in the colony the sugar grown here would be consumed; and in the present depressed state of the sugar industry they must be very jealous not to lose a single customer for that article. Besides that, packing amounted to a considerable item in connection with the jam trade. For instance, the tins, the labels, and even the very timber of which the boxes were made, had to pay duty when entering the colony, and even when the timber used was the product of their own forests, and therefore had not to pay duty, it had to pay a royalty; so that it would be manifestly unfair if the duty on pulp was raised, particularly as the business of jam-making had not been very long established here, and also, because the factories had been established under certain concessions given by the Governor in Council. The Government should be very careful not to play with the industries of the colony. They had not so many industries established that they could play fast and loose with them; and most of the industries of the colony being now under a cloud, those which were in a flourishing condition ought to be treated with the utmost care. To give hon. members an idea of how far those factories were a benefit to the colony he might state that he knew one, which had not been established many months, that was now employing about fifty persons, with the prospect of increasing the employment. He might also state that at the present time the jam factories in Tasmania, which, judging from the large buildings they had there—three or four stories high—must have been employing from 100 to 200 people, were standing idle, or at the outside employing only about a dozen or two dozen people in preparing pulp fruit—that was, subjecting fruit to no other process than was sufficient to keep it for export and bring it to the colony. Now, it was the progress of the industry in the other colonies that had injured Tasmania, and Queensland was far more benefited by it than Tasmania was injured. One patriotic statesman in Tasmania, who was a member of the Ministry, and also a jam manufacturer, had managed to pull the wires so as to injure his enterprising rivals in the other colonies. One jam manufacturer in Tasmania had sons established in other colonies, one of them in Brisbane. He was erecting buildings and employing men, and by giving him this opportunity they had attracted a most valuable colonist, for the manufacturer was the most valuable colonist they could get—he brought money, on which the colony had to pay no interest. He (Mr. Isambert) was very jealous of their industries; they had none to spare, and he should do his best to protect them.

Mr. NORTON said he thought it would be a mistake to impose a duty on the pulp imported for jam-making. When it arrived it was converted to the same purpose as the fruit if brought in its natural state, and the fruit was allowed to be imported without any duty being paid. One reason why they should be very careful in dealing with the matter was that at the present time there was great difficulty in getting a sufficient supply of fruit to keep up the jam manufactures. He knew that, in the case of a factory established some time ago in Rockhampton, they could not get enough fruit to keep them going. It was the same in Brisbane, and when the fruits of the country failed they imported fruit from the other colonies and made it into jam that would otherwise

have been made out of the colony. He did not see the slightest difference between the fruit in its natural state and in the pulp, except a difference in favour of our own industries. The only object of importing it in that shape was to avoid the expense and loss attending the carriage of the green fruit.

Mr. FOOTE said he agreed with the view of the last two speakers so far as the importation of fruit was concerned. If the clause applied only to pork it would not much matter, but he was very jealous of the industries started in the colony which employed a large number of hands. They spent large sums of money on immigration, and they should be very careful not to drive population away. He hoped the Treasurer would modify the clause so that it would not bear on fruit, otherwise he should feel obliged to vote against the clause if it went to a division.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the case stated by the Colonial Treasurer was only given in illustration of the class of article the clause was intended to apply to, and it was a very bad illustration. It went to prove that the clause, if passed, would tend to strangle an industry which was just struggling into existence, and one which so far had been of benefit to the colony. It had reduced the price of jam to the consumer and had not injured the fruit-grower. He thought it was very unfortunate that the Colonial Treasurer should have mentioned pulp fruit as an instance of the action which would be brought into force by the clause.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if pulp fruit had been the only article on the list he should never have thought of submitting the clause for the consideration of the Committee. He thought hon. members had not read the clause very carefully, or they would have seen that it was entirely optional with the Treasurer to take action in the matter.

Mr. NORTON: That is the objection to it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The Treasurer might not think that pulp fruit was one of the articles on which he was justified in charging a higher rate of duty. He thought that up to the present time the importers of pulp fruit had been pretty well satisfied that the Government had no intention to oppress them. The subject of the pulp fruit was a question to which he had given a good deal of attention when it was brought before him. If they were dealing with pulp fruit alone there would be no necessity for the clause.

Mr. CHUBB said that if he understood rightly green fruit bore no duty. The clause, therefore, would not apply to pulp fruit, as it referred only to articles liable to duty.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said that pulp fruit was a partially manufactured article, and the clause would apply to it. He would point out to the Treasurer, who said members on the Opposition side had not read the clause carefully, that he had said it was left in the hands of the Collector of Customs to decide what articles should be admitted at half the rate of duty payable on the manufactured articles, and they all knew that it was the duty of the Collector of Customs to raise as much revenue as he possibly could, without reference to the encouragement or establishment of any industry in the colony. It was a dangerous power to leave in the hands of an official whose duty it was to collect money. Hon. members of that Committee had another duty to perform. Their duty was not only to protect the revenue, but to encourage the establishment of industries. Therefore, they had read the clause very carefully, with the intention of protecting an industry from the grasping avarice of the Treasurer and his supporter the Collector of Customs. He hoped that the hon. gentleman would reconsider the clause and alter it in such a way as would suit the views of the Committee and not be oppressive to any industries which were established, or might be established, in the colony.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he thought they had hit a happy medium by proposing to tax partially manufactured goods at half the rate of duty payable upon the manufactured article. That rate would be quite sufficient to protect the Treasury and at the same time would not deter the manufacturers of the article here from continuing to import the pulp fruits and other articles. The clause would protect curers of bacon and pork as well as encourage people to grow fruit rather than pay duty on the pulp fruit. He did not see how any great hardship could ensue from the clause as it stood. It would protect the revenue and encourage industries in the colony. He had very frequently heard growers of bacon complain of not receiving any encouragement, and he believed that if the imported article were more heavily taxed they would be able to compete with it successfully. He should support the clause as it stood.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that what had fallen from the hon. gentleman completely bore out the arguments brought forward by the hon. gentlemen on the Opposition side of the Committee, and that was that the taxable articles should be scheduled. They had heard from the hon. member for Bundanba that the pulp fruit should not be taxed, and they had heard from the hon. member for Ipswich that a small tax should be levied. Neither of the taxes proposed were provided for in any schedule, and yet they were both brought out as typical cases in the statement handed to hon. members. There appeared to be no difference of opinion with regard to pork. That might be very fairly scheduled for the reasons given by the Treasurer and others; but with regard to the question of pulp fruit he thought it might be shown that it did not come under the 1st line of the 7th clause, which referred to goods which, in a raw or unmanufactured state, would be liable to a lower rate of duty on importation. That could hardly be called anything more or less than unmanufactured, because the manufacture commenced from the time of its being landed in Queensland. The whole operation, he had been informed, that the fruit was previously subjected to was boiling up to a certain point; so that he thought it might be very fairly described, so far as the 7th clause was concerned, as an article in a raw state. He thought the Colonial Treasurer had made a great mistake in citing that as one of the typical cases, because he must know himself that he agreed to its being accepted by the Customs as an article in a raw state, and he must also know that a considerable manufacture, with his consent and approval, had been started in Brisbane. The Colonial Treasurer would, therefore, perceive that that article should not come within the provisions of the 7th clause. It had been admitted by the hon. member for Bundanba and others that it would be an unmixed good to all concerned if pulp fruit were allowed to be introduced at a lower rate, as the general public would thus have the advantage of having good jams at a very low price.

Mr. KELLETT said he thought the Colonial Treasurer might very fairly dispense with the clause altogether. The more he looked at it the less benefit he could see to be derived from it. There were only two articles mentioned, one of which was pulp fruit, the duty upon which

the Colonial Treasurer himself said he did not intend to impose; so that that illustration might be put on one side. The other article was pork. He was sorry to say that there was very little good bacon made in the colony, except what was brought in a half-made state and smoked here; so that if the proposed duty were imposed upon pork they would have to pay a higher price for the bacon, and he did not think there would be any great addition to the revenue. Therefore he thought both of those articles might be omitted, and that the clause might be struck out altogether.

Mr. GROOM said he was one of those who thought that pulp fruit might be very well admitted into the colony free. At the last Exhibition he took a great deal of interest in looking round local manufactures, and he spoke to one gentleman, whose exhibits attracted his attention by their excellence, and asked him where he got his fruit from, because he knew there were several articles which could not possibly be made in the colony. He saw several dozens of black-currant jam and jelly, and knowing that no black currants were grown here he asked him where he got his material from, and he immediately told him he received it in its pulp state from Tasmania. Then again, in reference to strawberries: they knew very well that that was a fruit that could not be grown in any great quantities in the colony, and to admit those articles duty-free would not at all interfere with local growers. He spoke now from a protectionist view of the question, because he was not ashamed to admit that his protectionist views remained unchanged, and he believed that all the colonies were gradually drifting towards protection.

Mr. MOREHEAD: No, no!

Mr. GROOM: The hon. member said "No, no," but of course that was a national question upon which they could agree to differ; but anyone who looked at the current of public events would see that what he said was correct. They must recognise the fact that New Zealand and Victoria had adopted a protectionist policy, and South Australia was following in the wake.

Mr. MOREHEAD: What is South Australia now?

Mr. GROOM said whatever South Australia had been the fact was undoubted that her Parliament had adopted a protectionist policy. New South Wales was gradually drifting in the same direction, and all those who looked at the question from a national standpoint and read the current literature of the day would certainly be of the opinion that all the colonies were drifting towards protection. And really he did not wonder at it. He believed a protectionist policy would be a good one in this colony, and he regretted that the Treasurer had not taken the whole tariff into consideration, which had not been touched to any great extent since Mr. Ramsay dealt with it in 1870.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: By Mr. Hemmant in 1873.

Mr. GROOM: To a very small extent. Although the then Treasurer disclaimed any intention of dealing with the tariff from a protectionist standpoint, a large section of the House did deal with it from that standpoint, and all the increased taxation was carried by considerable majorities against the Government. The majority that existed then existed in a larger degree at the present time. Of that he was sure, and none who had watched the marvellous progress of Canada during the past five years under a protectionist policy could doubt the wisdom of protecting young industries in young countries in order that employment might be found for the native-born of the soil. For five years Canada had had an annual surplus revenue of 2,500,000 dollars, and hundreds of thousands had been employed in her manufactories. Protection had been an excellent thing for the Dominion of Canada, and it would have an equally good effect in all the colonies. He believed himself that the idea of protection was growing, not only here, but in all the colonies; and he was firmly of the opinion that federated Australia would be protectionist Australia.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I hope we shall never have a federated Australia.

Mr. GROOM said he hoped they would.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Not on those lines.

Mr. GROOM said he believed the time would come when they should have a federal Government independent of their own local Government; and when that time came they should be able to show as good a record as Canada had shown since federation. With regard to the particular articles under discussion, he felt satisfied from what he had heard from the gentleman who had charge of the manufactured articles he had spoken of in the Exhibition, and who himself had founded a very large industry in our midst, that it would be a very good thing if the Colonial Treasurer could see his way clear to admit pulp fruit duty-free. Green fruit was imported every year to the extent of £40,000 or £50,000 worth, and was admitted duty-free, and he did not see why a tax should be imposed upon the articles which could not be grown here, and which, when imported and manufactured in the colony, had the effect of considerably reducing the prices to the consumer. Besides which, it was much better to have the articles manufactured here than in other places, because with jams, as with everything else, a great deal of adulteration was going on, and if the articles were brought here in a raw state some guarantee could be obtained that a genuine article would be retailed. However, he hoped the Colonial Treasurer would see his way clear to admit pulp fruit duty-free, because, by taking action of that kind, he would do more than anything else towards the encouragement and establishment of local industries.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was unable to admit pulp fruit duty-free, even if he wished to do so, because it bore an *ad valorem* duty of 5 per cent., and he had no power to remit that duty. The only power he had was derived from Parliament, and he could not act on his own responsibility. However, from his own observation, confirmed by the opinion of the Committee, he did not think it desirable to alter the duty on pulp fruit. As had been already stated, it required a large amount of colonial manufactured sugar to prepare it for consumption, and for that reason he thought it should not have any higher duty imposed upon it. The chief item under discussion was salt pork, and, whilst he had listened to the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley, he could not see his way to abandon the clause, but he certainly did not intend to instruct the Collector of Customs to take action with regard to pulp fruit.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that the hon. member for Toowoomba had just made one of those peculiar speeches which might be interpreted any way. He had delivered a speech in favour of protection, and in favour of freetrade. If he voted for pulp fruit coming in duty-free he would be protecting the manufacturer; and if he voted for an imposition upon it he would be protecting the grower. He had been wondering himself whether the Colonial Treasurer was a protectionist or a freetrader—as he had always announced himself to be; but, he could not make

out what the hon. gentleman's views were. There was some truth in what the hon. member for Toowoomba said in regard to the colonies drifting towards protection—not the colonies, but this colony. It was drifting very fast in that direction, but the cause was the extravagance of the Government, who now had no other resource left to them but additional taxation. He felt sure the Bill they had before them was only the commencement of the end, and that next year they would have other additional duties. Then they would find themselves protectionists in spite of themselves. The hon. member for Toowoomba spoke about protection in America. He would tell them what brought that about. What brought about protection in America was the civil war. It was not adopted because the manufacturers came to the conclusion that it would be a good thing for the industries of America to have protection. They adopted that policy because they had to meet the interest of, and pay off, a large debt. It was by those extraordinary means that protection was introduced—it was introduced quite accidentally and not with the view of benefiting native industries. He hoped this colony would never obtain the protection to which the hon. member for Toowoomba apparently looked forward—the protection of a federated Australia, because that would be about the worst way they could possibly have protection for Queensland. He was unpatriotic enough not to wish to see the prosperity of Queensland swamped in the prosperity of the southern colonies. By federated protection they would join themselves against England. Victoria and New South Wales had the start of Queensland in manufactures and productions, and therefore, whilst protective duties would protect those colonies, they would not protect Queensland. The people of this colony would have to pay a higher rate for everything they used for the purpose of encouraging, not industries within their own borders, but industries down south. If federation would have that result they ought to fight against it, but he did not think it would have the effect of establishing protection of that sort. But all that was beside the question of pulp fruit. Really he thought the clause was scarcely worth fighting about. The Colonial Treasurer himself, in an addendum he had furnished to the Committee, had stated that pulp fruit would not be operated upon under that clause. He (Sir T. McIlwraith) did not think it would either; he did not think the clause would touch it. He did not think the clause was worth so much discussion.

Mr. BROOKES said he did not himself think that matter was worth speaking about, and he simply rose for the purpose of pointing out to the hon. gentleman who had just sat down that he must have spoken rather hastily when he said that protection began in America with the civil war.

Mr. NORTON: What is the question?

Mr. BROOKES said the hon. gentleman who had just sat down was the leader of the Opposition and a very important member of that Assembly, and it would be a great pity if any statements of his which were incorrect should not be corrected, if possible. The hon. member, who had spoken rather unadvisedly, must know that the very first thing the United States did was to establish a system of protection, and that no cause operated more to bring about a revolt of the American colonies from England than this, that England decided that they should not have anything like protection. It was in history that Lord Chatham said that if he had his wish every horse in America should go to England to be shod, and it was also known that it was a felony to make a felt hat in America. It was also a matter of history that George Washington was considered the personification of protection when he stood before the very first Congress in a suit of American homespun. It was of great importance that the minds of people in this colony should be drawn to the subject of protection. It was all very well for importers to talk about freetrade, because freetrade was the breath of the nostrils of importers. But looking at the interests of the colony, hon. members had something higher to consider than the interests of importers. He would now pass that subject and just allude for one moment to the federation question. When federation was mentioned by the hon. member for Toowoomba, some hon. member on the other side of the Committee—he thought it was the hon. member for Balonne—said he would not like to see federation on protectionist lines. Well, his opinion was that they would never see federation on any other lines. He considered that at present they had not learned the A B C of federation. The question which was raised in the Legislative Council of New South Wales when the subject of federation was under consideration distinctly showed how the current ran. The question was, "What are we to get out of it," and that was just the question which was the most natural in the world to come from a colony, the greater part of whose business people were importers; from a colony, the leading spirit of which was the spirit of pedlars and hawkers. Now with reference to pulp fruit, he really did not think the proposal under consideration could do any great harm either one way or the other, and it was a matter of indifference to him which way the Colonial Treasurer decided to act; but he did think it a matter of importance that, if protection was mentioned or freetrade, they should be mentioned, at all events, with some degree of correctness, because the question would grow. It was a very important question, and the sooner they were delivered from the superstitions of some English political economists in that matter the better.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the speeches they had just heard on the matter before the Committee were very discursive and vague. With regard to the particular clause before them he thought the matter could have been settled very much more quickly if the Colonial Treasurer had not himself introduced the subject of pulp fruit. Therefore, if there had been any delay in passing the clause, the responsibility rested upon the Colonial Treasurer. He had told the Committee just now that he never intended that the higher duty should be charged on pulp fruit. He had told them that so far as he was individually concerned, and so long as he remained in office, there would be no tariff on pulp fruit except so far as regarded the *ad valorem* duty. But how would that affect the future? There should be some qualification made in the clause to prevent any damage being done to those people in the colony employed in that particular industry at any future time by the imposition of a higher duty. The Treasurer himself had done a great injury to those who went in for jam manufacture and imported the pulp fruit into the colony, by putting that particular article into the schedule which he had put into the hands of members of the Committee. It appeared to him that the debate had been reduced to a discussion on pork, pulp, and protection. They had heard the most extraordinary speeches made within the last half-hour with regard to the respective merits of protection and freetrade. He should very much like to see some such test question put to the electors—he should not be found following the leader of the Opposition in

such a case, but would range himself on the other side. He was astonished to hear from the junior member for North Brisbane such a speech as he had just delivered. Had he ignored Bright, Cobden, and others whom he often quoted as being the saviours of the later age? Was John Bright a protectionist? Was Cobden, or any of those to whom, when he chose, the hon. member bowed down and worshipped—were they protectionists? Whether fortunately or unfortunately, he (Mr. Morehead) was a liberal; he was a freetrader to the backbone, and would remain so, he hoped, to the end of the chapter. And when the time for federation came a large section of the inhabitants of the colony would range themselves on the side of freetrade as against protection. The hon. gentleman inveighed against importers, but how long had he ceased to be an importer? Was he a freetrader so long as he was an importer? And since he had given up business had he become a protectionist? When the Federal Council Bill came on the question of freetrade and protection would be thoroughly discussed, and then, perhaps, there would be a new division of parties —freetraders on the one side and protectionists on the other—and he had no fear of the result. It would be the same as it was in England that day, or would be in November next, when the present Conservative party would be put out of power by the freetrade Liberal party. And the reflex of English public opinion would be felt in all English-speaking communities. He did not think they were bound to take America as their model altogether. They had a great deal to learn yet from the mother-country; and when the time for separation came, as it would come eventually, the traditions of the old land would be more to them than the traditions of America.

Mr. BROOKES said he never had quoted to hon. members from either Cobden or Bright. There were various matters on which he agreed with Bright.

Mr. MOREHEAD: That will please him.

Mr. BROOKES: But as for Cobden, the fact of the matter was that freetrade was an afterthought with him. After the success of the anti-corn law league freetrade was associated with the name of Cobden; but if the hon. member for Balonne would take the trouble to examine for himself he would find that every prophecy made by Cobden with reference to freetrade had been falsified.

The HON. J. M. MACROSSAN said they had wandered very far from the question, and it was time they came back. They had been looking at the 7th clause from a very narrow standpoint, for it was admitted by the Treasurer that pulp was put in as an illustrative case. How many cases were there in which young industries would be seriously injured, if not strangled, by the operation of the clause? He thought the advice given by the hon. member for Stanley was the best that could be taken—that was, to withdraw the clause altogether, and leave the matter in the hands of the Treasurer and the Collector of Customs, otherwise they would have to schedule every article on which the duty was to be raised.

Mr. PALMER said that if the Treasurer could not see his way to withdraw the clause it would be necessary to schedule every item which would be affected by the clause.

Mr. JORDAN said they had now come back, from the history of the establishment of the American Republic and the freetrade policy of Cobden and Bright, to the 7th clause of the Bill. He hoped the Treasurer would not take the advice of the hon. member for Stanley, because the clause might prove a valuable one, and the reasons given by the hon. gentleman why the clause should be passed were, he considered, quite satisfactory. There was some weight in the contentions of the leader of the Opposition that it would not be desirable to fix a hard-and-fast line, and charge the articles affected by the clause at the fixed rate of half the sum charged for manufactured articles. They should be subject to an equitable duty, which could be provided for by the omission of some words, and the addition of others to the clause. He thought that if the clause were altered so as to read "such goods shall be liable on importation into Queensland to duty at an equitable rate equal to a proportion of the duty which would be chargeable upon the manufactured article" it would meet the views of the Committee generally.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that such an amendment would lead to a considerable amount of misunderstanding. The clause as it stood was as intelligible as it was possible to make it. He had given the Committee the fullest information he possessed as to the quantity of such goods coming into the colony at the present time; and the clause would meet all cases likely to arise at the present time and protect the revenue against any loss. At a future time, when the tariff came to be revised, the clause would again come under consideration, when it could be revised if necessary. After the expression of opinion on the part of the Committee he might say that he did not intend to interfere with the rate charged on pulp fruit, which would be charged 5 per cent. *ad valorem*; but there were other articles which he thought should come under the operation of the clause.

Mr. MOREHEAD said the Colonial Treasurer did not grasp the question at all. It was not now a question of pulp fruit at all. It was introduced in the clause by the Colonial Treasurer, and on being objected to he said he would take care that during his *régime*, at any rate, the clause would not be carried out so far as pulp fruit was concerned. He thought the hon. member for Stanley had suggested the best and simplest way to deal with the clause—and certainly the best way so far as the Government were concerned—and that was to strike it out.

Mr. KELLETT said the Treasurer had just told them that he had given the Committee the fullest information he had upon the different articles that would come under the clause. He had listened attentively and he had heard only two articles mentioned—pulp fruit and pork. The Treasurer had done away with pulp fruit so far as the present Government were concerned, and there only remained the pork to come under the clause. If that was the only article to be affected, let it be mentioned in the clause, and then they would know what they were voting for. Otherwise he thought it would be far better to strike out the clause altogether. He could understand that as the Treasurer had introduced the clause he would like to see it passed, but he thought he saw, as clearly as he (Mr. Kellett) saw, that he could do just as well without it.

Question—That clause 7 as read stand part of the Bill—put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Messrs. Rutledge, Miles, Dickson, Dutton, Moreton, Sheridan, Wakefield, Foxton, Buckland, Mellor, White, Jordan, Isambert, Smyth, Aland, Brookes, Groom, Higson, Midgley, Macfarlane, Annear, and Bailey,

NOES, 15.

The Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Norton, Morehead, Chubb, Hamilton, Lissner, Govett, Kellett, Foote, Nelson, Black, Macrossan, Ferguson, and Palmer.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. FOOTE said he had a clause to move to follow the last clause passed. It had been his

intention to move that it should follow clause 2; but it was thought better to have it appear after clause 7. The clause he had to propose was as follows:—

"In addition to the goods now exempt from duty upon importation under the provisions of the said Acts, the goods mentioned in the second schedule to this Act shall also be exempt from duty on importation, and admitted free."

He intended to propose a second schedule, which would simply consist of the word "wheat." He spoke upon the matter a few nights ago, and his reason for introducing the amendment was because of the heavy duty that had been levied upon wheat; for many years past they had not been able to import it at payable rates, and as the colony consumed a very great deal of flour, and only a very small proportion of it was grown here, he was sure that if the duty upon wheat was removed it would be of very great advantage to the colony, and within a reasonable time he had no doubt many mills would be established in various parts of the colony. It would also be a very great source of encouragement to the wheat-growers of the colony. The lands at present appropriated to wheat-growing in Queensland were mostly situated over the Range, and consequently they were at a great distance from market, notwithstanding that railways ran through the Downs on each side. The number of millers there was very limited, and the farmers had a very limited market for their wheat. If they did not sell their wheat at the prices offered—whether they thought the prices right or wrong—they had no other market within the colony. It would enhance the interests of the wheat-growing districts in a great degree, because it would provide the farmers with a market for their commodity, and they would not be tied down to any single market. Even if the wheat went to a distant market the money would flow back to the growers and the interests of the district would be enhanced. It had been asserted that if the duty was taken off wheat would come across the border. But there was no duty on flour and it did not come across the border. Indeed, there would be no danger if wheat did come across the border. He had no objection to place a tax on beer, as that was a luxury; but he had a very great objection to placing a tax on bread. It did not matter how low the price was so long as the grower got paid somewhat in proportion for growing it. He had been accused of introducing the clause from a selfish motive—because he had a little mill of his own. But that was not the case. He had no intention to import wheat to grind; he had business enough without it; his mill was erected to serve the district by grinding for others. That was the work it did and would always do while it was in his possession. He had no interest whatever in the flour trade as a miller. A great deal had been said lately on the subject of encouraging local industries, and that was just the point he wanted to come to. Wheat, if imported free, would be ground within the colony wherever it was considered desirable to do so. The clause would have an important effect on the commercial interests with respect to the vessels trading to the various ports of the colony. Trade was often injured because vessels could not always fill up as quickly as could be wished. If wheat was available for the purpose they could fill up at any time for almost any port in the colony. The revenue would not suffer to any great extent by taking off the duty on wheat. When, some ten or eleven years ago, a measure was brought in to take off the duty on flax in order to encourage an industry he advocated the case of wheat, and he thought the Committee should assent to the clause now in order that a new industry might be established within the colony. That would be a step in the right direction. He would not take up the time of the Committee with any lengthened remarks on the subject, as his object must be apparent to every hon. member. He trusted the majority would think with him, and insert the clause in the Bill. There was also the question of imported wine. It was his intention to move afterwards that the following words be added to the schedule of the Bill:—

Wine not containing more than 25 per centum of alcohol at a specific gravity of ·825 at the temperature of 60 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, per gallon, 3s.

That also would be conducive to the interests of the inhabitants of Queensland. Wine-making, he was aware, was a very considerable interest in some parts of the colony; still he thought that 3s. per gallon was quite a sufficient protection for it. The revenue would not suffer from the reduction, because double the quantity of wine would be imported. Many persons who now drank ardent spirits or beer would drink wine instead, in the summer weather, to the great benefit of their health. It was well known that a great deal of the wine manufactured in the colony was consumed within twelve months of its being manufactured, and it certainly could not be conducive to the health of the community, especially when they considered the quality and amount of spirit with which it was fortified to preserve it. It must be patent to everyone that wines so new and so full of fusel oil could not be beneficial to those who partook of them. In fact, persons who were in the habit of taking too much colonial wine often suffered a great deal more than those who got intoxicated on ardent spirits. His object was to assist those who would like to have a mild drink during the hot months. Tea was often spoken of very highly as a beverage, but it was quite possible to have too much tea. It had its evils when taken in too large quantities, even as taking too much of anything else had. But apart from the temperance point of view, he believed that it would be conducive to the health of the inhabitants. He believed also that the reduction in the duty to 3s. per gallon would cause the vine-growers of the colony to compete with imported wines, and that that would result in getting a much better class of wine made in the colony than they had been accustomed to. He did not know of his own knowledge, but he believed that although there was a good deal of wine made in the colony the number of wine-drinkers was very limited, and that those who had taken to drinking Queensland wine very soon gave it up, because they often found that, with few exceptions, any other drink was preferable. He believed that if the motion was carried it would be very beneficial to the colony, and therefore he had brought it forward.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he regretted that at the present time he could not see his way to accept the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Bundanba. They could not impose taxation on the one hand and relieve it on the other. It would open the door to a charge of inconsistency and also to the neglect of other items in the tariff, which perhaps required attention as much as the small matter of wheat. On the abstract question of imposing a duty upon wheat, whilst they admitted the manufactured article—flour—free, he was quite at one with his hon. friend the member for Bundanba; but it must be remembered that that curiosity in their Customs duties arose from the circumstance that in 1874, when the tariff was revised, it was intended to impose a duty of £2 a ton upon flour, but that duty was disallowed by the Committee whilst the duty on wheat was retained. It certainly did present a very glaring anomaly, and under an ordinary

revision of the tariff he might feel disposed to view much more favourably than he could at present the proposition of the hon. gentleman; but he did not think that at the present time there was any class in the community suffering very great hardship or injustice from the duty upon wheat. It certainly did not furnish very much revenue. During the year that ended the 31st December, 1883, the quantity of wheat imported was 12,140 bushels, the revenue upon which amounted to £303 10s. In 1884 the importation amounted to 25,880 bushels, the duty upon which represented £647; so that, notwithstanding the quantity imported last year was double that of the preceding year, the total revenue was in itself a very inconsiderable item. But he did not feel justified, while proposing fresh taxation, to remit even that inconsiderable item, because he believed that at the present time the incidence of that tax was beneficial. The hon. gentleman must bear in mind that whatever wheat came to the colony came by seaboard; at any rate, by far the greater portion did, and if the existing duty were remitted the farmers upon the rich lands of the Darling Downs would be subjected to the importation of a very considerable quantity of wheat grown in New England and the northern parts of New South Wales, and the result would be that the agricultural interest, which was not particularly flourishing at the present time, would be placed at considerable disadvantage. At the same time there would be no benefit arising to the Treasury. At least the hon. gentleman had not shown that any would accrue, neither had he shown that the price of flour would be in any way reduced to the consumer. The hon. gentleman should have endeavoured to show that the remission of the duty would result in a benefit to the consumer of the manufactured article. He thought that any disturbance of the tariff at the present time in that direction would be unwise. It would not be a very considerable loss to the Treasury, it was true; but whatever the loss might be, it was such that they were not in a position at the present time to bear. All the proposals of the Government had been hitherto in the direction of increasing the revenue. He chiefly regarded the proposition in the light that it would be unnecessarily disturbing the agriculturists—those on the Darling Downs particularly—and that, too, without producing any beneficial results to the public generally. At the same time he must say that if the condition of the colony were more prosperous he might be tempted to regard the proposition with more favour than he could see his way to do at the present moment. With regard to the intention of the hon. gentleman to move an amendment in the schedule reducing the duty on imported wines, he must protest against that innovation also. The quantity of wine that was received during the year ending the 30th June, 1885, was 93,000 gallons—that was the total quantity of wine — European and Australian, and the duty paid represented £28,000. The hon. gentleman's motion did not discriminate between European and Australian wines; and if the proposed reduction were accepted it would result in a loss to the revenue of at least £14,000 in the consumption of wine. Under the circumstances, he must ask if the present was the time—when they were increasing the duty on spirits and imposing a fresh duty on beer — to remit the duty on wine, which was presumably the beverage of the better classes of the community? A very large proportion of the 93,000 gallons he had mentioned consisted of high-class European wines—sparkling wines, clarets, burgundies, and all classes of wine—which were more frequently to be found on the tables of the well-to-do classes than of the workers of the colony. Therefore, he thought the reduction would be very unnecessary liberality shown to the well-to-do classes of the colony, at the same time that they were endeavouring to obtain larger revenue by increasing taxation in other directions. The hon. gentleman had also cut the ground from under his own feet in regard to that matter, by informing the Committee—if he (the Colonial Treasurer) understood his argument—that a larger quantity of spirit than was generally supposed was contained in those wines. The hon. member must bear in mind that when they were increasing the duty upon spirits generally they certainly ought not to be asked to reduce the duty on wine, which, according to his own statement, was a vehicle containing a considerable quantity of spirit. At any rate he did not follow the course of the hon. member's argument in that direction. On the contrary, if those wines contained so large a quantity of spirit they ought to be increased *pro ratâ* with the duty that was now imposed upon spirits themselves. He regretted that he could not accept the hon. member's views in either direction; and while he had afforded him an opportunity of having the motion discussed by the Committee—as he was unable to be present the other evening—he should be glad if the hon. member could see the advisability of withdrawing it at the present time, because, as he had already stated, when a general increase of revenue was necessary to be obtained by increased taxation, it would be certainly extremely illogical for him on the one hand to impose taxation, and on the other to remit it, especially when it affected those classes of the community who were supposed to be best able to pay the existing duty upon those articles.

Mr. KATES said it seemed to him that the Government could not sacrifice their policy by imposing taxation on one hand and remitting it on the other. He would like to enlighten the hon. member for Bundanba as to its being an advantage to millers that the tax should be retained. If the duty were abolished the millers would have wheat coming across the border from Tenterfield; they would have a larger field of operations, and would be the gainers, while the farmers would be the losers. The hon. member said the Darling Downs farmers wished the duty abolished. If the hon. member could bring a petition signed by one-fifth of the *bonâ fide* wheat-growers on the Downs to that effect, he should have his (Mr. Kates's) cordial support. A meeting of the Farmers' Union, about a fortnight ago, had come to a resolution to petition the Government to retain the duty on wheat. The hon. member said the abolition of the duty would lead to the establishment of flour-mills; but that was not likely, for if mills were established in Brisbane they would have to pay the freight on the wheat from Adelaide, and would have to go into competition with mills fitted with heavy machinery, and three or four pair of stones, not one pair, as the hon. member had in his mill. The Colonial Treasurer had told them that the revenue from wheat was not large, but he had forgotten to mention that there was a heavy duty on bran and pollard, which would be lost if the duty on wheat were remitted. The farmers on Darling Downs were entitled to a small protection, and he did not think hon. members would grudge that small protection to a struggling industry.

Mr. GROOM said he had never regarded the 6d. a bushel on wheat as a protection to the farmers on the Darling Downs, nor did he think it had ever prevented wheat from coming over the border. The freight on wheat from the New England district was so high that the growers

would never send it across to Queensland unless they had a very certain prospect of profit. The Darling Downs farmers were sometimes in the greatest straits what to do with their wheat, and they had to sell it at whatever price they could get for it. The miller would only give a certain price for it; the 6d. a bushel duty had nothing whatever to do with it; it was simply a question between buyer and seller. He had been informed that the millers on the Downs entered into a compact and agreed to give only 3s. per bushel for the wheat, and the import duty in no way influenced that compact, or the price given for the wheat. He was quite prepared to admit that when the duty was imposed on wheat there was also submitted to the Legislature a duty on flour of £1 a ton. That was thrown out and a tax on wheat retained. The cry then was that it was a tax on the poor man's flour. With regard to the reduction of the duty on wine the hon. member had raised quite another question. He did not know whether the hon. member was aware of it, but it was the very question of reducing the duty on wine while simultaneously raising the duty on beer, that brought about the downfall of the Gladstone Ministry. The cry was immediately raised, and to good purpose, that the Government were going to increase the tax on the poor man's beer, while the rich man's champagne and sparkling burgundy were to be cheapened; and the consequence was that an indignation was aroused that resulted in the downfall of the Ministry. He was inclined to think it would be one of the most damaging things they could do—to increase the tax on beer by 3d. a gallon, whilst reducing by one-half the duty on champagne and all the more costly wines consumed chiefly by the richer classes of the community. The object of the hon. gentleman, no doubt—an object with which many others in the community sympathised — was to reduce the duty on colonial wines; but he must bear in mind that the Imperial Government would never allow the duty on colonial wine to be reduced to 3s. a gallon, whilst the duty on champagne and other wines remained at the old rate. The colony was not allowed to pass differential duties; the only way it could be done would be by entering into a treaty of reciprocity, say with Victoria and South Australia, which might then be sanctioned by the Imperial Government. The object the hon. gentleman had in view could not be achieved without the Government sacrificing a large amount of revenue, besides doing a great injury to the wine industry of the colony. That was a matter which ought to enter into consideration. There was a large amount of capital invested in the wine industry, which as yet was only in its infancy. Every year the manufacturers were gaining experience by their losses, and the quality of the wine was improving year by year. The present was certainly not the time to propose to throw further difficulties in the way of the industry by reducing the duty on imported wine. He thought the hon. gentleman could not do better than follow the advice of the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, and withdraw the motion.

Mr. ISAMBERT said it was really very serious to see with what ease some hon. gentlemen attempted to trifle with industries. Nothing could be more injurious to the farming interests than constantly interfering with them. What had the hon. gentleman ever done to encourage the wine industry? Had he ever moved that the Minister for Works should make a similar reduction in the freight of colonial wine on the railway as he had made in that of colonial beer? Colonial wine had to pay the same freight as imported wine, and that was a very considerable item. Had the hon. gentleman ever proposed that the Government should establish an agricultural college to teach farmers how to improve their wines and their methods of wheat-growing? He did not remember his ever having done so. On the whole, when the amendment was looked into, he thought it hardly deserved a single comment. If the reduction were made on colonial wine there would be no end of smuggling. The Government would not hold office one moment if they attempted such a partial reduction. The Imperial Government would never allow them to establish a differential duty except by treaty. The great wisdom of the hon. gentleman was shown in the schedule where he described wine. He believed the hon. gentleman did not know what he was speaking and writing about when he framed that schedule—"Wine containing 25 per cent. of alcohol of a specific gravity of '825." It looked very scientific, but the hon. gentleman had no idea of what he was talking about. It was almost as strong as brandy—nearly 50 per cent. of proof spirit. He had never seen wine of that strength.

Mr. KELLETT said he quite agreed with the proposition made by the hon. member for Bundanba, because he believed it was in the interest of the farmers on the Downs, the only place where wheat was grown.

Mr. KATES: What do you know about it?

Mr. KELLETT said there was an hon. gentleman behind him who was very fond of interrupting people on all occasions and seemed to make the present a personal matter. The hon. gentleman must be very sore, or he would not be so uneasy on the subject. He (Mr. Kellett) paid a visit to the hon. gentleman's district some time ago, and spent a very pleasant evening at Allora, where he met a number of farmers—as intelligent a class of men as could be met anywhere—and they had a long discussion on that very point of the duty on wheat. Those men at one time went in for protection; but the opinion now was that the duty should be taken off. That was the opinion of the farmers he was talking to, and they were men living in the neighbourhood of the hon. member for Darling Downs. He asked the reason, and they gave one similar to that given by the hon. member for Toowoomba—that there had been an understanding between the millers that only a certain price was to be given for wheat, and the consequence was that the farmers had either to take it or go without. They tried to get up a co-operative company and put up mills of their own, but the attempt did not succeed. It was well known that in some seasons rust had got into the wheat so much that a great part of it was almost useless, and there was a very small profit. The only way it could be used was to import good wheat from Adelaide and mix it with the bad. In another year the crop would be nearly nil, and the millers, who had expended a lot of money in machinery, would be idle unless they imported wheat to keep the mills going. If the duty were taken off the consequence would be that there would be a number of mills on the Downs which would buy all the wheat from the farmers and compete with one another, and the price given would be something like 30 per cent. or 40 per cent. more than last season. He happened, only the other day, to meet a miller from the Downs, a very intelligent man, and he told him that this year pulled him through. He had made up the losses on several bad seasons, simply because there was a compact made and they were only paying a poverty price to the farmers for their wheat. That gentleman, who was one of the largest millers on the Downs, said, "I suffered as well

as the farmers, but now I have had my revenge upon them, because I have made money this time and can clear out now." That was within the last few days. He was satisfied that the farmers had come to the conclusion that it would be a good thing for them when the duty was taken off, because when they did get a good crop they could sell it at a cheaper price than wheat from Adelaide could be sold for. They did not consider that they had a good crop unless it was double that grown in South Australia. He believed that the average there had been eight bushels for the last few years; but the farmers on the Downs did not think anything of a crop unless it yielded twenty bushels and sometimes up to forty bushels. A man told him, a few years ago, that he had a patch of fifty acres which yielded forty bushels of clean wheat to the acre. When there was anything like a decent season they could undersell the Adelaide men altogether. That was the opinion he got from the farmers, who had, no doubt, studied the matter; and his own opinion was quite opposed to that of the hon. member for Darling Downs, who seemed to think that because he had a mill the hon. member for Bundanba was aiming at him. He thought it would be a good thing if the duty were taken off. The Treasurer agreed that in no part of the world was such a thing done as the manufactured article being allowed to come in free and the raw material taxed; and the revenue the hon. gentleman got from wheat was very little indeed. As far as the question of wine was concerned, he should much like to see the duty reduced. At present they could not go into the question, but he should like to see some reciprocal arrangement made with the other colonies for reducing the duty on colonial wines. He thought that if that was done the wine-growers of the colony would be benefited, and the vignerons would then take some trouble to improve the quality of the article they manufactured. He had drunk some colonial wine fifteen years ago, and the wine of to-day was no better than it was then. The growers were too careless, and a little competition would do them good. Why, the very corks they put in their bottles were not fit for gingerbeer corks; and in many other ways they were behindhand. He was convinced that they only wanted to understand the manufacture of wine, and they would then be able to compete with Southern growers. A great deal of colonial wine would be drunk here if it could be obtained at a reasonable rate; but as they could not deal with the question it was no use discussing it further. He should have great pleasure in supporting the motion for the reduction of the duty upon wheat.

Mr. JORDAN said he was glad to hear a gentleman who understood the question so well, state that farmers in Queensland expected to get an average of something like double the yield obtained in South Australia, and that whereas the average there was eight bushels, sixteen bushels was the yield here. That was a great admission, especially when made by a gentleman who advocated taking off the duty on wheat for the benefit of the farmers. But there was a more effectual remedy than taking the duty off wheat, and that was to encourage the settlement of the colony by the farming class in those localities which were most suitable for the growth of wheat. It was on that ground he supported the resolution of the hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Kates) for repurchasing Canning Downs and Westbrook Estates. He said the other night, as he had a few years since pointed out, that for one single acre under wheat in this colony there were 180 acres under cultivation in South Australia. There were now more than a hundred times as many acres under wheat in South Australia as in Queensland, although their average was only half what was obtained here; and if from nine to sixteen bushels could be obtained here with only moderate seasons, wheat-growing could be made a great success in this colony. Instead of taking off the duty on wheat, they should encourage the introduction of a large number of the farming classes of Great Britain, who would be glad to produce wheat in any quantity, if they were only given facilities for so doing. The question of the production of wine in the colony was very much the same. Some twelve months ago he had visited Roma, and went to a vineyard owned by a Mr. Bassett. About eighty acres, he believed, were under vines; and he had a long talk with the manager. He told him that the land was particularly well suited for the growth of vines, inasmuch as it required no trenching; the plough was just passed through it, and the vines were planted. Upon inquiry that gentleman told him that there were millions of acres of the same land, not only about Roma, but in the Mitchell district—on the way to the Maranoa. Why, hundreds of thousands of people from Europe and the south of France could be settled upon that land, and there was nothing he knew of to prevent our producing wine in this colony equal to that which was produced in Victoria and South Australia. He believed nothing would be more conducive to the establishment of temperance than the extension of colonial vineyards and the making of good colonial wine. There was a well-known proverb on the Continent, "as drunk as a Briton"; but the people in the south of France and in Spain, where large quantities of wine were made, were a temperate people. He felt sure that nothing would be more conducive to the cause of national temperance than the cultivation of the vine. Instead of taking off the duty upon wheat, he would encourage the settlement of a large number of the farming classes upon the lands of the colony.

Mr. KATES said he had a few words to say in reply to the hon. member for Stanley. The hon. member had said that on the Darling Downs he had had a pleasant evening, and a chat with some intelligent persons who advocated the duty on wheat being taken off. If the hon. gentleman would just look at the Warwick papers, which could be found in the Library, he would find that a large and influential meeting of farmers had recently taken place, and they were decidedly opposed to the duty being taken off. As to a compact existing between the millers, he knew nothing about it; he had always bought his wheat independently of any other miller. As to the farmers being dissatisfied with the prices they obtained, they did certainly get low prices last year, but prices for wheat were low all the world over; but as a proof that they considered their crop a paying one they had put in twice as much seed this year. If the hon. member for Stanley would produce a petition signed by one-fifth of the farming population on the Downs recommending the abolition of the duty upon wheat he should support him.

Mr. PALMER said the hon. member for Darling Downs, in objecting to the motion brought forward by the member for Bundanba, stated that the farmers on the Darling Downs were entitled to some small amount of protection. If hon. members looked at the tables accompanying the Treasurer's Financial Statement they would find that the farmers were already protected to a very large degree, as was shown by the fact that the importation of hay and chaff last year amounted to 9,148 tons; of potatoes and onions, which were products peculiar to farmers, 17,886 tons; and of maize, which of all the products peculiar to farmers was the one for which Queensland was most suitable, there were imported 210,466 bushels. All those products

were imported under a protective tariff, so that really the farmers on the Darling Downs were protected to a very large extent. Let hon. members think of the number of horses there were employed about Brisbane ; they would all starve if it were not for the hay and chaff imported into this country from the other colonies. Although the farmers here obtained double the quantity of wheat per acre to what was realised by the farmers in South Australia they did not produce sufficient horse-feed for the requirements of the colony. Even a large quantity of the green-stuff used here was imported from the southern colonies. He firmly believed that if farmers had electoral power sufficient they would re-enact the corn laws and impose a duty on both flour and wheat. If farmers found that wheat-growing did not suit them it was very evident that they were wasting their energies and that they ought to turn them in some other direction. What that direction would be experience would teach them. There was a sufficient market in Queensland for all that the farmers could produce, and he did not think the time would ever come when the colony would produce enough wheat for home consumption. The time would never come when Queensland would be able to compete with other parts of the world now opening—such, for instance, as India, where railways were being extended into the interior of the country and were developing its agricultural resources. South America was now coming into competition with Russia and putting her into the background, and the United States could alone produce sufficient wheat to supply the world ; so that Queensland was altogether out of it. The hon. member for Bundanba, in advocating his motion, argued that the remission of the duty of 6d. per bushel would encourage the farmers, and he thought the hon. gentleman made out a very good case in that respect. But taking into consideration the advantage farmers had in this colony in obtaining double the quantity of wheat per acre to that obtained in South Australia, and remembering that even under these favourable conditions they could not hold their own, he thought no scheme could be devised by which the Committee could help them. He would support the motion of the hon. member for Bundanba.

Mr. FOOTE said he did not wish to detain the Committee. It was not his intention to withdraw the motion. He intended to test the opinion of the Committee. If he lived to be in the House for the next ten years he would try the question every year on the same two items. The hon. member for Rosewood professed to be a protectionist and professed to do everything he could to encourage labour, but he did not appear to know that the imposition of the duty of 6d. per bushel on wheat had the effect of drawing away labour from the colony. The hon. gentleman professed, also, to be an expert in wine-growing and to know all about the strength, etc., of wine. Well, he did do something in the way of wine manufacture on one occasion, but what he produced was a sort of wash and he very soon got rid of it and did not stick to the business. But that was not all. With very few exceptions there was nothing like reasonable drinking wine made in the colony. The hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Groom), in speaking on the question, had made out a very strong case in support of the motion before the Committee. He made one of the best speeches in support of the proposal for taking off the duty on wheat that had been made that evening in that Committee. The hon. gentleman did not do it intentionally. He told the Committee about the land monopoly that existed on the Darling Downs. But there were two or three millers there who were also storekeepers, who made advances to the farmers during the year and ground them down, taking their wheat in exchange for the advances at any price they chose to give. If the farmers did not accept that price they could go without. That was the state of things that he (Mr. Foote) wanted to remedy. He did not propose the motion because he thought that West Moreton would become a wheat-growing district ; he believed it never would be a wheat-growing district—never in the age of man. One reason why he wished to bring about the change contemplated by his motion was to remove any prohibitory duty which would prevent industries which were much needed being carried on in the colony—industries in which people were engaged in the preparation of that article which was the staple of the colony, and that was the poor man's bread. He was astonished that when the Government brought in their new tariff they did not modify some part of the existing tariff that the interests of the colony rendered necessary should be modified. He contended that the prosperity of the colony would be advanced by a proper revision of the present duties. The hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Kates) had taken that motion as a very personal matter. No doubt he looked upon it as an insult, for he had spoken in a very ticklish way. No doubt he was interested in the matter. He was one of those who made money on the Darling Downs at the expense of the poor farmer, and he wished the present state of things to continue. He could quite understand the hon. gentleman s feelings in the matter. Talk about the monopoly of the lands! Why, the millers on the Darling Downs held the greatest monopoly there was in the colony in reference to the farmers, and they were the greatest oppressors they had in the land. The hon. gentleman had two or three times made allusion to the little mill that he (Mr. Foote) had. Did the hon. gentleman imagine that he was the only man in the colony that could put up a mill or understood grinding? Why, he was a mere myth in society, shut up in one part of the Darling Downs—one of the petty tyrants that they often read about, and whom many men on the Darling Downs thoroughly understood. The hon. gentleman had been very pointed and very bitter in his remarks, but he had advanced no argument containing any logic whatever against the proposal before the Committee. Why, he himself, in order to keep his mill going, had to introduce wheat from the other colonies, and not only that, but he had mixed it with that rubbishing wheat grown on the Darling Downs, and passed it off as good flour. Then again, he understood thoroughly that, though he paid 6d. a bushel duty, he got more than a rebate in the drawback by way of differential rates of carriage to the Downs. Talk about payment of members ! That was payment of millers. He could understand the support the hon. member would give to any Ministry which would retain that state of things. He could see that the wine matter was not received with general favour. The hon. member for Darling Downs (Mr. Groom), stated that they could not make a differential duty, and he did not attempt to do so, for he was of the same opinion. Then the hon. member for South Brisbane gave the Committee a long speech about wheat, and said he clearly saw the reason why the duty should not be taken off wheat, because the farmers sometimes got forty bushels per acre on the Darling Downs. He fancied the farmers would be able to grow sufficient wheat to supply the colony with flour, but that period would never come in the age of the hon. gentleman, or in the age of his descendants, though they should live 200 years hence. The hon. member did not

know much more about wheat-growing than the seat on which he sat; and as for wine-growing, he knew grapes when he saw them on the vines, but beyond that his experience was not very great. Sometimes what the hon. member said contained a little sense, but oftentimes it was a mere fabrication of rubbish. Whilst he (Mr. Foote) was a member of Parliament, he would agitate the subject every year until something was made of it; and when he brought it forward again it would be on a larger scale. If he got leave to bring in a Bill he would alter the tariff, no matter what Ministry might be in power; he would put it into a better shape than its present form.

Mr. BROOKES said he had a word to say in opposition to what fell from the hon. member for Burke, and on which the hon. member for Bundanba laid great emphasis. Some years ago Mr. Duffield, from Adelaide, visited the colony, and after he came from the Darling Downs he had a short conversation with him. That gentleman said he was perfectly astonished at what he had seen on the Downs, and was thoroughly satisfied that there was no necessity for Queensland to import a single bag of flour from South Australia.

Mr. KATES said there was a certain class of people who would not sink so long as they could swim. There was no doubt that before very long the Darling Downs would supply the country with flour. In 1883, 10,000 acres of land were under wheat. There were 15,000 acres last year, and during the present year they were likely to have 20,000 acres under wheat in spite of the dry weather; and the wheat was looking remarkably well. The hon. member for Bundanba got into a temper and abused him and other hon. members because they did not agree with him. He wanted to smother a rising and promising young industry in order to establish a few flour-mills in Ipswich or Brisbane, but if those mills were established how could they compete with the powerful mills in Adelaide? They would have to import wheat from Adelaide.

Mr. FOOTE: No.

Mr. KATES: Would it come from the Darling Downs? The hon. member called him a petty tyrant. He had been four times before his constituents and was returned chiefly by farmers—once at the head of the poll. If he had been a petty tyrant after living twenty years on the Darling Downs he would not have been returned. He was not a storekeeper, but simply a miller. The hon. gentleman persisted in speaking of the monopoly possessed by the millers, but he would point out that the duty on wheat was not for the benefit of the miller—the farmer would suffer if the duty were abolished; and it was in order to protect the farmer by retaining the duty of 6d. per bushel on wheat that he opposed the new clause. He sincerely hoped hon. members would not take off the small protection at present afforded to the farmers on the Darling Downs.

Question put, and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 6.

Messrs. Nelson, Palmer, Govett, Kellett, Smyth, and Foote.

NOES, 33.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Archer, Morehead, Dickson, Norton, Chubb, Griffith, Rutledge, Midgley, Hamilton, Annear, Stevens, Aland, Wakefield, Ferguson, Kates, Lissner, Campbell, Buckland, Dutton, Moreton, Miles, Sheridan, Isambert, Bailey, Jordan, Black, Brookes, Macrossan, Groom, Wallace, Foxton, and Mellor.

Question resolved in the negative.

Clause 8—"Commencement and short title of Act"—put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would like to go on with the Bill, and as the matter had been so fully discussed already, there was nothing to do but divide. However, he did not wish to take advantage of the good nature of hon. members. Speaking seriously, he hoped they would make some more rapid progress to-morrow than they had done to-day. He moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that owing to the unexplained absence of the Premier, perhaps, the time of the Committee had been more than ordinarily wasted that night, though certainly not by members of the Opposition. He did not know where the Premier had been—he might have been in church or opening some new Masonic hall—but he should continue to attend more regularly, because through his absence the Opposition considered there had been an immense deal of time wasted, as members on the other side had not been kept in order at all.

Question put and passed.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn. We propose to proceed to-morrow with the business in the same order as for to-day. The motion of the Minister for Works for the approval of plans of the Beauaraba railway will be postponed.

Question put and passed; and the House adjourned at twenty-eight minutes past 10 o'clock.