

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 1885**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Friday, 30 October, 1885.*

Question.—Petition.—Motion for Adjournment.—Order of Business.—South Brisbane Gas and Light Company (Limited) Bill—second reading.—South Brisbane Gas and Light Company (Limited) Bill—committee.—Logan Village to Beaudesert Railway.—Mackay Railway Extension.—Cairns to Herberton Railway.—Federal Council (Adopting) Bill (Queensland).—Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1880 Amendment Bill.—Noble Estate Enabling Bill.—Licensing Bill.—Endowment of Agricultural Colleges.—Adjournment

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

### QUESTION.

Mr. SMYTH asked the Minister for Works—

1. What progress is being made with the survey of the railway from Gympie towards Brisbane?
2. Are the parliamentary plans of the line from Caboolture to Mellum Creek ready?—if not, when will they be ready?

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

1. The Chief Engineer reports that a trial survey is being made of a new route from Gympie, securing a direct get-away from the Gympie station, which will junction with the former survey about twelve miles from Gympie. This survey will probably be completed during the ensuing month.

2. The parliamentary plans from Caboolture to Mellum Creek are ready.

#### PETITION.

Mr. CHUBB presented a petition from William Frederick Tucker, of Bowen, a clerk in holy orders, and others, praying the House to take such steps as will facilitate the formation of that portion of the colony north of the 22nd degree of south latitude into a new and distinct colony; and moved that it be read.

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

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

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall conclude the remarks I am about to make by moving the adjournment of the House. It will be in the recollection of hon. members that during the consideration of the estimates of the Port Office an item under the heading "Schooner 'Mavis'" was passed by the Committee, and that the senior member for Fortitude Valley (Mr. Beattie) called for the log and all papers in connection with the wreck of that vessel. The observations I am about to make are in reference to the position of the late master of that vessel, Captain Cater, who considers that he has not had a fair hearing of his case and that he has been condemned without being heard in defence. I have in my hand a letter which I received a day or two ago in reference to the wreck and the condition of the vessel. It is as follows:—

"I see by *Hansard* of 30th September that I am accused of leaving a supply of ground tackle behind at Thursday Island.

"With regard to this, I would say that when I took command of the 'Mavis' there was a quantity of cable on deck. I asked Captain Williams what it was there for. He told me that it was cable he had condemned, except one piece which was to be laid down at Thursday Island, for moorings for the 'Mavis.' He also told me that he had intended landing the cable himself, as it was perfectly useless and always broke when he used it in anchoring; but owing to the vessel being placed as a guardship he had not had time to do so; but advised me to land it at once, which I did.

"This was the only ground tackle put out of the vessel after I took command.

"As you have so kindly interested yourself in my behalf, I should be obliged if you could find an opportunity of bringing this before the Legislative Assembly."

With reference to a conversation I had with Captain Cater, in regard to this vessel and her condition when he took command, I will refer to the log of the vessel of about the 23rd January last:—

"6 a.m.: Got under way and proceeded. Noon, passed brig 'Lady Adelaide' and *boche-de-mer* boats at anchor. 2 p.m., entered Hibernian Pass. 5 p.m., arrived at Murray Island and anchored in eighteen fathoms outside reef, but anchor not holding ship dragged on to the reef; at work all night running kedges and lines out to get ship off; cleared reef twice but sagged on again; lines carried away; lost six anchors (one bower and five kedges) on one long five-inch line. Midnight: Ship on reef, heading for shore and bumping heavily, also working gradually in shore with rising tide; pumps attended to.

"Saturday, 24th January.—High water; not enough water to float ship over the reef. Let crew have a sleep to wait for next tide. Moderate N.W. wind, and sea making ship bump heavily at times. Noon: Wind changed to S.W.

"Sunday, 8th February.—Begins with calm clear weather; very close and hot throughout all the day. Crew mustered for inspection and prayers. Afternoon: Hands ashore on liberty.

"Monday, 9th February.—Tried to find Manilla hawser by dredging for it with grapnels, but without success. Cut up some cocoanut logs and made a cradle for bilge of ship.

"Saturday, 14th February.—Got all ready for heaving ship off the beach at high water, but tide did not rise sufficiently."

I do not think I need say any more in reference to the log, but I will read some extracts from the evidence taken before the Marine Board in Brisbane. I see the senior member for Fortitude Valley is now in his place, and he will be able to bear me out in the remarks I may make. I find an extract from a letter from the Hon. John Douglas to the Colonial Secretary, in which he states:—

"I can only give the opinion of a landsman, but I must say that during the time I was on board Captain Cater gave me the impression of being a most capable and confident seaman.

"I have not pressed for an inquiry because I think that you can secure the evidence of Captain Cater, Mr. Robb, and any of the seamen you may require, just as well in Brisbane as I can here, if you think that an inquiry ought to be held."

I will also read the letter of the Hon. John Douglas, in reference to Captain Cater and the wreck, to the Colonial Secretary:—

"In further connection with the stranding of the schooner 'Mavis,' I have the honour to inform you that in order to satisfy myself as to the condition of the hull of the vessel, as she lay on the reef, I engaged Mr. H. D. Mills, a shipwright and boatbuilder of Thursday Island, to report to me on the matter.

"On the morning of the 3rd instant Mr. Mills left for that purpose; but shortly after he was met at sea by Captain Cater, who was on his way into Thursday Island in a shelling boat, after having abandoned the vessel."

Mr. Douglas went on to say that from advice he received he had the vessel sold by public auction, and she realised £33 5s. I will also read Captain Cater's letter to the Marine Board, which he read in his defence, and that of Captain Williams, the late master of the "Mavis," and now master of the Government schooner "Lucinda." Captain Williams said:—

"I have read with surprise, not unmixed with indignation, the statements made by Captain Cater as to the state of the 'Mavis' when he took charge of her on the 22nd of May last, and can only attribute them to the same malicious spirit which prompted him on the 1st instant to say to me that he thought that Captain Heath and I were working in an underhand manner against him, because I had replied to Capt. Heath's letter asking what anchors, chains, and purchases there were on board the 'Mavis' when I left her. As to the statements themselves they are utterly untrue. He says, 'She was almost a wreck.' When I left the vessel, she was sufficiently well found (with the exception perhaps of a second topsail) to cruise, if necessary, until Christmas, when I intended to have a general overhaul, and have the vessel caulked and recoppered, as recommended to you in my letter from Murray Island last February. On giving up charge to Captain Cater I told him the only thing absolutely necessary to be done was to have the keel and forefoot coppered, owing to her having been on the reef at Murray Island, and by putting her on the beach at Goode Island now, when there was a lull in the war scare, perhaps he might be able to manage it. 'She would scarcely float.' The vessel had been afloat since the 26th February, and made no more water than she did when she left Brisbane in July last year. She only required a spell of 15 minutes in the 24 hours, and had never caused me or my crew a moment's uneasiness. 'The copper sheathing was very much damaged.' I scarcely know what this means, unless that the copper was getting old and was a good deal patched in consequence and owing to her having been on the reef at Murray Island. 'And the vessel's bottom bore evidence of having encountered something stronger than water.' This, I suppose, would be natural after being on a reef for 24 hours. 'Her cables were short, only 45 fathoms to each bower anchor, and no spare purchase gear of any description.' When I gave up charge of the vessel to Captain Cater she had on board 105 fathoms of new steel-link cable—60 on the starboard or working anchor, and 45 on the port one.

"Having been without a mate from the 18th April till the 22nd May, I received these myself on the 2nd May, and saw them bent, and know that this amount of chain was on board when I gave up charge. There were also on board 120 fathoms of round link chain, 60 fathoms of which I intended to keep on board in case it might be required."

I do not think I need read any more. Captain Cater distinctly denies that such was the case, as I have stated; and I may add that Captain Williams, when ordered to go to the Fly River with the "Advance," positively refused, and wrote to the Colonial Secretary to the effect that it was a dangerous passage to take in consequence of the tides, and he did not wish to run any risks. I bring the matter before the House so that Captain Cater may have an opportunity of defending himself in some way by having the case heard again; and as it is too late to ask for a select committee, I hope the Colonial Secretary will be able to explain the matter to the House, and if possible give Captain Cater a hearing, so that the matter may be satisfactorily cleared up. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I hardly know what the hon. gentleman—or rather what Captain Cater desires. He was in charge of the "Mavis" and the "Mavis" was lost. The board held an inquiry in Brisbane; they heard the evidence of Captain Cater, the mate, and one of the crew, and two persons who had been pearl-diving in the Straits for some years—they did not hear Captain Williams—and they had the letter the hon. gentleman has read from Mr. Douglas; and they arrived at certain conclusions. One conclusion they arrived at was that the vessel was insufficiently found as to her cables. They say:—

"She certainly should not, in those waters, have had less than sixty fathoms on each cable, and three or four lengths of spare chain on board."

Captain Williams says that when he gave over the charge of the "Mavis" to Captain Cater there were 120 fathoms of chain on board, besides the cables. It was not there when the vessel was wrecked, because it had been taken out. Unfortunately Captain Williams was not examined before the Marine Board; no doubt if he had been examined he would have made the same statement as he makes in his letter. The hon. gentleman read Captain Williams' letter. He says:—

"There was also on board 120 fathoms of round link chain, 60 fathoms of which I intended to keep on board in case it might be required (these were the cables replaced by the new stud-link chain); also sufficient blocks and gear even to lift her masts out had it been necessary; and I suppose Captain Cater never took the trouble to find out what was in the vessel, or he would never have made such rash and foolish statements."

A passenger who was on board the vessel called on me a few days ago and informed me that after the wreck they discovered sixty fathoms of cable on board which they were not aware of before. Captain Williams says it was there; Captain Cater says it was not there; and a passenger called on me and said he thought it was his duty to tell me that after the wreck they discovered it was there. But there is another matter which deserves attention. It appears from the report of the board that at 4 o'clock in the afternoon the vessel was off a place called Halfway Island. They steered then for an island called Poll Island, which was thirty-one miles distant. After they had been travelling from 4 o'clock till dusk—much before the time when they could possibly have got to Poll Island—they sighted an island; and without inquiring what it was they assumed it was Poll Island; they steered accordingly—steered on to a reef. It was Dove Island, an island marked on the chart, and only nineteen

miles from where they were at 4 o'clock, being the distance they would naturally have run in that period. The board find—

"The distance from Halfway Island to Poll Island is thirty-one miles, so that between 4 o'clock and dusk she could not possibly have reached that island, nor can the board think that the vessel could have been kept a S.W. by W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  W. course so long as the master imagines, while Dove Island is only nineteen miles distant, and bears from the approximate position of the vessel off Halfway Island about W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  N. The board can only come to the conclusion that the vessel was crossing from island to sandbank and sandbank to island, and that the courses and distances actually run had been more or less lost sight of. Witnesses were called to prove the frequent abnormal set of the tide in the Strait; but, as no unusual set had been noticed when passing any of the banks or islands, the board think this need not be taken into serious consideration."

They add—

"The Honourable John Douglas, the Government Resident, speaks in high terms of Captain Cater's conduct on board the vessel; nevertheless, the board consider that, the weather being squally with rain, and Captain Cater having but little practical acquaintance with the navigation of the Strait, he did not take sufficient care to ascertain the correct course and distance actually made between island and island; though, as before stated, the accident would probably not have happened had the 'Mavis' been provided with sufficient length of cable."

Captain Cater himself was heard, and no one was heard against him before the Marine Board; the evidence was all one way. The Marine Board came to a certain conclusion, and I do not exactly see what ground the hon. gentleman can urge why a further inquiry should be held. Captain Cater cannot complain that any of the evidence he desired to call was not given before the Marine Board. They came to an unfavourable conclusion as to his navigation; but they merely censured him, and did not take away his certificate. I do not think he can complain that he was harshly dealt with by the Marine Board.

Mr. BEATTIE said: Mr. Speaker,—I have no desire to say anything upon this question except with reference to a remark made by the Premier that he did not know what Captain Cater wanted. I believe this is what he wants: He sent in to the Colonial Secretary a letter explanatory of the whole matter—and this is the complaint I think Captain Cater has to make; because his whole future life depends upon this case being brought prominently before the Colonial Secretary. He sent in a report to the Colonial Secretary stating the whole circumstances of the case, as well as the evidence given before the Marine Board; and that report was sent to Captain Williams of the "Lucinda." On Captain Cater asking to see the Colonial Secretary his request was refused.

The PREMIER: I did not know he wanted to see me.

Mr. BEATTIE: I am informed that that message was given to him, and given in a very gruff manner. Of course he felt it very badly. After I had moved for the papers I was very anxious to see the report of Captain Williams; because statements were made on oath before the Marine Board that there were only forty-five fathoms of chain on each cable, and that there was no other chain on board the vessel. Two or three days afterwards I saw Captain Cater, and I said, "It is singular that you and the chief officer should give evidence on oath that there were only forty-five fathoms of chain on each cable, while Captain Williams states that there were 120 fathoms of chain on board the 'Mavis' which you put ashore at Thursday Island; how do you account for that?" He said, "When I went up to Thursday Island and delivered over the 'Advance' to Captain Williams, and

took charge of the "Mavis," I found on her deck a large quantity of chain, consisting of a stud-link cable, with another very large chain that was intended for moorings at Thursday Island." I said, "What did you do with that 120 fathoms?" He said, "I asked Captain Williams what this chain was, and he said, 'If you take my advice, Cater, you will put that chain on shore; that chain, every time I let go an anchor, has lost me an anchor; it is perfectly rotten.'" That is what Captain Cater told me. I said, "It is an extraordinary thing that Captain Williams should make a statement like that he made in his letter to the Colonial Secretary after making that statement to you." Captain Cater's statement that Captain Williams gave him that advice to put the chain on shore because he had lost so many anchors is borne out by the fact that in a very short time Captain Williams lost six anchors. He lost six anchors by the very chain he recommended Cater to put on shore at Thursday Island.

The PREMIER: They were kedge anchors.

Mr. BEATTIE: They were not kedge anchors. The smallest of them was 3 cwt. 3 qrs. 14 lbs., and the bower anchor was only 6½ cwt. It is an uncalled-for thing for the master of a ship to try and condemn his brother shipmaster without a hearing. There is no doubt that something must have passed between Captain Cater and Captain Williams, at Thursday Island, otherwise the chain would never have been put out there, as Captain Cater knew he was going to take a quantity of coals to the Fly River. The Premier said he had got information from a passenger on some vessel that the chain was on board.

The PREMIER: He was in the "Mavis" when she was lost.

Mr. BEATTIE: How did he ascertain that the chain was there? It can be easily shown that the ship chandler's order was for forty-five fathoms of chain.

The PREMIER: This was old chain.

Mr. BEATTIE: I do not know anything about that. That is new information to me. I am speaking about the chain which Captain Cater was recommended by Captain Williams to put on shore at Thursday Island. Any man who thinks he is labouring under some injury is justified in making application to be heard in his defence. We know that Captain Cater was brought before the Marine Board and was found guilty on account of the manner in which the vessel was navigated. At the same time there were extenuating circumstances which Captain Cater might fairly bring before the Colonial Secretary. The man's whole future life depends upon his getting employment, and there is no doubt that if it is circulated that he, through gross carelessness in leaving cable on shore, incurred the censure of the Marine Board, because they considered the want of ground tackle on board the vessel was one of the causes of her wreck, he will have some difficulty in getting employment. But if he can prove he was not to blame his case might be taken into consideration by the Colonial Secretary. There is another matter which should be considered. Captain Cater came down here and supported himself while he was kept hanging about for some time without receiving any communication from the Colonial Secretary's Department. He was five or six weeks here when he received a note saying his services were no longer required. He was only paid up to the day he arrived, and he was kept hanging about all that time believing himself to be still under the orders of the Government. He has some little cause of complaint on that ground. I do not

blame the Colonial Secretary for refusing to see him; and I think that very often messages sent as answers are delivered in a way that was not intended. I would like to see this matter cleared up, and to find out who is making the mis-statements concerning this chain, because I cannot believe that there could have been sixty fathoms of chain on board that small vessel without her officers knowing anything about it—especially as she had just been put on the beach to have her bottom repaired. She was taking coals to the Fly River, and had some ballast in her which could not be dispensed with, as it is impossible to get ballast there; but I cannot see how a captain could have sixty fathoms of chain in his vessel's hold and not know anything about it. I would like to see the matter cleared up, as I have said, and this dispute between these two masters set at rest.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I will just say a word or two with the permission of the House. Captain Cater made a report to the Marine Board. That report was sent to me; and, as it contained some very serious charges against Captain Williams, an officer in the Government Service, it was sent to him for his answer. That is how it got to him, and no further use was made of his answer. With respect to the new matter raised by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, to the effect that for some time after he arrived here Captain Cater did not know that his services were not required by the Government, I can only say that it is generally understood that when his ship is lost the captain's engagement is at an end.

Question put and negatived.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Before you pass on to the "General Business," I may state that I understand that the hon. members for Darling Downs and Fassifern have agreed to postpone their motions until after the consideration of the South Brisbane Gas Bill. In order to do that it will be necessary to pass to the Orders of the Day, and I will, therefore, move that the House do now pass to the Orders of the Day.

Mr. KATES said: At the request of the hon. member for Bowen, I agree to his Order of the Day coming on first.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the first Order of the Day was the second reading of the South Brisbane Gas and Light Company Bill. What would the next business be?

The PREMIER said that afterwards they would go back to the notices of motion.

Question put and passed.

#### SOUTH BRISBANE GAS AND LIGHT COMPANY (LIMITED) BILL—SECOND READING.

Mr. CHUBB said: Mr. Speaker,—The object of this Bill is explained in the preamble. The company has lately been incorporated with the object of manufacturing gas and other means of public and private lighting—and coke—for the purpose of lighting South Brisbane, Kangaroo Point, Woollongabba, and other suburbs and places with gas. The Bill is a *fac simile* of the Townsville Gas Company Bill, which was passed last year after very careful scrutiny. It will be seen that when the profits of the company amount to a greater sum than 20 per cent. the price of gas is to be reduced so that the clear annual profits shall not be more than 20 per cent. A similar condition was contained in the Townsville Bill. Some gas Bills have fixed the amount at 50 per cent., but the present Bill brings it down to the

minimum. The remainder of the clauses are purely formal. In the 38th clause, power is given to the local authority within whose jurisdiction the company carries on its operations, to purchase and take from the company the whole of the lands, buildings, etc., on such terms as to ascertainment and payment of the purchase money as may be prescribed from time to time by Parliament. Whilst the Townsville Gas Company Bill was under discussion, a question arose as to profits and a general standard of light and purity, and it was decided to reserve for the local authority the power of purchase after the expiration of fourteen years. With regard to the work of the committee appointed to report on the desirability of the Bill—they examined Mr. Porter, the chairman of the company; Mr. Morrison, one of the residents of South Brisbane; and the engineer. The evidence of those gentlemen amounted to this: That there were as many houses in South Brisbane now as there were in North Brisbane when the Gas Company was established there twenty-one years ago. The supply of gas in South Brisbane was deficient, not only in quantity but also in quality; and complaints had been made, but no redress had been obtained. The establishment of a South Brisbane gas company will result in a wholesome competition with the old company; and the consequence will be, not only an improvement in the quality of the gas, but a cheapening of the price to the consumers. As monopolies are always objectionable, it will be admitted by every member of the House that fair grounds have been shown for the passing of this Bill. The plant of the company will supply at first 30,000,000 cubic feet of gas per annum; and by an increased expenditure of £10,000 the company will be able to double that production. It may be added that the Brisbane Gas Company are removing their headquarters several miles out of the city, and of course as they go further away there will be a demand upon them from the adjacent suburbs; they will have an adjacent larger number of consumers to supply, and that of itself will not benefit the inhabitants of South Brisbane. There is ample room for the establishment of another gas company on the south side, and the evidence taken by the committee is, I think, sufficient to show the desirability of such a company being formed. I beg, therefore, to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—As one of the committee who inquired into the motive of this Bill and the necessity there was for it, I may inform the House that it was a matter of regret, generally, that the Government had not brought in a Bill dealing with gas companies generally. As hon. members are aware, under the existing gas Acts the public have very little protection. There is nothing to compel them to manufacture gas up to any particular standard of quality; they can make it as pure or as impure as they please. With regard to the profit we are willing to allow gas companies to make before compelling them to reduce the price of gas, I consider that 20 per cent. is an exorbitant one, especially when we remember that the value of their property is increasing year by year. To allow them to earn such a profit is not fair to the public. But the committee felt bound to deal with this company in the same way as the House has always dealt with previous companies. Last year, in connection with two Bills, we reduced the profit from 30 per cent. to 20 per cent., but even that is too high. I hope that next year the Government will redeem the promise made last session, and bring in a general Bill of that kind for the protection of the public. In this Bill the committee have dealt fairly by the company, and the interests

of the public have not been sacrificed in any other way than has hitherto been allowed by the House. That there is a fine field for the company, I have not the slightest doubt, and the other company has been deplorably deficient in supplying both quantity and quality of gas to the people of South Brisbane. That was made very apparent by the evidence. I hope no exception will be taken to this Bill, and I hope also that the Government will next session bring in a Bill dealing with gas companies generally.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not intend to oppose this Bill. I rise chiefly to urge upon the House the necessity of affording protection, in these Bills, to taxpayers. Gas companies have the right to disturb our streets and roads whenever they consider it necessary. All they have to do is to give notice of their intention to the municipal council or divisional board. The company is supposed to leave the street in as good order as they found it, and I must say that the Brisbane Gas Company have endeavoured to their utmost to do so. Still, it is impossible to open a macadamised street and close it again and leave it in the same state as it was before. A heavy shower of rain causes the loose earth to sink and leave a trench in the street. The consequence of that is that the local authority must fill it up and re-metal the place. Although this Bill provides that the company shall leave the streets as they found them, the company is subjected to no penalty that I can see for neglecting to do so; nor is there any in the Brisbane Gas Company Act. The company may be sued for neglecting to leave the road as they found it, and a verdict may be given against them, but there is no penalty. Many hon. members may have noticed that last year the Brisbane Gas Company was laying some large mains through the street at Petrie's Bight. That street was open for six months; they were constantly opening one trench after another. The company certainly did their utmost to prevent the road becoming dangerous; they have a most excellent manager, who endeavours to protect the interests of the public as well as any man I have ever seen. Still, work of this kind throws upon the municipality the very great cost of re-metalling and re-forming the streets, and I think it is only fair that there should be a penalty clause inserted in all Bills of this kind. Private companies who have the privilege of opening our streets for the purpose of laying down pipes ought, in common fairness, to be made to pay a little in the shape of taxes towards the cost which their exercise of that privilege involves upon the municipality or divisional board. It is a very nice point of law whether the present company could be made to pay rates upon their plant for the use of our streets. I cannot see why these companies should not contribute something towards the revenue of the city as some sort of compensation for breaking up the streets. I do not see why gas companies should be placed in a better position than the Tramway Company. The Tramway Company has the right to lay rails along our streets, but they have to maintain the whole of the road between the rails, and eighteen inches on either side; and not only that, but they have to pay a rate upon their earnings as well. I think myself it is only fair that a gas company, or any company that utilises our streets for the purpose of acquiring large profits, ought to contribute towards the maintenance of those roads in return for the privileges they receive. I hope that either the hon. gentleman who introduced the Bill, or some other hon. member, will see the necessity of introducing amendments which will enable a penalty to be imposed, and also enable the corporation or divisional boards

to collect a small tax so that they may be able to recoup themselves for the outlay. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, from the personal knowledge I have, that last year the large mains that were laid through the streets of Brisbane cost the municipality a large sum of money in re-metalling; and I have no doubt other members who have been in the same position as I have been will bear me out in that. I think it is only reasonable that private companies, acquiring such large profits as we hear of—20 and 50 per cent.—should contribute something to the revenue. I do not wish to put a heavy tax upon them, but they should certainly contribute something towards the maintenance of the streets. If amendments to that effect are introduced in this Bill I hope that next session the Government will introduce a measure dealing with all gas companies—putting them all on the same footing. I do not wish to handicap this company. I believe a gas company in South Brisbane will do well; it is wanted. The only other thing I see in the Bill calling for attention is that the company ask the right to cross Victoria Bridge, a right which was denied to some extent to the present company. Hon. members may laugh, but it was a fact, because, although the gas has been taken across the bridge, it was taken across when the bridge was no man's property. The Government said it was theirs until they found it wanted repairs, and then they would not own it, but compelled the corporation to take it over. The corporation refused to allow the present gas company to lay additional pipes upon that bridge unless they paid a handsome sum, and the company has not crossed the bridge. If this Bill pass in its present form, the new company will be able to cross to this side of the river, but the other company may not be able to cross to the other side—they have small pipes across now, but they may wish to put down larger ones. I therefore hope that the Government will see the necessity of bringing in a Bill next session dealing with gas companies generally.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. R. Dickson) said: Mr. Speaker,—I have no doubt there is ample field for the establishment of a gas company at South Brisbane, and that it will prove of great benefit to that part of the city, and also be a profitable concern to those directly interested in it. I should like, however, to have seen this Bill framed not altogether in the stereotyped form of other Bills of a similar character that have passed through this House; and without any desire whatever to disparage the company, I think legislation might very fairly be invited to endeavour to obtain for consumers of gas a better article than they are actually paying for at the present time. I find from the evidence that it is admitted that good gas may be manufactured from the coal which we locally produce, therefore I cannot accept the quality of that coal as being a reason for an inferior article being produced at the present time and supplied to consumers. I think it would be as well in this Bill if the committee had insisted upon the introduction of a clause by which the illuminating power of the gas supplied should have been specially referred to. My attention has been particularly called to this, because in the evidence taken before the select committee, Mr. Robert Porter, the first witness, was asked:—

“Do you think it desirable that the gas company should be established at South Brisbane for the purpose of lighting it with gas or other means of lighting? Yes; it will supply a want that I know has been felt for some considerable time, both as regards the quantity and the quality of gas.”

There does not appear to be any attempt whatever made by the Bill to improve upon its predecessors in respect of quality, although it is

pointed out in another portion of the evidence that an improvement might easily be effected which would not operate injuriously upon the gas company. At the conclusion of the evidence Mr. Mellor asked this question of Mr. John Davis, engineer for the South Brisbane Gas Company:—

“Do you think it would be an injustice to introduce a clause into the Act compelling gas companies to have a light of sixteen candles? The gas company could do it, certainly.”

“You think that is about fair—what ought to be? Yes; I think so. That is a fair average, I consider. Very much superior to the quality now made by the old company.”

Having that direct evidence that this illuminating power is not costly to obtain, I think it would be in the interests of the public if a clause were introduced insisting upon better illuminative medium being supplied than we have at the present time on several occasions to submit to. The matter is one of great interest, and I make these remarks, not with any desire to injure or impede the operations of the new company; but, at the same time, I think it very desirable that we should get better illuminative power than is at present supplied. Then, again, my attention has been directed to the fact that we allow the shareholders of this company to distribute the same percentage of dividends that we have done to other companies established—

Mr. CHUBB: No.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is 20 per cent.—the same as Townsville. Brisbane was 50 per cent., but the percentage has been gradually reduced, and I am inclined to think that, with the growing cheapness of money, the shareholders and others interested in an investment of this sort might very well be content with a less dividend than 20 per cent. I think 15 per cent. would be a very encouraging dividend. There is not much risk in the undertaking. It is not like trying new paths, or entering upon a new industry or enterprise. The manufacture of gas is a very lucrative business and, no doubt, will continue to be so. I do not think its remunerativeness will be at all interfered with by any large extension of the electric light, or that that will jeopardise the dividends of the shareholders. Therefore I think 15 per cent. would be quite sufficient inducement to capitalists and enterprising men to invest, and thereby allow a larger proportion of the profits to be employed in extending the operations of the company. I make these remarks because the Government have not had their hands sufficiently free up to the present time to introduce a Bill dealing with gas companies. Even when they have introduced a measure of this sort, it will hardly be fair to affect existing rights; therefore we must bear in mind that we are adding to the rights that already exist, which we shall have to touch very tenderly whenever the time comes to make a general revision of the subject. The question introduced by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley is of considerable importance—that is, that a rate should be levied upon gas companies for the right to open up streets. If we affirm that, we should also levy a similar rate upon the Board of Waterworks for allowing them to put mains through the streets of municipalities. I think we ought not to oppress these companies with any unnecessary charges, and I do not think it right to introduce into this Bill any clause which will enable such a rate to be levied. With regard to the other matters, I think they deserve attention at the present time, and I certainly think, as regards the quality of the gas supplied, there should be a clause insisting upon a better quality.

Question put and passed.

SOUTH BRISBANE GAS AND LIGHT  
COMPANY (LIMITED) BILL—COM-  
MITTEE.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the Speaker leave the chair, and the House go into Committee to consider the Bill.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not wish to offer any objection to the hon. gentleman proceeding with the Bill, provided he has ascertained from hon. gentlemen who have motions upon the paper, that they anticipated it. Nothing was said about the further stages of the Bill, and as they are likely to delay the proceedings of the House, I think the hon. gentleman should obtain the concurrence of those hon. gentlemen.

Mr. CHUBB: I have ascertained that. I knew that it would be useless to bring in the Bill at all unless it could be put through all its stages to-day. Therefore, I ascertained from hon. gentlemen that there would be no objection.

Question put and passed.

Preamble postponed.

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 passed as printed.

On clause 4—"Power to convey land"—

The PREMIER asked if the hon. gentleman had read the clause carefully? It was not the way land was conveyed under the Real Property Act. The form in use before the Real Property Act was introduced was followed.

Mr. CHUBB said the matter had escaped his attention. The same wording was used in the Townsville Act of last year, upon which there was considerable discussion in the Committee. He moved that all the words after the word "of" in the 34th line, down to and including the word "money" in the 37th line, be omitted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 8 passed as printed.

On clause 9—"Power to secretary, officers, or agents, to do certain things"—

The PREMIER said he did not see the necessity for that clause. It was all provided for by the Supreme Court and District Courts Acts.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the clause be omitted.

Clause put and negatived.

On clause 10, as follows:—

"It shall be lawful for the said company, and they are hereby fully authorised and empowered, subject to the provisions and restrictions hereinafter mentioned, by their servants, agents, or workmen and others, from time to time to erect, sink, cut, lay, place, and fix such retorts, gasometers, receivers, buildings, cisterns, engines, machines, drains, sewers, watercourses, pipes, reservoirs, and other apparatus, works, and devices of such construction, and in such manner as the said company shall think necessary or proper for carrying the objects and purposes of the said company and of this Act into execution, and also, subject to the provisions and clauses hereinafter mentioned, to break up the soil and pavements of and cut into and remove the materials of any streets, highways, roads, ways, lanes, bridges, passages, and other public places, or any part of them, or either of them, and to erect posts, pillars, pilasters, lamp-irons, lamps, and other apparatus in and upon the same streets, highways, roads, ways, lanes, bridges, passages, and other public places or any of them, against any wall or walls erected on or adjoining to them or any of them, and to dig and sink trenches and drains, and to lay and place meters, mains and pipes, and put stop-cocks, syphons, plugs, or branches, from such pipes in, under, across, and along places, streets, ways, lanes, bridges or public passages, and also with the consent of the owners or occupiers thereof, in, under, across, and along any private ways, buildings, passages, grounds, and other places, in such manner as shall be necessary for the purpose of carrying this Act into execution, or supplying any such lights as aforesaid, and from time to time alter the position of and to repair,

relay, and maintain such pipes, stop-cocks, syphons, and plugs or branches, or other necessary apparatus from any main or pipe laid in or upon any street, road, highway, lane, bridge, passage, or public or private place, by the said company, by virtue of this Act, into or through any dwelling house or houses, manufactories, public or private buildings or grounds for the purpose of lighting the same, or any other public or private lamp or lamps from any of such mains or pipes, and to erect and set up any machine or other apparatus necessary or requisite for securing to any dwelling-house or houses, manufactories, public or private buildings, a proper and competent supply of gas, or for measuring and ascertaining the extent of such supply, and also to alter and amend any bad or imperfect work which shall have been placed or which shall be injured or damaged in such dwelling house or houses, manufactories, public or private buildings, and to do all such other acts, matters, and things as the said company shall from time to time think necessary and convenient for completing, amending, repairing, improving, supplying, and using the same, and for carrying into effect the purposes and meaning of this Act, provided a proper compensation be made for any damage done thereby."

Mr. McMASTER said he thought that that was the place to call the Colonial Secretary's attention to the necessity for making some provision to protect the footpaths and streets. The Brisbane Municipality had gone to very great expense in laying asphalt footpaths, and whenever a new building was erected the footpaths were broken up. It was true that when the gas company broke up the footpaths, they returned the material in a manner, but it was never laid back in the same way as it was found; and the corporation had to relay large portions of asphalt on the footpaths. He thought they should have a promise that a Bill would be brought in next session to assimilate all the gas companies. He did not wish to handicap the new company more than another, but it was not fair that a private company should have the power of breaking up all the streets and footpaths without being compelled to contribute something towards their maintenance. The gas company and waterworks board were continually breaking up the streets. Of course they could not get the water-pipes to pay taxes, because they belonged to the ratepayers themselves; but the gas company was a private company that divided all the profits amongst the shareholders, therefore it was only fair that they should pay something. When the roads were once broken up they were never properly relaid until a fresh coat of metal or asphalt was put down. He was quite sure that last year, when the present company was laying down large mains, it must have cost the citizens of Brisbane hundreds of pounds to re-metal the portions of the road that were broken up. Now, in South Brisbane, when the new company was formed, all the streets that they had been macadamising and metalling for years past would be broken up, the citizens would have to re-metal them, and the company would contribute nothing towards it. Certainly, the company would furnish them with gas, but they would have to pay for it. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would see his way to do something enabling the citizens to levy a rate, something similar to that levied on the Tramway Company. The Tramway Company had the use of the streets, and they had to keep them in repair between the lines and eighteen inches each side, besides paying something out of their earnings for the use of them. Although the pipes were laid underground, he maintained they were far more injurious to the roads than the tramway. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would move some amendment, and next session bring in a Bill to assimilate all the gas companies.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said there was a great deal in what the hon. member said. In looking through the various private gas Acts, there



was no doubt of the intention that those who disturbed the roads for private uses should make everything perfectly good, and leave things as they were, so that the municipality should be under no expense. He believed, however, that that intention was in some way defeated—that the gasfitters had the streets pretty much under their control, and after digging trenches for their pipes could leave things as they chose. Clause 16 to his mind seemed sufficient, but it appeared that it was not. It was an intolerable nuisance that men should be allowed to break up the streets, and not restore them to the same state in which they found them. Of course it was a great deal worse now than it used to be, because now there were asphalted channels that could not very well be fixed up after they had been broken, except at considerable expense. He could not understand—not being a lawyer—why clause 16 did not give a remedy, and he would be very glad if it could be remedied. He thought the thing ought to be done by a general Bill applicable to all the gas companies. It was only fair they should all be placed in the same position. It would only make things worse instead of better if the law was worse for one company than another. Last year a discussion took place upon that matter and also upon the percentage of profit which a company could claim before they were obliged to reduce the price of their gas. It was then admitted that a general gas Bill should be brought in, and in fact it was definitely promised by the Premier that as soon as Government business would allow of it a general Bill would be brought in dealing with the power of gas companies to break up streets, to deliver gas to consumers of any quality they chose, and the paying of dividends beyond a reasonable sum. He thought 20 per cent. an unreasonable sum, but as 25 per cent. had previously been the minimum it was thought that it would be rather unfair to reduce the rate, in the case of the Gympie, Bundaberg, and Townsville Acts passed last year, below 20 per cent. They were allowed to go distinctly on the understanding that an Act would be passed, applicable to the whole of the gas companies, and dealing with the three things he had mentioned. It was unfortunate that there was so little time for dealing with private business that they were unable to take the stand which they ought to take on any particular Bill; and it was always felt that it would be unjust to take that stand and say, "This company shall not get more than 10 per cent.," whereas another got 25 per cent.; or that one company should not be allowed to break up the roads without leaving them in the state in which they found them, while a company working alongside might break up the roads and leave them as they chose; or that one company should be bound to give gas of a particular quality, whereas another was not bound by any such provision. At the same time the interests of the public should be protected, and it should be resolved that those companies should not enjoy a monopoly without giving some guarantee that they would leave roads as they found them, give a good quality of gas, and not pay themselves extravagant dividends before they reduced the price of the gas.

Mr. JORDAN said he understood that Mr. Davis, the engineer for the company, when before the select committee, expressed the opinion that the company would be willing that a clause should be inserted to regulate the power and quality of the gas. He stated that the power of illumination could easily be increased by using a certain proportion of shale, up to sixteen-candle power. He understood that was the minimum in Sydney. The minimum in England varied, while in Scotland it was

twenty-candle power. From an answer given by Mr. Davis, however, he concluded that the company only contemplated giving a power of twelve-candle. Mr. Davis, he found was asked the following questions:—

"Can you give us any information with regard to the supply of gas? Yes.

"As to its quality and quantity? Well, we can increase the quality to almost anything by using a proportion of shale. In Sydney, I think, they are limited to sixteen candles. We could easily do that.

"That is the minimum—sixteen-candle power? Yes.

"That is to say, in England—by the Gas Act? It varies. In some towns it is as low as twelve, fifteen, and sixteen;—in Scotland they go as high as twenty-candle power.

"What candle-power do you propose to supply? It is difficult to say. It varies. Sometimes it will be only twelve."

He gathered from that that the company contemplated a candle-power as low as twelve in some cases. Mr. Davis was asked by Mr. Mellor—

"Do you think it would be an injustice to introduce a clause into the Act compelling gas companies to have a light of sixteen candles? The gas company could do it, certainly."

He gathered from that that the company would have no objection to the introduction of a clause providing for an illuminating power of sixteen candles. The hon. member in charge of the Bill would, no doubt, inform the Committee if that was so.

Mr. CHUBB said the hon. gentleman read the evidence wrongly. In the first place the engineer was not asked to give that evidence with authority from the company; and the question put by Mr. Mellor was really as to whether the engineer considered, in a general gas companies Bill, it would be a fair thing to introduce a clause compelling them to provide an illuminating power of sixteen candles. The answer given was that they could do it. There was no statement made that the company would be willing to accept such a clause; in fact it would be unfair to compel that company to introduce a compulsory clause of that kind, which other companies were not compelled to introduce. The subject had been discussed more than once; and he remembered bringing up the question of a standard of purity. There was an Imperial Act called the General Gas Clauses Act, which provided for sixteen-candle power in the metropolis, and in parts of the suburbs; there were heavy penalties provided for cases where the power was not kept up, and where the gas was not of a certain standard of purity—for instance, if there was too much sulphuretted hydrogen in it. There were several other clauses applying to all gas companies. That matter had been before the committee, as to whether such clauses should not be inserted in a Bill dealing with all the gas companies in Queensland; but the Committee did not think it advisable to begin by tacking them on to the present company, for two reasons—first, because the company had never had any reason to anticipate that they would be the first to have to be restricted by those provisions, and secondly, because if that were done they would be putting restrictions upon a new gas company in Brisbane which would not have to be complied with by a gas company already existing in the same place. The present Brisbane Gas Company had, to all intents and purposes, a monopoly, and they were not compelled to reduce the price of their gas until they paid the shareholders 50 per cent. If they put the restrictions mentioned upon the South Brisbane Company they would be increasing the advantages of the existing company, which had been in operation for twenty-one years, and which was now a very powerful company. For those reasons it was advisable to withhold those conditions now, in view of the fact that the

Government would be asked to prepare a general gas companies Bill during the recess. He saw no reason why the profits should not be reduced below 20 per cent. in a general Bill. Under the Bill it would be seen that if the price of the gas became so high as to be prohibitory, the local authority had the power to purchase and carry on the gasworks. For that reason the Committee thought it unwise to introduce the penal clause, especially when a proposition was to be made to introduce a Bill dealing with gas companies generally.

Mr. JORDAN said that in the evidence of the engineer, Mr. Davis, nothing was said about a Bill to regulate gas companies generally. He was glad to see that a gas company was going to be established in South Brisbane, as it would be for the convenience of the residents there, but he would like to see provision made so that the residents would be supplied with a good article.

The PREMIER said he thought the Bill was drafted very much in the interests of the Gas Company, especially with regard to the breaking up of the streets. By the English Gas Companies Clauses Act, no streets could be broken up except under the superintendence of an officer of the corporation. There were various provisions on that subject, and also with regard to properly restoring the work. If a street was broken up without notice by the company to the corporation, the company were liable to a penalty. They were liable to a fine of £5 for each offence, and a further penalty of £5 a day. He certainly thought that the provisions in the Bill should be more stringent than they were. The time had arrived now, he thought, when there should be a general law for gas companies. He hoped the Government would have an opportunity of preparing a Bill, which would have a general application, during the recess. With regard to the question of the quality of gas, that was dealt with in the Act of 1871, which contained sundry provisions for the testing of gas. There was, of course, no use in fixing a standard of quality unless provision was also made as to how the quality was to be tested and proved.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said he desired to ask what would be the position of the South Brisbane Gas Company five years hence, if at that time the Victoria Bridge had to be opened?

Mr. McMASTER said that if the Bill was passed in its present form the company would have power to come across to the north side of the river. They would, however, have to pay £250 a year for crossing the bridge with their pipes. As to the Victoria Bridge, it was already too narrow for the traffic. Upon it, too, a double line of tramway was to be constructed. If the corporation was to keep that bridge in repair it would have to receive further assistance. He knew that the corporation did not wish to increase the weight on that bridge any more than was necessary, and it had to be borne in mind that they had to maintain the bridge at the cost of the citizens. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would see to the matter of the utilisation of the Victoria Bridge by gas companies, as it deserved serious consideration.

The PREMIER said the question raised by the hon. member was rather a serious one. If a very heavy main were laid over the swing portion of the bridge, at any rate, it might do serious injury to it. He did not know whether the bridge was strong enough to carry a number of heavy mains, but if the weight was likely to injure the structure it was a matter that ought certainly to be considered; and if the bridge was strong enough the same privilege ought to be given to other gas companies.

Mr. McMASTER said he hoped hon. member would give a little consideration to the clauses

especially as, if that privilege were given to the South Brisbane company, the Brisbane company would insist upon getting it also. If the privilege were granted they would no doubt put very large mains across the bridge. Perhaps they might put the mains underneath the roadway so as not to interfere with the traffic, but the weight would be on the bridge all the same. He thought the Victoria Bridge should be specially exempted from the clause, and he trusted the Premier, as member for the city, would see to it.

Mr. BAILEY said the hon. member might not be opposed to the South Brisbane Gas Company, but he seemed to be opposed to that company coming over the bridge and competing with the other company in North Brisbane. That was where the trouble came in. It was absurd to suppose that that splendid Victoria Bridge was not strong enough to carry the South Brisbane Gas Company's main. He hoped that company would come into North Brisbane and compete with the existing company, and he believed a great many gas consumers in North Brisbane hoped so too.

Mr. McMASTER said he had not the slightest antagonism to the proposed company, and no one had been more severe on the old company than he when he was mayor of the city. He had no sympathy with the Brisbane Gas Company; he was not even a shareholder in it; and it would be an advantage to him personally if the new company did come into North Brisbane and compete with the old one. But he was speaking with knowledge of the Victoria Bridge, and of the heavy expenditure that would be necessary to maintain it if all the companies—private and public—were allowed to lay heavy mains across it. The directors of the Brisbane Gas Company were shrewd men, and did not need him to protect them.

Mr. FERGUSON said the hon. member need not be afraid of the Victoria Bridge giving way under the weight of the gas-mains. They were only the weight of the empty pipe, and the bridge must be a very frail one if it could not carry them. Competition would be a very good thing for the gas consumers of North Brisbane, where the gas supplied was the very worst that he had seen anywhere. As to the bridge, if there were fifty gas-mains over it they would not have the slightest effect on its stability.

Mr. SCOTT said that as the clause stood there was nothing to prevent the gas company from taking up the whole of the bridge. A couple of mains, perhaps three feet in diameter, would materially circumscribe the space available for traffic.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that although the clause would give the company certain rights which would, of course, have to be extended to the other company, yet they had no rights which could not be overruled by a higher power. They would not be suffered to interfere with the traffic or with the public who used the bridge. It did not follow that the mains must be laid on the decking; they might be laid outside it, or even hung underneath it. The companies would certainly never be allowed to lay them down in the centre of the carriage-way; they would not be allowed to do that whether the clause passed in its present shape or not. The only right which the clause conferred upon the company was the right to use the bridge as a means, or as an assistance, to carry their gas from one side of the river to the other.

The PREMIER said he had a few shares in the Brisbane Gas Company, and he made the statement so that what he had to say should, if necessary, be discounted. He wished he had a great many more of those shares.

Mr. MOREHEAD : "Sell all and give to the poor."

The PREMIER : At the same time, he thought he was bound to call attention to the point that had been raised. As the clause was framed there was nothing to restrict a main being placed on any part of the bridge. The words used were, "under, across, and along places, streets," and so on. He thought provision should be made that no pipe or main should be laid across the bridge in such a manner as to obstruct traffic. It could be easily done by inserting a proviso at the end of the clause. He presumed the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill would not object. The bridge was not too wide now.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the proviso should be a general one, applicable not only to the Victoria Bridge, but to all bridges.

Mr. CHUBB said he had no objection to the amendment if it were considered necessary, but he would point out that, as a rule, bridges were public highways, and if pipes were laid down in such a way as to interrupt the thoroughfare they would be a public nuisance which could be removed by legal authority. He supposed that was the reason why no special provision was made—the general law being sufficient to meet such cases.

The PREMIER said a private Act was intended to enable parties to do certain things which otherwise would be unlawful. He should be sorry to see the law so uncertain as that it should be provided by an Act of Parliament that a company might lay mains or pipes across a bridge, trusting to the court to hold that they should not do so in such a way as to obstruct the highway. The court might say that it was the intention of the Legislature to allow an obstruction of the highway; that would be a possible view for the court to take. He thought it would be better for the hon. gentleman to accept the amendment. It was desirable in the interests of the public to provide that no mains or pipes should be laid across any bridge in such a way as to obstruct the width of the bridge available for traffic.

Mr. CHUBB said he would be glad to accept the amendment.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he understood that the present gas company had power to convey gas across the bridge to South Brisbane, and that they did so. That being so, he—having no interest in either company—thought the new company should not be handicapped as against the other. If under the existing Act the Brisbane Gas Company were allowed the privilege of using the bridge as a highway, why should it be denied to the new company—a competing company certainly, but one whose competition was bound to lead to the general benefit of the community? Why should not that company be placed in exactly the same position, as regarded their right to cross the bridge, as the present Brisbane Gas Company was? He thought every member of the Committee would see the justice of that contention.

Mr. FERGUSON said if hon. members would look at clause 17 they would see that power was given to the corporation to direct the company as to the way in which they were to lay down their mains in all parts of the municipality, and it referred especially to bridges, so that ample power was given to meet the case referred to. No pipe could be carried anywhere without the sanction of the corporation.

Mr. McMASTER said that was quite plain under the clause.

The PREMIER : No ; it is not.  
1885—4 o

Mr. McMASTER said from the way in which the hon. member for Rockhampton put it he thought it was. What he (Mr. McMaster) contended was that the Bill empowered one company to cross the bridge, and, as a matter of fact, the present company had not crossed it since the corporation had taken it back from the Government, the corporation having refused them permission to cross except under the condition of paying a certain sum annually in perpetuity. It was a nice point of law whether the corporation could stop them from crossing the bridge. The corporation believed they had the power, and the gas company admitted it by the fact of not proceeding with the work. He wanted to protect the South Brisbane Company as much as any other, but he said they were not justified, until the bridge was made wider, in allowing two rows of gas-pipes to be placed across it, especially as the Tramway Company was going to put a double row of rails down.

Mr. CHUBB said the hon. gentleman said it was a nice point whether the present gas company could cross the bridge, but they had crossed it.

Mr. McMASTER : Before the corporation had control over it.

Mr. CHUBB said he believed the reason why the gas company did not put a larger main across was because hitherto they had paid nothing, and now the corporation wanted a rental of £250 a year, or something like that, for the privilege of putting the larger main over. Under the Bridge Act, passed when the Government took over the bridge from the corporation, it was expressly declared that the bridge should thereafter be "a free main public highway"; under the Brisbane Gas Company Act they had power to lay their pipes through all highways, and although the word "bridge" was not mentioned in that Act they had authority to cross it, it being a main public highway. He would point out to the hon. member for Rockhampton that clause 17 did not touch the point; it only applied to the levels being given. The hon. the Premier was quite right in suggesting the proviso, and he (Mr. Chubb) was very glad to accept it.

The PREMIER moved that the following words be added to the clause: "Provided that no main or pipe shall be allowed to cross any bridge in such a manner as to obstruct such bridge, or diminish the width of the bridge available for traffic."

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the hon. gentleman had forgotten altogether the navigation of the river. If the pipes were hung six yards below the bridge it would be impossible for vessels to pass. There was no provision made for preventing the hanging of the pipes so low as to obstruct navigation.

Mr. BEATTIE said perhaps it was the intention of the hon. Colonial Secretary that the pipes should be erected above, like an overhead railway, and that was exactly what they ought to be. There would have been very much more space left on the bridge had that been done, and it would be a very serious question if they were hung so low as to impede the navigation of the river.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said they could be put on brackets outside of the bridge.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 15, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 16—"Company to relay pavements or roads broken up, and to remove rubbish, etc., until pavements be relaid—company to provide necessary lights, etc."—

The PREMIER said he would call the attention of the hon. gentleman to the inadequacy of the penalty provided, 20s. being the maximum, for spoiling the road. He would ask the hon. gentleman whether he had observed the expression "make good such ground, soil, pavement, or material, to the satisfaction of the person having the control, direction, or supervision of such pavement." Those words were taken from the Act of 1841, and only applied where the streets were under the superintendence of an overseer.

Mr. CHUBB said he agreed with the hon. gentleman, and would move that the words, "person having the control, direction, or superintendence of such pavement, soil, ground, or material respectively" be omitted, with a view of inserting the words "mayor or chairman of a municipality or a division."

Amendment agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. CHUBB, several consequential amendments were made.

Mr. CHUBB said it might be advisable to increase the penalty.

The PREMIER said the English Act provided a penalty for delay; but that clause did not provide any penalty except for not paying costs of repair. There was no penalty for delaying the work, which there ought to be.

Mr. CHUBB said it would be better to leave the matter for the general regulations. He would move the omission of the words "twenty shillings," with the view of inserting the words "five pounds."

Mr. BEATTIE said he would point out that that would simply apply to the South Brisbane company, and not to any other company. He had mentioned last session the system which was in existence in America. In San Francisco they never interfered with the roadway at all; they excavated the footpath and made a chamber which contained all the gas-pipes, water-pipes, and telegraph wires, with openings at intervals so that they could be got at for repairs. If the gas company would only adopt that system they would find at the end of twelve months that they had saved a great deal of money.

Amendment put and passed.

After several further verbal amendments, the clause, as amended, was put and passed.

On clause 17, as follows:—

"In case the corporation of the municipality of Brisbane, or other corporation, or other person having the control, direction, or superintendence of the said roads, streets, ways, lanes, bridges, and other public passages and places respectively, shall from time to time supply full information to the said company respecting the permanent levels of the said roads, streets, ways, lanes, and other public passages, either without notice requiring such information or within fourteen days after they shall have received notice from the said corporation so to do, the said company shall lay and place their mains, main pipes, stop-cocks, plugs and branches, and fix their lamps and other means of lighting so as to accommodate them to the said levels; and in case the said corporation or other person as aforesaid shall neglect or refuse to supply such information after such notice from the said company, and shall at any time thereafter change or vary any of the said levels so as to raise or sink or otherwise alter the situation, line, or direction of any of the main pipes, stop-cocks, plugs, or branches which shall have been laid down for the purposes aforesaid and in accordance with this Act, it shall and may be lawful for the said company to raise or sink or alter the situation, line, or direction of such main pipes, stop-cocks, plugs, or branches, and the reasonable costs and charges of doing the same shall immediately thereafter be paid by the said corporation or other person; in default thereof the same may be recovered and levied in such manner as forfeitures and penalties imposed by this Act are directed to be levied and recovered."

Mr. CHUBB said there were some amendments required in the clause. He moved that the words "corporation of the municipality of Brisbane, or other corporation, or other person" be omitted, with the view of inserting the words "local authority."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the clause be further amended by the substitution of the word "company" for the word "corporation."

The PREMIER said the proposition contained in the clause was a very serious one. The clause would compel the local authority to give the permanent levels of roads or streets after fourteen days' notice to do so by the company. They would not be able to give the levels in fourteen days. There were many places in the Woollongabba district where the permanent levels could not be fixed in fourteen days. The clause said the levels should be fixed under a penalty of having to bear the expense of altering the levels of the pipes. That was a very serious thing to propose.

Mr. CHUBB said that under the Local Government Act an owner of property could compel a local authority to fix the levels of a street or road after six months' notice. That seemed perhaps a long time for a case like that before them. The local authority was entitled to reasonable notice, however, and as in the present case it would be no hardship as the company could give notice at once, he would, with the permission of the Committee, withdraw his amendment for the purpose of moving an amendment upon a previous portion of the clause. He proposed to move that the words "fourteen days" be omitted with a view of inserting the words "six months."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. CHUBB moved the omission of the words "fourteen days" with a view of inserting the words "six months."

Mr. McMASTER said the clause was a very arbitrary one altogether. According to the latter part of the clause a local authority must give levels within a certain time, and if at any subsequent time those levels were altered in the interests of the public, the local authority would have to bear the expense of relaying the gas-pipes. That, in his opinion, was absurd. In a young city like Brisbane, and in other towns of the colony, the levels of the streets had frequently to be altered, and it would be a great hardship if the local authority, having to alter the levels in the interests of the public, should be compelled to bear the expense of lowering the gas company's pipes. The clause proposed to give that company an advantage which the present gas company of Brisbane had not got. If the levels of the streets were altered at present, the Brisbane Gas Company had to lower their pipes at their own risk. A cutting was to be made in Adelaide street, for instance, to relieve Queen street of the heavy traffic from the wharves. He did not know if the gas company had pipes in that street; but, if they had, they would have to lower them at their own expense. There was to be a cutting also in Ann street, and the same would be the case there. The clause, however, proposed that the local authority should supply the South Brisbane Company with the permanent levels after fourteen days' notice, and if, subsequent to that, they altered the levels, they would have to pay for lowering the company's pipes.

Mr. FERGUSON said that the engineers of local authorities were, in some cases, not very careful in taking the proper levels, and the clause was to provide that, if the wrong levels were

taken and they had to be altered in a short time, the company should not be put to the extra expense of relaying their pipes. Unless the company had some provision of the kind to protect them they might be put to enormous expense in relaying their pipes a short time after the levels had been fixed, owing to the fact that the engineer might have taken the wrong levels or might not have gone to the trouble of surveying to get the proper levels the first time.

Mr. McMASTER said that under the Local Government Act six months' notice had to be given to the local authority to fix those levels. There might not be any hardship in that, but the clause said that the local authority should fix the levels after fourteen days' notice, and if in the interests of the public they had subsequently to be altered they could be called upon to bear the expense of lowering the pipes. It did seem to him unreasonable that if the corporation cut down the levels of a street the gas company should be made liable for the altering of their pipes.

Mr. BUCKLAND said it was unreasonable to expect a local authority, such as a divisional board, to give the levels for streets; at present they were not in a position to do so; for instance, the Woollongabba Board, through the streets of which there was a probability that the mains of the company now before the Committee would require to be laid, could not possibly be able to give permanent levels, and there were other suburban boards, which he need not name, which would be similarly situated.

Mr. ALAND said he differed from the junior member for Fortitude Valley on the question under discussion. He held that, as municipalities were to some extent, benefited by gas companies, if the street levels were cut down the expense of relaying the gas-pipes should be met by the municipality. He would support the clause as it stood.

Mr. WAKEFIELD said he could not agree with the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Aland, that gas companies were purely for the benefit of municipalities. They supplied gas for the purpose of receiving dividends, and they had certain privileges allowed to them. It was a difficult matter for municipalities or divisional boards to fix permanently the levels of streets. Months were occupied in fixing the level of a street. Yet the Bill gave the gas company the power to charge municipalities or divisional boards for lowering or raising their street levels. He thought that was too much power to put in the company's hands.

Mr. ALAND said the hon. member for Moreton, Mr. Wakefield, should not put words in his (Mr. Aland's) mouth. He did not state that the gas companies were formed merely for the benefit of municipalities. He knew quite well that their primary object was to benefit their shareholders. At the same time, however, they benefited municipalities to a very great extent, as they increased the value of property.

Mr. FERGUSON said he knew very well that if the clause under discussion was struck out there would be no protection whatever for the gas company. They would get certain levels for the laying of their pipes so that the pipes would not interfere with the traffic, but no guarantee that those levels would not be altered. The levels in many cases were bound to be altered, and the pipes would have to be re-laid. The company would thus be put to no end of expense in the future.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the words "said corporation or other person as aforesaid" be omitted, and the words "local authority" be inserted in their stead.

The PREMIER said the question should be considered as to whether the corporation should be charged with the cost of altering the levels of the pipes at all. He suggested that the latter part of the clause should be left out altogether.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said that according to the law relating to divisional boards and municipalities the owners of private property were entitled to know from the municipality the permanent levels of the streets, so that they might erect their buildings accordingly. If they got the permanent levels before building, the municipality was liable for any alteration in the levels afterwards. That privilege having been extended to every gas company in the colony up to the present time, why should there be an alteration now? If they passed a Bill by which the local authorities were not bound to furnish permanent levels to the company, the company would be at a serious disadvantage, because they would not know if their own work was to be permanent or not. It must be remembered that if the company was formed for the sole purpose of making money it would also do good to the inhabitants of South Brisbane generally. The promoters ought, therefore, to have some security for their investment of money, just as owners of private property had for the investment of theirs. Any expense incurred in altering the levels should be borne by the local authorities.

Mr. McMASTER said he did not object to a municipality giving the levels, so long as they had a reasonable time to do it in; but what the hon. member wanted would, in the suburbs of Brisbane, be a hardship to the companies themselves. The corporation was of course bound to give the levels, and the company would be compelled in some cases to lay their pipes a very great depth, while the corporation need not cut down the road until it was required for building purposes. The corporation would thus protect itself, while the company would be put to an enormous expense.

Mr. CHUBB said that did not necessarily follow. The company might put their pipes just under the surface, and lower them afterwards, when the road was cut down—of course at their own expense. Without the proviso, the corporation might cause the company to be constantly altering its levels. The Brisbane Gas Company had to alter their mains three times at Petrie's Bight at their expense in consequence of the alteration of the levels.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the illustration given by the hon. member showed the folly of imagining that the levels represented by the corporation were the real permanent levels in new towns and cities. In an extensive suburb like South Brisbane, which was likely before long to be thickly populated, the permanent level of the roads would be very different from what it was now, and it would be handicapping the municipality with an unnecessary amount of expenditure were Parliament to insist that they should, when altering the present levels, be also put to the expense of lowering the gas company's mains. It would be a judicious thing to make a fresh departure in the present Bill, and relieve the local authority from the necessity of making such an outlay.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said it was a just principle that a municipality, after having once furnished a permanent level to a private owner or a public company, should be responsible for what took place afterwards in consequence of an alteration of those levels for the

public good. That was all that was wanted, and it was on that principle that all previous gas Bills in the colony had been framed. Supposing they adopted the suggestions of the Colonial Treasurer, in what position would the South Brisbane Gas Company be, compared with the other gas companies, whose alterations, after an alteration in the permanent level of the road, had to be effected at the expense of the local authority? Without a clause of that kind a company might be compelled to lower or raise its pipes every six months. The hon. member could not have considered the subject. Why should a fresh departure be made in the case of the South Brisbane Gas Company, when they had adopted the principle in the Divisional Boards Act, the Local Government Act, and every gas company Act that had been passed in the colony?

Mr. JORDAN said the remarks of the hon. member for Mulgrave should be approved of by the Committee. It would be a manifest injustice, after permanent levels had been given, and the municipality should for any purpose alter those levels, to compel the gas companies to be at the expense of altering the pipes. He hoped the Committee would not countenance anything in that direction.

Mr. FERGUSON said he did not think they ought to handicap the South Brisbane Company more than any other company in the colony. If a company, after having got the permanent level, did not choose to comply with it, and put the pipes a short distance below the surface, and afterwards had to lower them when the street was cut down, of course they would do it at their own expense. They had the levels, but they did not wish to go to the expense of putting the pipes down to the depth given; therefore, when the time came that the streets were cut down to the level, the company would have to go to the expense of lowering the pipes themselves. That would not apply to any formed streets in Brisbane or South Brisbane, but to new streets; and when the company got the permanent level, if they did not put their pipes down to that level, when the streets were cut down they would have to put them down at their own expense.

Mr. McMASTER said he could assure the hon. member that South Brisbane would suffer more than any other portion of the city, because the levels of a great many streets there had not been fixed. He was not aware that the authority in question was given in other gas companies' Acts, but thought that it was a new authority given to the South Brisbane company only. He should not further obstruct the measure, but thought it his duty to call attention to the matter because he was certain it would be a great hardship on divisional boards, and put them to a great deal of expense. As far as South Brisbane was concerned, he had no doubt they would take care that the levels were fixed so low that they would not have any occasion to pay the expense of lowering the pipes—that if they had to be reduced at any future time the company must do the work of lowering the pipes themselves.

Mr. BAILEY said he must say he was very much surprised at the obstruction that had been offered to the Bill. It had been very carefully framed, and he was sorry to hear from the hon. member for Fortitude Valley a kind of threat to that gas company.

Mr. McMASTER: No; I made no threat.

Mr. BAILEY: The hon. member spoke of some kind of impossible levels—levels so low that the company would be required to sink their pipes to some extraordinary depth. He hoped

the South Brisbane people would have more sense. They wanted the gas there; it would be a great benefit to the district, no matter how good it might be to the shareholders, and he hoped the obstruction would cease, and that they would get on with the Bill, which ought to have been taken almost as a formal measure.

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

Clause 18—"Damages to be made good"—was passed with verbal consequential amendments.

Clauses 19 to 22, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 23, as follows:—

"Whenever the water which may hereafter be supplied by the Government for the use of the city of Brisbane or its suburbs, or the water of the owner or company of proprietors of waterworks, or of any other person serving the same or any part thereof with water, shall be contaminated or affected by the gas of the said company, and such company shall not within forty-eight hours next after such notice thereof in writing (signed by any person consuming the said water), to be left at the usual office of transacting business of the said company, effectually stop and prevent gas from so escaping, and wholly and satisfactorily remove the cause of every such complaint, and prevent all and every such contamination whereof such notice shall be given as aforesaid, then and in every such case the said company shall, on each and every complaint whereof notice shall be given as aforesaid, forfeit and pay to the Colonial Treasurer, or the Treasurer for the time being, or to any one of the directors for the time being, or owner or proprietor of such waterworks, for the use and benefit of the Government or of the same proprietors, as the case may be, any sum not exceeding the sum of ten pounds for each and every day during which the said water shall be and remain contaminated, tainted, or affected by the gas of the said company or person as aforesaid; and such penalties shall and may be recovered and levied in such manner as the penalties and forfeitures by this Act imposed are directed to be levied and recovered."

The PREMIER said the water was not supplied by the Government, but by the Board of Waterworks.

Mr. CHUBB moved the omission of the word "Government" with a view of inserting the words "Brisbane Board of Waterworks."

Amendment agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. CHUBB, the words "the owner or company of proprietors of waterworks, or of" were omitted.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the words "Colonial Treasurer, or the Treasurer for the time being, or to any one of the directors for the time being, or owner or proprietor," be omitted with a view of inserting the words "said board or owner."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the words "for the use and benefit of the Government, or of the same proprietors, as the case may be," be omitted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 24 was passed with verbal amendments.

Clauses 25 to 28, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 29—"Recovery and application of penalties"—

The PREMIER said that the first ten lines of the clause, which provided that all fines and penalties should be recovered before any justice of the peace for the colony in a summary way, covered everything, and the remaining part of the clause was unnecessary.

Mr. CHUBB said that appeared to be the case, and he moved that all the words after "summary way" be omitted.

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

Clauses 30 to 38, inclusive, passed as printed.

On clause 39—"Interpretation"—

The PREMIER said the words "corporation of the municipality of Brisbane," which only occurred once in the Bill—namely, in clause 13—were defined in that clause, but there was no definition of local authority. He would suggest to the hon. member that he should insert a definition of local authority which might be formulated as follows: "'Local authority' shall mean the municipality or divisional board having control over the street or place in question."

Mr. CHUBB moved that the following words be inserted after the 23rd line of the clause, namely—"The words 'local authority' shall mean the municipality or divisional board having control over the street or place in question."

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. CHUBB moved the omission of all the words from the end of the 23rd line to the end of the clause.

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

Clause 40—"Short title"—passed as printed.

Preamble put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

On the motion of Mr. CHUBB, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee to reconsider clause 13.

Mr. CHUBB moved that the words "local authority" be substituted for the words "corporation of the municipality of Brisbane, or other corporation or person," in lines 2 and 3.

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

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with a further amendment. The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

#### LOGAN VILLAGE TO BEAUDESERT RAILWAY.

The SPEAKER read a message from the President of the Legislative Council, intimating that the Council had approved of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension of the Logan branch of the Southern Railway from Logan Village to Beaudesert, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 21st October.

#### MACKAY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

The SPEAKER read a message from the President of the Legislative Council, intimating that the Council had approved of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed Wharf Line extension of the Mackay Railway, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 27th October.

#### CAIRNS TO HERBERTON RAILWAY.

The SPEAKER read a message from the President of the Legislative Council, intimating that the Council had approved of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Cairns to Herberton (first section), from 0 miles to 24 miles and including the wharf line shown by the said plan (being from 2 miles to 8½ miles, the plan, section, and book of reference of the line described as the alternative line, and passing by way of selection 138), as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 16th September.

#### FEDERAL COUNCIL (ADOPTING) BILL (QUEENSLAND).

The SPEAKER read a message from the Legislative Council, returning the Federal Council (Adopting) Bill (Queensland), with amendments.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the consideration of the message in committee was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### PACIFIC ISLAND LABOURERS ACT OF 1880 AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER read a message from the Legislative Council, returning the Pacific Island Labourers Act of 1880 Amendment Bill with amendments.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the consideration of the Bill in committee was made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

#### NOBLE ESTATE ENABLING BILL.

The SPEAKER read a message from the Legislative Council, returning the Noble Estate Enabling Bill without amendment.

#### LICENSING BILL.

The SPEAKER read a message from the Legislative Council, returning the Licensing Bill with amendments.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Bill was ordered to be taken into consideration on Monday next.

#### ENDOWMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.

Mr. KATES, in moving—

That, with a view to promote the acquisition of practical agricultural knowledge, and for the maintenance of higher national educational establishments, it is desirable that suitable areas of land in various parts of the colony should be set aside as reserves by way of endowments for agricultural colleges and university institutions—

said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not like to see the present session come to a close without making an attempt to improve the agricultural industry of this colony, and without calling the attention of hon. members to some very interesting and important facts in connection with my resolution. Considering the great importance that is attached to the land question and the proper settlement of the people upon the soil, it is most astonishing how very little has been done hitherto for the agricultural industry in the way of the dissemination and acquisition of agricultural knowledge. I maintain, sir, that the existing condition of the agricultural industry is certainly not very creditable to all parties concerned. I do not mean to refer to the present Parliament particularly, but to all Parliaments that have existed since Separation; and the policy so far adopted in this respect, to my mind, shows a most lamentable want of recognition of the claims of agriculture. Why, sir, would it not have been possible some years ago, considering the millions of acres at our command, to set aside suitable areas in various parts of the colony for the purpose of endowing and establishing agricultural colleges, which in the course of time will have to be done? We are richer in land than most of the neighbouring colonies, and I am sure that, from a financial point of view, we should never feel the loss of such reserves, whilst, on the other hand, when these institutions started into life they would be based on a surer footing—be prosperous and a blessing to the colony and the rising generations. Well, sir, we have in this colony three great producing industries. We have the pastoral, the mining, and the agricultural industries; and, of course, under the heading of agriculture I include the tillage or cultivation of the soil—

whether in the North or the South, the tropics or the semi-tropics—and the cultivation of all such products as sugar, rice, tobacco, coffee, maize, lucerne, etc. I put them all in the same class, and I maintain, sir, that by the agricultural industry chiefly we shall secure a large population in this colony, and that the prosperity of the whole colony virtually depends upon the prosperity of the agricultural industry. Now, sir, let us see what has been done in other parts of the world in connection with agricultural education. According to some recent reports laid on the table of the House of Commons, we find that a great deal of attention has been paid to agricultural education in all parts of the world. We find that in France, last year, there was an expenditure of £1,666,000 for agricultural education; and that instruction was imparted in forestry, irrigation, and the breeding of horses, etc.; and so successful has the system been there that the expenditure has been recouped to a large degree, and reduced to something like £270,000. We find that in Germany there was an expenditure, during the year 1884, on agricultural education of some £482,000; in Denmark, £30,000; in the Netherlands, £38,000; and there was also an expenditure of large sums of money in Sweden and Norway. The efforts made in those countries have been equally extensive, and equally successful, as those made in France. Now, Mr. Speaker, I find that in England there are two agricultural colleges, neither of which receive assistance from the State, both being self-supporting. In Scotland, a recognition by the State of the necessity for agricultural education has taken the shape of the endowment of a chair at the University of Edinburgh. In Ireland, the great potato famine forced the necessity for agricultural education with most peculiar strength upon the attention of the Legislature, and resulted in the establishment of an agricultural training school in Glasnevin. The recent agricultural depression in England formed the subject of an inquiry by a Royal Commission in the year 1882; a vast amount of evidence was taken, and in the report of the commission it was stated that England, so far as agriculture was concerned, was very much behind the other nations in Europe. If, however, hon. members would desire to turn to a country where agricultural education has been recognised as an overwhelming necessity; where it has been established and flourished to a most remarkable degree; and where the State has made most magnificent provision for agricultural education, they should look to the United States of America. The Americans, with characteristic shrewdness and sagacity, established agricultural colleges on a truly magnificent scale, and their labour has produced most excellent results. I find that in the year 1883, in the United States, there were no less than 473 professors and assistants imparting instruction to 4,211 students. The principal provision there to assist agricultural education has taken the form of large land endowments. Each State of the Union received for every representative and senator 30,000 acres, but to no one State could there be granted more than 1,000,000 acres. The total area so endowed amounted to 9,500,000 acres, or  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the entire territory. I think it would be well if in this colony we set aside a corresponding area for a similar purpose—for the establishment of agricultural colleges. I also find among other things that throughout the Union there were distributed in 1883 no less than 2,500,000 packages of seeds to the agriculturists, and in previous years similar work was done there. Speaking of an agricultural department such as is established in America, I think the time has

come when we in this colony should establish a special department where farmers and agriculturists could come into direct communication with such a department, where they could obtain various information. I think there should be a special office where agriculturists could obtain information upon various matters connected with their pursuits—such as the character of a new district; the average of crops; also information on new plants and seeds; on all matters connected with manure; on the analyses of the soil; on botany; on forestry and forest conservancy; and on veterinary science. I know that in the up-country districts many valuable horses are lost annually because of the want of knowledge of how to treat the diseases those animals are subject to; also information as to diseases in vines and their causes, diseases in fruits and their causes; and also to offer suggestions as to new varieties of plants, which, I am sure, could be produced in this colony, but which no one has ever made an attempt to produce yet. Without the establishment of a special department of agriculture the vast and voluminous reports and information gathered by the departments in Victoria and New South Wales upon the subject of the conservation and storage of water will be entirely lost to our farmers, unless such information could be diffused and disseminated by such a department as I have mentioned. I do not know how it could be done more effectually than by a special agricultural department. I do not mean to say that there should be a Minister for Agriculture, because sometimes the gentlemen appointed to that position do not themselves know much about agriculture; but a competent head of the department, attached, say, to the department of the Secretary for Public Instruction, would answer the purpose very well. Coming nearer home, I find there is a very successful agricultural college established in Canterbury, New Zealand, and the result of the labours of that college has been very important indeed. We also find that in South Australia recently an agricultural college has been inaugurated, and there it took several years to establish such an institution. As far back as the year 1879, the Legislature of South Australia authorised the establishment of an agricultural college, and we find that it has only recently been completed. I think it would be well for us, considering that it takes so many years to establish such an institution, to lose no time but go into the matter as pointed out in my resolution. The longer we wait the greater may be the difficulty. When our Land Act comes into proper swing and full operation, which I think will be next year, the areas which might be suitable for such purposes may be selected and have passed away from the hands of the Crown. There is another excellent step which might be taken, and it is to introduce the simple means of agricultural teaching in our primary schools. And speaking of State schools, I wish to refer the hon. gentlemen to a very valuable report that has been laid on the table of the House of Assembly in New Zealand, in connection with the land endowments of these schools. To simplify the tabulated matter in that report, I shall divide it into three parts—first, those vested in school commissioners; second, those vested for the purposes of secondary education; and third, those vested for purposes of university education. I find from that report that there has been granted in the district of Auckland, in New Zealand, 10,378 acres; in the district of Wellington, 12,181 acres; in Hawkesbury, 6,289 acres; in Nelson, 1,888 acres; in Otago, 55,710 acres; and in eight districts a total of 93,778 acres. I find the endowments vested in the governing bodies for public secon-



dary schools are—for the Auckland College, 290 acres, of a value of £40,000, and a present annual income of £3,219; Christchurch College, an area of 9,325 acres, value £58,700, and a present annual income of £2,557; and several others with a total of 152,334 acres, value £289,038, and a present annual income of £14,538. In the third case, lands vested in the governing bodies connected with university education, I find the Otago University is endowed with a total of 207,844 acres, value £127,275, and a present annual income of £7,825; and the Canterbury University has a total endowment of 107,103 acres, value £117,600, and an annual income of £5,538. Now, sir, when we find that New Zealand, with a considerably less area than Queensland, where we have an area of over 400,000,000 acres—I say, when we find the Legislature of New Zealand thinks proper to endow its educational institutions with such large areas, we cannot do wrong if we, out of the whole of our immense territory, take steps to have educational reserves set aside with as little delay as possible. I also ask hon. members to refer to the report which has been sent in by the directors of the Canterbury Agricultural College, which speaks very highly of the work done at that college, both in the field and in the laboratory. In connection with this motion, I cannot resist the temptation to recite extracts from the *Toowoomba Chronicle*. The article appeared two or three days ago, and is quite *apropos* of this motion. It is a very able leader, from which I have received some very valuable information. It says that—

"In America an immense area of land is vested in the States Legislatures for the permanent endowment of agricultural schools and colleges. If any of the land is sold it is provided that "the proceeds shall be invested in 5 per cent. stock, and that the interest shall be inviolably appropriated by each State to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college or school where the leading object shall be to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life."

In another part of the article I find the following—

"It was not to be supposed that such liberal provisions as the foregoing would remain on the Statute-book of the American Republic as a dead-letter. They have been, we are happy to say, largely availed of, and 22 agricultural colleges have been established in the States of Connecticut, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Maine, Colorado, Illinois, California, Missouri, Mississippi, and Wisconsin."

The article also points out the different ways adopted of teaching agricultural knowledge in the field as well as in the school. Further on it says:—

"The time allowed for the pupil at these colleges to become proficient as a practical agricultural scholar is two years. At the conference on education held in London in connection with the Health Exhibition in 1884, Professor Townsend, of the Ohio Agricultural College, gave a most interesting account of the wonderful good accomplished in America by the foundation of these colleges and schools, and he attributed the success of agriculture in America and its wonderful progress in the Western States very much to the vast amount of useful information communicated to pupils at those colleges."

I do not wish to go any further in the matter of reciting extracts. I would simply add that it is impossible to forecast the great benefits which would flow from the acceptance of this resolution. The union of science and practice will, to my mind, considerably increase the usefulness of our farmers, and will also greatly augment our national wealth. Its benefits, too, will not be confined to farmers. Many persons belonging to our trading and professional classes, whose ranks are already very much crowded, will receive this

motion with considerable satisfaction as opening up a new field for enterprise and industry. It is universally admitted that agriculture has become a science, and it in consequence becomes necessary that our farmers should be thoroughly equipped, so as to be able to fight or compete with the farmers in other parts of the world. If the reserves I ask for should in the course of time become unnecessary for the purpose I have in view, not having passed from the hands of the Crown, they may be resumed for any other purpose. I do not wish to detain the House any longer as it is getting late, and I know there are other members who, being interested in agriculture, have something to say. The acceptance of this motion will be received by the whole community, and by the agricultural section in particular, as a very important step towards the realisation of one of their most cherished hopes and aspirations. I may add that there are agricultural colleges, not only in the countries I have already mentioned, but also in South Australia, and that, so far as our population and revenue are concerned, the time has arrived when we should bestir ourselves to establish similar institutions in this colony. Not only should we have agricultural colleges but also a Queensland university, as I do not see why our scholars should have to be sent to Sydney and elsewhere to finish their education.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I must congratulate the hon. member who introduced the motion on the speech he has made. It is impossible not to agree with a great deal he has said with regard to the importance of scientific knowledge of agriculture in this colony. But it is easier to see the advantages of acquiring the knowledge he has spoken of than to see exactly how its acquirement is to be achieved under existing circumstances. I believe the time has very nearly come, if it has not quite arrived, when we should have some institution of the nature of an agricultural college. Of course, an institution of that kind will cost money. In fact, the carrying out of any scheme of this sort will cost a great deal of money. We could not equip a college satisfactorily without going to a considerable expense, and I am not prepared at the present moment to say what would be the best way of doing it. In respect to a university for Queensland, the time, I think, has nearly arrived when one should be established. Of late years, however, we have been subjected—especially when the estimates of the Minister for Education were being considered—to very severe criticism for spending too much on education, and the higher education has been represented as a thing which ought to be deprecated rather than otherwise. I hope, notwithstanding all that, that it will not be very long before we have a university, as have nearly all other countries which are not of more importance than the colony of Queensland. The hon. gentleman confined his speech principally to the subject of agricultural colleges, and did not say much about universities; but he did not give very much information with respect to the real object of his resolution—which is, to affirm the desirability of setting apart special reserves for those purposes. With a view to getting rid of the feeling that too large a sum should not be expended annually upon higher education, the question of setting apart special reserves for that purpose is worth taking into consideration. Some ten years ago I myself took a good deal of interest in the subject, and I think I drew a Bill to give effect to very much the same scheme as that contained in this resolution. I am not able to find any record of that Bill in the records of the House, so I conclude that it was not brought forward. But it was just at this point that I could not see my

way ; that I did not quite see how it was to be carried into effect practically. Of course, it is very easy to select suitable areas of land in different parts of the colony, and to say that they shall be reserved for the purpose of education. That implies that the land should not be alienated, but should be held in some form of trust, and that the annual income from it should be appropriated for the purposes of higher education. How to work out the scheme is the difficulty ; and on the previous occasion I presume I was unable to satisfy my colleagues on that point. It is not easy to say which would be the best plan to administer reserves of that kind. I do not know, and I have not had time, since the notice of this resolution was given, to see how it is managed in the United States. The hon. member has said that in that country very large areas of land are set apart in every State, in proportion to their population, for the purpose of higher education. In this colony it would not, I think, be practicable to set apart a certain area of land for each town or for each district. So long as we administer our education appropriation under a central head—a thing which is likely to continue for some time to come—the income derived from reserves of this kind would have to go into one general fund, which would be in relief of the cost of education. The question then occurs whether the income derived from this source should be set apart for higher education only or should be available for the purposes of education generally. If that were practicable I should be much inclined to be in favour of it, and we should get rid of the cry about the increasing cost of education—which is a cry and nothing more. So long as the State undertakes to bear the cost of education and so long as it increases in prosperity and population—so long will the cost of education increase proportionally. I wish the hon. member had given the House rather more information as to details on this matter. The resolution asks the House to approve of a general proposition, but the hon. member has not carried the matter any further. I should be disposed to assent to the proposition laid down by the hon. gentleman, but I doubt very much whether a discussion merely on an abstract resolution of this kind will have much practical effect. I shall be very glad if any hon. members who are acquainted with the subject will throw a little additional light upon it from that point of view, so that we may have something to think over in order to see how practical effect can be given to it.

Mr. ISAMBERT said : Mr. Speaker,—I was very much pleased to hear the hon. member for Darling Downs give such practical and intelligent expression to what I contended for the other day in this House, when I pleaded for the reform of our educational system, for the establishment of a university of agricultural colleges, and of a training college for teachers. You cannot separate the one from the other. To come to any just conclusion, we must naturally look to other countries possessing more experience in these matters. Even so late as the last ten or twelve years, Prussia, which is far advanced in matters of education, and which has established agricultural colleges all over the country, has found it advisable to rule that all teachers should resort to the agricultural colleges for a short time to take lessons in agricultural knowledge, so as to enable them to spread that knowledge throughout the length and breadth of the land. This shows how necessary it is, when we attempt to establish higher education, that we must not establish a training college for teachers only, or agricultural colleges only, or a university only ; but that we must establish them altogether. To establish them all would cost very little more

than to establish one branch of them. Nearly all the teaching staff of the university would be available for teaching in the training colleges and in the agricultural colleges. The professor of chemistry would do for all three branches ; so would the professor of moral philosophy, and the professor of political economy. It is curious to see how our Governments—not the present Government only, but all Governments—have to strive their hardest to make both ends meet. They have lost themselves in a wilderness of figures of income and expenditure, whilst they have left out the question how to balance our imports and exports as an insoluble conundrum to be solved by some future Solomon. A Government which has the welfare of its people really at heart will look first at the outgoings and incomings, and this cannot be correctly calculated by the actual expenditure, which is only the final expression of what is done before. As I mentioned before, this colony is suffering from unsuitable political systems. One political system is represented by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, and it is the clearer system of the two. Then we have the colonial system, which looks on the colonies as a place to make some profit out of for Great Britain and those who come here as adventurers—just to get rich by any means and leave humanitarian views or feelings out of calculation altogether. Their only object is how to get rich. Whether it is by maize-growing or sugar-growing, or railway-building, the object is how to make big fortunes, and humanity is left out of calculation entirely, or is only calculated so far as how to make a profit out of it ; and when that humanity, hailing from the same stock as the speculators, becomes obstreperous and not pliable, and objects to being used as an instrument of gain, it is to be set aside for some cheaper form of labour—for such labourers are able and willing to perform those duties which, to use the hon. member for Mackay's expression, white people are not able to perform—inferior races, which in the present state of society we dare not employ in a free State. It has been very ably explained repeatedly by the hon. the Premier that in such a free State as we have—a republican State with self-governing institutions, the employment of inferior and superior labour is an anachronism. Those persons we shall not get rid of until we have a Government that will really look about to see that all institutions and all laws are subservient to the higher objects of humanity. Much fault as I have found with the Conservative policy, it is a superior policy to the policy that is pursued by the Liberal party.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition : Hear, hear !

Mr. ISAMBERT : I say it is superior, Mr. Speaker, because they know what their policy is ; they know what they are about. Their policy is clearly defined by pounds, shillings, and pence ; humanity does not come into their calculations. But the Liberal party are the outcome of the people who feel where the shoe pinches, but they do not intelligently know where it does pinch, so that they are an intelligent portion of the people with high aspirations not yet properly understood. As I mentioned the other day, before the storm you see little whirling clouds which indicate that a big storm is coming, and this motion is one of those little whirls which should remind the Government that they must part with this hybrid policy ; that they must cut the painter and adopt a true national policy—a State policy which has humanity and humanity alone for its object. The object of the Conservative policy is to make the people hewers of wood and drawers of water—the pro-

ducers of raw products, which are to be exported afterwards and imported as a manufactured article. That is the colonial policy—the Conservative policy—and the mistakes that are made by it are made by the borrowing of foreign capital. The colonial countries which have been governed by this policy are hopelessly in debt and poverty-stricken. Our sugar-growers—badly off as they are owing to the depression in the price of sugar—are infinitely better off than those countries which have enjoyed their own policy in that respect to their hearts' content. They are so poor in the island of Barbadoes that they have proposed, in order to save themselves from utter ruin, that the Imperial Government should authorise, or guarantee, a very large loan for the purpose of establishing the central sugar-mill system. They are too poor to raise a loan themselves; and the Governments of those countries which have cheap labour, and where the legislative enactments have been solely for the interests of the speculative capitalist planter—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Question!

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. We are now discussing a motion introduced by the hon. member for Darling Downs, as to the desirability of setting apart certain lands for agricultural colleges, and my point of order is that the hon. member for Rosewood has not addressed one word to this question. I do think that hon. members should not be detained here to listen to a speech of this kind, not one word of which bears on the question before the House.

Mr. BROOKES said: I rise to a point of order also, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member for Rosewood cannot really be supposed to gauge with mathematical accuracy the intellectual calibre of the hon. member for Maryborough; and I do not think that I am the only person in this Chamber who is of opinion that the hon. member for Rosewood is fairly within the question. We are dealing with an educational question, and I would respectfully ask the hon. member for Maryborough to wait a bit—light may dawn upon him.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—Addressing the House on the point of order, for my part I cannot see the slightest application of the remarks of the hon. member for Rosewood to the question. The question is one with regard to establishing educational establishments, and the hon. member has launched out into freetrade and protection, and every other question that could possibly arise. I am heartily in accord with the hon. member for Maryborough and other hon. members who called attention to the way in which the hon. member for Rosewood was gyrating about.

The SPEAKER said: I can hardly rule the hon. member for Rosewood out of order. I think he was keeping within the lines of debate.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: The hon. members who rose to a point of order, in order to draw the attention of the House to the fact that I was out of order, only succeeded in drawing attention to the fact of how obtuse they are in matters of political science or statesmanship, which is the profound question of the motion now under discussion. What is all education good for but to raise us above the savages? And the motion of the hon. member for Darling Downs is meant to make our everyday avocations more effective—to make our manual labour, not only in agriculture, but in all directions, more effective. If the motion of the hon. gentleman can have any other meaning, it has none at all. Hitherto, our higher educational system has been misunderstood to a great extent. We have left practical education out of the question altogether,

and it is now apparent to the community that they must do something more than teach Greek and Latin in the grammar schools, and not waste the time of the establishment in order to make half-a-dozen boys lawyers or doctors. The Premier has expressed his doubt or perplexity as to how that higher education is to be established. Our statesmen, or would-be statesmen, have yet to learn that expenditure kept within the colony, in which the money circulated from hand to hand, is not so serious—even if £1,000 be spent in that way—as £100 spent out of the colony. The hon. gentleman's motion simply means this: In the first instance, how are we to raise a greater abundance of those gifts Providence is willing to bless us with? and then, after we have raised them in the shape of raw products, how to put our intelligence to work, to combine our individual efforts, to manufacture them, and make them of a higher value? I shall now show those obtuse members who raised the point of order that I have been within the lines of the debate. When this is once understood, hon. gentlemen will understand how futile it is to try to balance our expenditure with our income. I have been accused of entertaining peculiar views—as having a sort of mania against borrowing money. When we have such a policy as will protect us against the inroads of cheap labour, then we shall balance our exports with our imports; and when we have done that there will be some sense in considering whether it is advisable to borrow money to carry out public works which are above our present means. I condemn borrowing so long as our exports are so hopelessly out of gear, and if the motion of the hon. member for Darling Downs is adopted, and higher education is established—not so much for the teaching of Greek and Latin, but to teach us how to employ our efforts more intelligently—then there will be some sense in it. The sooner our Treasurer will pay attention to this, and the Liberal Government get rid of their hybrid policy, and adopt a national system of education, for the benefit of the colony the sooner will the question be solved, and separation and cheap black labour will be unnecessary. If we call in intelligence to our aid we can make European labour—well-requited labour—more effective, and we can make it cheap by making it effective. That is the kind of cheap labour I want to see—well-paid labour made effective by intelligence. Any education—in fact, any action of the State or the Government—which has not the higher welfare of the people for its object, is useless; in fact, it is more than useless—it is hurtful; and therefore, we ought to establish this higher branch of education; and if the Premier does not know how properly to establish it, he should ask those people who know more about it, and he will find no difficulty in getting men who do know more about it. I would not say, "Go to England, or to France, or to Germany"; I should say "Go to America, where the knowledge and learning in those branches is concentrated." We cannot go to England, because agriculture there is at a very low ebb. Land that has previously been cultivated is now lying idle and waste, and lands that were once farmed are converted into sheep-walks and deer-parks. We must look to America, where they have success for their passport to show what a high standing they have arrived at. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member for Darling Downs.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said: Mr. Speaker,—I must say that I always admire the earnestness, and even the eloquence, of the hon. member for Rosewood; but to-night he has got far beyond his vocation. He means well, and his object is good. I am perfectly satisfied of that; but his mode of attaining that object is not a good one. I do not suppose there is an

hon. gentleman in the House who would, either by deed or word, do anything to depreciate the value of higher education, whether in agriculture or in anything else. But in considering a matter of this kind, I must say that, at all events, we should consider, in connection with the advantages to be obtained by it, how it is to be brought about—how it is practically to be applied. The method proposed by the hon. member for Darling Downs is one that appears to me to be the most roundabout and wasteful method of reaching that object that it is possible to conceive. Here, as in every other country, the State is supposed to deal with the lands as they are wanted by the people. In this case, although I admit the necessity of giving instruction—in the form of State or national instruction—I do not see why it should not be paid for out of the general revenue. Instead of setting apart land for it, why should not money be set apart for carrying it out? That seems to me to be a better understood method than that proposed by the hon. member for Darling Downs. In New South Wales they adopted a system similar to this in the early days of that colony. They set apart lands for State, Church, and school purposes; but they were so grossly mismanaged for many years that the State had to come in and appropriate the lands, and deal with national education in something the same way as we do here. If we were to set aside any money for purposes of this kind, whether for agricultural colleges or for a university, it seems to me that, in a large area of country so sparsely populated as this, the advantages must be confined to a very small number of people. Our object should be to make the instruction we give accessible to every child or man or woman in the land. We have no business to use money that is the property of the State generally, in such a way as only to be of value to a small section of the community. This would be essentially the case if we attempted to establish colleges and universities in Queensland at present. The centres of population in the southern portions of the colony must necessarily have them, and how are children in the North to get the benefit of money expended in that way? I may be considered to hold very indifferent views on matters of this kind, but I think the State has already done too much in that way. I do not hold with the Premier when he says he would like to see a university established. I maintain that the establishment of grammar schools has not resulted satisfactorily. I believe that the State should confine itself to national education, and that all higher forms of instruction should be at the expense of the individual who desires to attain them—or of his parents and those interested in him. I am quite satisfied that would not prevent the ablest men in the country from coming to the front, and from establishing that reputation their natural capacity entitles them to. We find that the greatest men all over the world have been men who have not had a university education, but who, from the force of their vigorous and clear intellect, have come to the front. If money is to be spent in establishing agricultural colleges, why should we not also give higher instruction in pastoral pursuits?—there is a great deal of ignorance in that branch of industry. Why should we not also establish institutions for the purpose of giving instruction to miners, and to every artisan and mechanic throughout the colony? I maintain that it would be a most desirable thing if it could be done, but in the present condition of the colony I maintain that it cannot. If you give the principle a general application you will exhaust the whole revenue of the colony to do it. What the

agriculturists here want, I believe the State has already provided—a good basis of education enabling them to understand their occupation properly, and to avail themselves of the knowledge which is within the reach of every man in the land, if he knows where to look for it and how to apply it. The reason they cannot apply it is that they have not even the rudiments of instruction. I maintain that a man who has had a fair education, such as can be attained in the State schools of this colony, is competent to educate himself—I will not say in scientific agriculture, but in every branch of agriculture and in every industry, to an extent that will secure himself success in that occupation. If he has not the natural capacity to enable him to avail himself of the instruction he has had in the schools of the colony, then no university or college throughout the world could enable him to apply his knowledge practically, and make it of that value it is claimed it would have for all. I quite agree with the hon. member for Rosewood in his suggestion that teachers in the different State schools should be educated for the purpose of imparting instruction in those particular branches of science that may be of value for agriculture or any other purpose. I maintain that there is not enough opportunity given to those who have the capacity for acquiring knowledge of that kind in the State schools of the colony. I think if a great deal more attention were given to physiology and chemistry it would be of enormous advantage to every youngster throughout the country. Those are subjects that youngsters are absolutely ignorant of everywhere. I appeal to hon. members of this House whether, if they had known more about their own constitutions and their own frames, they could not have been better able to deal with themselves throughout life? I am sure it is a want every young man has felt—at least the majority—and I suspect most young Australians have felt it, because they have not had the opportunity of acquiring even the rudiments of such sciences. Knowledge of that kind would be of great practical value to everyone, and I can see how it would be possible to disseminate it by having a class of teachers for these different branches. If men were instructed with sufficient care to enable them to impart knowledge of that kind in a practical and sensible way, it would be very much more effective than the proposition of the hon. member for Darling Downs, which is confined to one section of the community, and would not give a fair advantage to all.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—I was rather surprised to hear the speech just made coming from such a sensible and intelligent gentleman as the Minister for Lands. I shall support the motion of the hon. member for Darling Downs, because I think it will be one of the best things this House can possibly adopt in the interests of the country. The hon. member who has just sat down asks, if we are to establish colleges for agriculture, why not also for pastoral pursuits? I maintain that it is almost impossible for a man to farm successfully in this colony without combining pastoral and agricultural pursuits. If the squatters adopted more agriculture on the best lands of their runs they would not lose so many cattle when the dry seasons come. If they were to cultivate their lands and store up the produce they would have sufficient grass to keep their stock alive during the dry seasons; but in the past they have been in the habit of amassing fortunes out of the natural grasses. Now they are beginning to see that they will have to adopt another method, and turn their attention to agriculture, to raise food for their cattle when the dry seasons come. I maintain that if such a college or university

were established, the colony would reap a benefit that no hon. member in this House can estimate. I am certain that if this resolution is adopted by the House, and the Government give it practical effect, generations to come will bless the hon. member for Darling Downs for moving this resolution in his place in Parliament to-night. I have been on farms in the old country where I am sure the soil is not equal in any way to what we can find in many parts of our own colony. I speak more particularly of farms in Ayrshire, where the farmer pays £3 or £4 per acre per annum rent—there is no freehold there—and where he makes a good living and maintains his family in a respectable manner. As I said on a previous occasion, I am confident that if those farmers came out here they would be in a very comfortable way. What is the reason those men have maintained their families and paid such high rents? Why, because they have a practical knowledge of tilling their farms—such knowledge as we want in this country for our young people. We have got the land, we have got the population. There is a large number of young men growing up around us, and we are told that our grammar school and primary education systems are spoiling them, or only fitting them for the Civil Service or mercantile offices, and that they are not competent to settle down on the land and cultivate it successfully. I contend that if we had a university where these young men could have imparted to them a knowledge of agriculture they would endeavour—many of them, at any rate—to settle on the land instead of loafing about the town seeking employment in offices at any price rather than go into the country. I think the proposed colleges should be distributed over various parts of the colony, so that our young men would not have to come from the North and other distant parts to attend a university in Brisbane. The colleges should be so located that those who attend them may not have to live at a long distance from their homes during the twelve months they are studying, and they should be so arranged and conducted that hereafter a large revenue may be derived from them. If it is necessary to have agriculture taught in the old country—there is an agricultural chair at Edinburgh—to farmers and young men, how much more necessary is it that such information should be imparted in a colony like this, where we have a large number of young men growing up around us, and educated in the colony. If they had the opportunity to acquire that knowledge their parents would settle on the land and give employment to the young men and those immigrants whom the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, advocates should be introduced into Queensland. I think it is an excellent idea to set apart a portion of our large estate for educational purposes. We hear hon. members complaining of the large amount of money voted for education by the House. Every year that will increase; or if not it will show that the colony is going backward instead of forward. Our population is increasing, and as our children increase so must the education vote increase. Therefore, I affirm that the very best plan we can possibly adopt to provide for such education as is contemplated in this resolution is to set apart a portion of our estate so that it will maintain these colleges in the years to come. I was very much disappointed on hearing the speech of the Minister for Lands, when he spoke in opposition to this resolution, and I hope the House will not be led away by the remarks of the hon. gentleman. I think that on calmly reflecting on the matter he will find that he has made a mistake, and that we ought to establish colleges to educate young men in such a way that they may be able to settle on the land and grow, not only maize

and sugar, but such produce as is required for grazing purposes, for I am sure that by combining grazing and agriculture we shall be able to settle a large population on the lands of the colony. I intend to support the motion.

Mr. BAILEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I think this is an abstract resolution which, if carried, will give a kind of direction to the Government to take some measures to give effect to its object during the next session. So far as that goes I quite agree with the resolution. I do not care exactly for the wording of it, but I agree with the object, and that is to provide for the great necessity there is in Queensland for some sort of education for our young people which will enable them to compete, as they will be able to compete, with other countries in the world. Australia is a very big nation, and Queensland is no small part of Australia now. But there is one little bit left out of this resolution, and that is technical education.

Mr. KATES: That is comprised in the resolution.

Mr. BAILEY: It may be comprised in university education; but my idea of university education is that it breeds lawyers and parsons. We have quite as many of these as we want in this colony. I want to see some different education provided for our young people. Some years ago I was at the "Atlas" works in Manchester, and there saw about thirty railway engines in course of manufacture. I asked where they were for, and was told they were for Belgium. Then, a very few years afterwards, I was in South America, and there I found that the Belgians were actually making their own engines and sending them out to America at less cost than they could be supplied from England. What was the reason? Why in the meantime they had established technical schools for the education of their mechanics, and in place of sending to England for railway engines, they were making them cheaper than they could be made in English manufacturing. That is what I wish to see in these colonies. I wish to see our boys become mechanics, so that instead of sending out of the country for every bit of machinery we want we shall be able to make it here better and cheaper than we can import it. We have all the material here; we have iron and we have coal, and all we want is knowledge. We want to see our boys enabled to get that knowledge. My own boy is in a foundry now, but he has not the facilities for obtaining that technical knowledge which will enable him to be a better man than his father. I say it is a shame that in a colony like this we should close our hands and not enable our boys to get that knowledge which every Continental country—Germany, France, and Belgium, and other places—affords to their young people. I agree with this resolution in that way, and I hope it will give an indication to the Government that we are fully alive to the responsibilities that we have in relation to the boys who are coming after us and that we would like to see a race of self-dependent and good mechanical Australians, able to compete with all parts of the world in time to come.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. junior member for Fortitude Valley, in commencing his attack on the Minister for Lands, said that he was surprised at such a sensible and intelligent man making such a speech. Well, really I do not see much to be surprised at in a sensible man making a sensible speech, for the hon. gentleman has made the only sensible speech that has been delivered on the subject. Every other speaker was flying in the air far above the practical. Even the Premier went a little too high in the atmosphere,

higher than he generally goes. The hon. member who has just sat down told us something about Belgium, but he forgot to tell us something else, which would really be the cream of the joke. He has told us what he saw in the "Atlas" Foundry, Manchester, and he has also told us that the Belgians can compete successfully in the manufacture of locomotives with manufacturers in England, because they had established schools of art and industrial schools. He forgot to tell us the chief reason, and that is that the Belgians work for much less wages than the English. That is the principal reason why the Belgians have been able to compete successfully with the English. Englishmen have far higher wages, and I hope they will continue to do so. I hope English mechanics will never be reduced to the same level as the Belgians—who are the highest paid mechanics on the Continent, but whose wages are nearly 30 per cent. below those of the English—but if we felt inclined to reduce the wages of our mechanics in the same way we could make locomotives cheaper than the Belgians, though not otherwise. The Minister for Lands did not raise any objection to higher education, but said what is quite true—that no man, either inside or outside the House, would have a word to say against higher education, but that people who wished to get their sons more highly educated should be prepared to pay for it. What can a man take exception to in that? And that was the chief part of the speech of the Minister for Lands. I believe every member of the community would gladly have his sons more highly educated if he could, and every member of the community would be glad to become rich, in spite of the theories of the hon. member for Rosewood. I do not think that even the hon. member for Rosewood himself, in his desire to be poor, would refuse a share in the Mount Morgan Gold Field, though he is the apostle of poverty in this House—

Mr. ISAMBERT : I am not.

The Hon. J. M. MACROSSAN : And the denouncer of capital, because it comes from a foreign country. I think the hon. gentleman might relieve us occasionally of his theories of finance and borrowing. I agree with the hon. member for Maryborough, that the hon. gentleman was travelling outside the lines of the resolution. He also stated a very strange proposition, to my mind, coming from him, a supporter of the party on that side of the House—in fact, an ornament to the party opposite—that the Liberal party was sent into this House by a suffering people—suffering from corns and bunions; and that the Liberal Government had not yet been able to find out where the shoe pinched. Would it not be as well, when we established those high art schools, to teach a few Liberal shoemakers to find out where the shoe pinches, as well as to teach lawyers and doctors their professions? What is really the meaning of higher education in this colony? There are no people in this country who can afford to educate their sons to be gentlemen at large. They all educate them with the intention of fitting them to acquire a better and higher position in society from that education. Everyone must work; the lawyer works; the doctor works; they are all workers; and I maintain that we have no right to spend the money of the bulk of the people on those lawyers and doctors, any more than on Liberal boot and shoe makers. I do not think anyone can charge me with an illiberal idea in expressing these views. We are going a great length at the present time towards laying the foundation of a well-educated people; but I do not wish to see the money of the people, who are

not able to take advantage of this higher education, spent in the direction indicated. The Premier gave what I may call a very qualified assent to the motion; he pointed out the want of practicalness. There is often a want of practicalness about the motions brought forward by the hon. member for Darling Downs; they are generally too theoretical. The Premier also said that ten years ago he took in hand a resolution of a similar nature, but he does not know whether he moved it or not. I do not know whether he did either, but I do not think he did. That was before he adopted the Georgian theory; at that time he was in favour of selling land, but now he has adopted the Georgian system, and how can he set land apart for education? The land must be retained by the Government for the benefit of the people, not for education; and there I think the hon. gentleman has made a mistake even in giving his qualified assent to the motion. His qualified assent amounts to this: that in the abstract he slightly approves of the motion, while in the concrete his colleague, the Minister for Lands, is taking care to sell every acre he can of the reserves of the people of the colony already established. That is the real meaning of the hon. gentleman's qualified assent—that he is actually opposed in principle to the practice of his colleague the Minister for Lands. But it is well known, from the information laid before the House, that the Minister for Lands is doing what I say. Any reserves that can be made use of in any part of the colony he is selling in order to get revenue. There is the gist of the thing. If we are going in the direction of a higher education let us pay for it in money. It is more honest, less deceptive to the people, and less deceptive to ourselves, to pay the money fairly and directly, the same as we do now, for the education of the children than to do it in the manner proposed; and I hope the Government will not take this resolution seriously into their consideration, because the principle of it is setting apart large areas of land. The hon. gentleman quoted the practice of America; but there they have not adopted the Georgian theory; they set apart land there for almost every purpose under the sun—among the rest, for building railways. But I do not think we need go to America at all, for, as the Minister for Lands pointed out, large quantities of land have been set apart for school and church purposes in Australia, and the result in New South Wales was that the land had to be sold at last, the churches thrown upon their own resources, and the schools supported by the State. That has been the result there, and that would be the result here if land were set apart for the purpose for which the hon. member for Darling Downs asks it to be set apart. I have no objection to agriculture, or mining, or any other technical subject being taught, but I think we should teach technical subjects in our primary schools. We do not require to set apart areas of land for that purpose; we can do it with the means at our disposal if we think fit: I say that is the proper course to adopt. If we were to set apart large areas of land, we should have to set them apart in the names of trustees, and we should then, to a certain extent, lose the control of the land we now have. It would be much better for the Government to either retain possession of the land in its own hands or get rid of it altogether and apply the proceeds to the support of schools. I hope, therefore, that the Government will not assent, even in the qualified manner expressed by the Premier, to the motion proposed by the hon. member for Darling Downs.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) said: Mr. Speaker,—I feel it incumbent

upon me to compliment the member for Darling Downs upon the very able speech which he made in introducing this motion to the House. I listened to the manner in which he presented his case with considerable admiration and respect for the industry and ability displayed on the subject; but I was somewhat disappointed that the hon. gentleman did not go so much into detail as I had expected he would. It does not afford us very much information to be told that in various countries there are more or less considerable areas set apart for the purpose of endowing agricultural colleges. I think the House, before committing itself to the adoption of an abstract resolution of this kind, ought to be in possession of some practical scheme by which members could understand what they are committing themselves to in adopting the resolution as it now stands. I must say that I concur, to a great extent, with the hon. member for Townsville in the observations he has just addressed to the House with regard to the essential difference that exists between the case of Queensland and the countries which have been cited by my hon. friend the member for Darling Downs. It must be remembered that we have an immense territory here, and that we have now a land law by which persons who wish to utilise that territory may do so upon terms that seem ridiculously easy, especially to persons who are familiar with the ideas respecting land that prevail in Europe and America. Why, sir, here people can take up agricultural areas for fifty years at a rental of something like 3d. per acre! That might certainly be raised by the Land Board, according to the value of the land, to some higher figure; but anything from 3d. to 1s. an acre will, I think, be considered a pretty fair price under our land system for any agriculturist to pay for an agricultural farm; and we know that any man desirous of going into the other branch, and taking up a grazing farm, may do so for a still more reasonable figure—at least, he may do so as soon as the system comes into perfect operation—and for a very low price he may, for the very long period of thirty years, become the holder of a pastoral area. Now, I want to know what area it would be necessary to set apart in order to yield such a revenue as would be necessary for the maintenance of an agricultural college such as the hon. gentleman proposes to establish? When men can go and take up selections as agricultural farms, or as grazing farms, at so reasonable a figure, it is not likely that they will be disposed to rent the land set apart for these purposes in such a way as to yield a revenue that would be requisite for the carrying out of the hon. member's idea, so that the extent of land that would be required to be set apart would be something enormous in order to yield anything like an adequate revenue. There is yet another point to be considered. It must be borne in mind that there is an essential difference between the condition of Queensland and the conditions of America and New Zealand in this: that in America and New Zealand the larger proportion of the land is suitable for agriculture—it is suitable for the production of cereal crops, and we know that only a very small proportion of the land of this colony is suitable for agriculture of the ordinary kind. Then again, I think, considering we have industries which are, without disparagement to the agricultural industry, of very much greater importance to the welfare of the colony, it would not be doing the right thing to give facilities of this kind, and to provide a large annual revenue, as it were, out of the public lands for the purpose of fostering agriculture, when nothing whatever is spent upon the mining industry in the same way. As a representative of a mining con-

stituency I contend that if we have any ability to be generous in this way it is the interests of the mining community that ought first of all to be considered. It is perfectly true we have carried a resolution affirming the desirableness of having lectures delivered in various mining centres, in order that miners may be able to utilise the great mineral deposits which are known to exist in this colony; but I think that a scheme should be perfected by which the great bulk of working miners should be able to inform themselves thoroughly upon those points. It may be possible, in one great scholastic institution, to combine a chair of agriculture with chairs of political economy, medicine, and natural science; yet I think that the establishment of one central colossal institution of that kind would hardly have the same beneficial result that the multiplication of schools of less pretentious character through the colony would have; and while I do not feel disposed to offer any serious objection to the resolution which has been proposed, yet I cannot help feeling that as it at present stands it is too much in the region of theory, and hardly deals with those practical details upon which members require information before they commit themselves to all that is implied in the motion.

Mr. STEVENSON said: The speech just delivered is certainly one of the most extraordinary I have listened to in this House. The hon. gentleman who sits at the head of the Government bench congratulates the hon. member for Darling Downs upon making a good speech in having brought before this House his motion, and he then proceeds to tell us that the motion did not enter sufficiently into details, and, in fact, tries to knock down every argument brought forward by the mover of the motion. Well, I think I know what all this means—we all know pretty well—and I do not intend to take up much time in helping Ministers and their supporters behind them to obstruct the business of the House, because it is evidently the object they have in view. They have evidently made up their minds that the hon. member for Fassifern shall not have an opportunity of bringing forward his motion for the adoption of the report of the select committee in the "Forest King" case. That is evidently the intention of the Government. At any rate, I must congratulate the Attorney-General, the junior member for Kennedy, in having at last got in a word for the miners in his own constituency. It is about the only time that he has been able to get up in the House, since he has been drawing a good fat salary, to say a word for his constituents, unless on the occasions upon which he has been goaded on by his senior colleague, Mr. Lissner. I do not think much of the part the hon. member has taken in the debate to-night. I do not think the people or members of this House will congratulate the Premier, who is at the head of this business, or any member of the Government, upon the stand they have taken in trying to block the motion of the hon. member for Fassifern, concerning the "Forest King" case. I have no doubt that, notwithstanding the obstruction of the Government and some of their supporters, the hon. member for Fassifern will have an opportunity of bringing that matter forward.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Speaker,—As a member of the Government, I cannot remain silent under such an accusation as that made by the hon. member.

Mr. STEVENSON: It is quite true all the same.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: There has been no intention whatever on the part of the Government to delay the business. The members of the Government have not in any way



occupied the time by long speeches. A considerable amount of discussion took place in committee on the South Brisbane Gas Company Bill; and that discussion was contributed to by members on both sides of the Committee. The discussion upon this very important question has by no means attained the dimensions its importance demands. I consider that the very important question introduced by the hon. member for Darling Downs demands a very much larger amount of consideration than it has received this evening. There is a great deal in the hon. member's resolution which commends itself, to my mind, in one direction. I am not altogether at one with my hon. colleague, the Minister for Lands, on this question. I must say that I have always entertained a strong and profound conviction that it is desirable that this colony, having encouraged education to the full extent it has done—in fact, having led the van of education in Australia—ought not to stop short of the finishing point, the proper coping-stone, and that is the establishment of a university. I hope that in due time that will be done. I do not regard it at all in the light of the establishment of a university for the rich man's sons at the expense of the masses. I am fully aware of this fact: that the colony has during the last ten years seen a great many of its rising young men, who have attained eminence in the primary and grammar schools here, departing for the universities of Sydney and Melbourne, and after obtaining high honours in those institutions, actually settling down in those colonies and becoming in that respect a loss to this colony in which they were reared. This will continue as population increases, and the demand is made for a more liberal education; and that demand will be met by the establishment of a university in this colony. Until that is done we shall lose some of the best intellects of the country. Taking that view of the case, I hope the time is not far distant when we shall see the foundation for the establishment of a university. The question arises—how is this to be accomplished? Is it to be accomplished by the endowment of a certain area of land? I must say that experience has shown us in the past that these endowments of land have not been wholly unsatisfactory. That raises an apprehension in my mind that the system proposed in this motion will not work satisfactorily in so far as providing an adequate endowment for the establishment either of a university or of these agricultural colleges throughout the colony. At the same time, while the question seems surrounded by this obscurity, I do not think it renders it any the less worthy of our consideration; and I consider that the hon. member has done good service in submitting the matter for our consideration. I have been looking at the American system under which, for the purpose of providing endowment for the primary schools, there is an area of one square mile in thirty-six set apart for that purpose in laying out townships in that country. But in a country like this, where the land is comparatively cheap, and where, to a great extent, it is unproductive, I am afraid that a very large extent of territory would be required to be set apart for the purpose of providing anything like an adequate endowment for the establishment of these agricultural colleges, and especially for the more costly establishment of a university. I am inclined to agree with what has been said by the hon. member for Townsville, that when the time comes for the establishment of a university or these colleges, it will be better that the State should provide a sum of money, the interest from which would go towards maintaining these establishments.

I cannot see how any moderate extent of endowment in the shape of land at the present time is to furnish an adequate revenue to make these establishments efficient. If the hon. gentleman could demonstrate that, I would go heartily with him. In addition to that I would like him to explain how the Government are to make provision for the different settlements, and the instruction which would necessarily be required in accordance with the expanding circumstances of the colony. In the course of twenty years a very much larger number of towns will have arisen throughout the colony than we have at the present time; and I think it is a necessary part of the scheme that the hon. gentleman should show how the provision for the establishment of these colleges could keep pace with the concentration of settlement in this direction. As my hon. colleague, the Attorney-General, said, I think the hon. member for Darling Downs has hardly put this before us in a practical light. Even if the motion were carried in its present form, I do not think there could be any immediate practical outcome from the resolution. I do not wish to depreciate the hon. member's action in this matter, particularly as it leads to the consideration of what I am desirous of seeing established in this colony, the successful accomplishment of the establishment of a university which I consider the capital of our educational system. I do not think that any satisfactory outcome can be looked for from the affirmation of this resolution, which is too abstract in form for us to deal with effectively.

Mr. HORWITZ said: Mr. Speaker,—It is not my intention to detain the House long; but I must congratulate the hon. member for Darling Downs upon the able manner in which he brought his motion before the House. I am very sorry the Government, who should have given him their assistance, have simply thrown cold water on boiling oil. Certain industries require nursing and watching, and this industry has been neglected for years. The hon. member's motion might be accepted, but at the same time the House might deal with it in different ways. I think it is the duty of the Government—whom we consider a Liberal Government—to assist the parties who assisted them to hold the reins with such a strong majority. What do we find now? If anything is required by the agriculturists or the miners, they go dead against them. I will not detain the House any longer than to say that if the hon. member for Darling Downs presses this motion he shall have my support.

Mr. BROOKES said: Mr. Speaker,—My opinion is that the hon. member for Darling Downs introduced this subject in a very admirable and able way. I do not know that there is any other member in the House who could have done it better. I do not believe that the Ministers who have spoken on the question really meant all they said, especially when they remarked that the hon. member for Darling Downs should have defined a practical scheme. It hardly falls within the duty of a private member to do that; that is a matter more in the province of the Government. I think every purpose is served by the manner in which the hon. member introduced the motion. A great point would be gained if we only try to get inoculated with the idea—which is apparently new to some hon. members—that education and knowledge and intelligence are the highest aims that we can possibly have in view. In one respect I differ from the Colonial Treasurer. He desires a university; I do not. It may be necessary to explain why I do not. I consider that we could do a great deal better with our time,



money, and energy, than to bestow a large sum for the mere purpose of educating a few doctors and barristers. Strange to say, the longer I live the more clearly I see that this higher education is not the education that is so much wanted in this colony. There are many young men here who would gladly exchange their knowledge of Greek for knowledge as to how to shoe a horse; and there is a long difference, I know, between the one kind of knowledge and the other. Now, I would rather that the Attorney-General had not insisted as he seemed to insist upon the disqualification of this colony for agriculture. I think that idea is greatly exaggerated. I have an idea that we could do with, in round numbers, about 10,000,000 people in our agricultural industry. But now comes in the argument of the hon. member for Fassifern—what is to be done with our agricultural produce when it is grown? That is the question; for if we bestow our undivided attention on agriculture, it would be something like building a table with two legs, which would not stand up. But some remarks have been made to-night which clearly show the advantages of this motion. Whatever becomes of the motion, we shall be all the better for having talked about it. The Minister for Lands made a speech which he will permit me to say, without any offence, showed a great deal of the leaven of the squatter. He betrayed that narrowness of view which thinks it is enough if we lease our land at 3d. an acre. All authorities agree that if there is one occupation in which it pays to be well informed, and to have some knowledge of botany, geology, and chemistry, it is that of agriculture. Knowledge does not encumber. It is not a weight to be borne. The more a man knows the better qualified he is for any occupation in life. But this motion speaks about land endowments. Well, in this matter we may take a lesson from the United States. Exactly one hundred years ago, before the Federal Union was established, or the Constitution of the United States framed, in the territory of Ohio—a territory very similar to our own Far West and more difficult to get at—it was determined that there should be established in every six square miles a free school, and for that end a grant of 640 acres was made in each western township. At the time these grants were made the real value of the land was absolutely nil. At that early period in American history, however, one thirty-sixth of all the public land was devoted to educational purposes. That was one hundred years ago.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I wish you had lived then.

Mr. BROOKES: Later on, the 640-acre allotments were increased to double that size, or 1,280 acres, and as the national growth of the United States has proceeded further provisions have been made. As each territory was organised public lands were set aside for colleges, seminaries, and schools, and now there are nearly 72,000,000 acres dedicated to the cause of education in the United States. With the advance of civilisation in the west this land is rapidly increasing in value, so as to keep pace with the ever augmenting demands of common schools and college instruction. And now every State in the Union has not only free schools but free colleges. These agricultural colleges are provided with professors and tutors, and commodious buildings, including dormitories, lecture-rooms, and a model farm, at which the students may put into practice the precepts taught from the desk of the professor. Why is all this done? Because it is recognised in the United States that farming is a science. That would not be inferred from the speech of the Minister for Lands; but farming is a science, and farmers educated at these colleges will doubtless use and not

abuse, as the ignorant farmer always does, the precious gift of land. This is a most immense subject, and it is one in which I take a very deep interest. Some time ago I read a book, written by Sir J. Kay-Shuttleworth, on Continental education, and his account of the agricultural schools of Switzerland comes to my memory now. Such schools as they have there are exactly such schools as we should have in every centre of population—at Toowoomba, and Dalby, and Roma, at Rockhampton, and Townsville, and every other town. There were attached to those schools—the students, I should imagine, were fourteen or fifteen years of age—the outhouses of a farm, and the students were taught their mother tongue, French, botany, chemistry, mineralogy, meteorology, and the whole curriculum of high education. Not only that, but I was much struck with the fact that the work of the farm, and the work of the house, and the work of the stable, were divided among the students; so that every student, in the course of a week, went the whole round. A lad would very likely begin on Monday morning by cleaning out the stables and carting the manure on to the field. Perhaps next day he would have some instruction in the curing of sick horses, or how to manage a dairy. Then, next day, he would be taught ploughing. In fact, there was not a single item connected with farming that those students did not learn. The result was, according to Sir J. Kay-Shuttleworth—and he was an undoubted authority on the matter—that for a comparatively small expense—not more, if I remember, than £20 a year for board and residence—the students left that school in possession of a better education than they could have obtained at either Oxford or Cambridge in England. But that is not all. These students were drafted off to the public free schools of Switzerland. They went sometimes to very barbarous and uncivilised places, and through their example a marked improvement was often effected in manners, and the schoolmaster was looked upon as their "guide, philosopher, and friend." Cannot we do something like that? Is it beyond our powers? I will not detain the House much longer. I only want to say this: that unless we do something in this direction we shall never realise anything except an enlarged debt and the contempt of the world. These are new ideas, I know. I was not a bit surprised that the hon. member for Rosewood should be laughed at. Everybody is laughed at when he talks sense.

Mr. HAMILTON: Then you were never laughed at.

Mr. BROOKES: The hon. member for Darling Downs has done the House and the colony a service by the instructive speech he has made, and the subject he has broached to-night will not be allowed to die. Something will come out of it. I know the tendency of Ministers; it is wholly towards something practical, not theoretical. But I would like to know whether anything practical is not theoretical to begin with. Everything exists first in idea. The invention of the steam engine originated in an idea before the use of steam was practically demonstrated. The artist who paints a picture draws it in his own mind before he puts brush to canvas. This scheme of having our youths properly instructed is an idea, but I am satisfied that the present Ministry, or those who will succeed them, will be quite able to formulate a scheme which will redound to our credit, and, at all events, make a beginning of the time when our boys shall not be lounging about larking at street corners—when our girls shall learn to sew, to make a pudding, and to boil potatoes as well as to play the piano and talk nonsense—when

our boys shall be able to do all the work of the foundry, the farm, or the station; and at the same time both boys and girls shall be able to go into a drawing-room and show all the graces and refinements of intelligent social life. This is within our reach. It is not a dream. It will be realised, and the wisest men among us are already giving it their attention and helping us to begin the realisation of it.

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—Nothing pleases me so much, after having known this colony as a colony for twenty-five years, as the evidence we have had to-day in this House that there is a growing conviction in the minds of hon. members of the importance of beginning the ground-work of agricultural education in Queensland. I was delighted, sir, with the speech of the hon. member for Darling Downs, Mr. Kates. There is no one who takes a deeper or more intelligent interest in that subject—a subject of immeasurable importance in these colonies, and even in this colony of Queensland—than the hon. member for Darling Downs; and I am satisfied that hon. members who have taken the trouble or the pleasure to listen to that admirable speech must have been convinced as he went on from one part of it to another that it was time that we began in earnest the great work of teaching the rising generation of the colony the science of agriculture. It is marvellous to me, sir, that this colony should have grown to the age of a quarter of a century and that we should have taken no trouble as yet, systematically, to set about the great work of teaching the children in our schools how to plough the land, what kind of crops can be profitably cultivated, how to guard against the natural disadvantages under which we labour in this colony in some respects, and how the farmer can realise a good livelihood, taking care not to put all his eggs in one basket; and, in short, how farming may be made profitable and a great source of wealth to the people. It is a marvellous thing that we should spend a quarter of a million of money, or more than that, in bringing people into the colony who know nothing about farming; and that we should spend nearly another quarter of a million to teach our boys Latin and Greek, and mathematics, and a number of things which are of very little use in a colony like this, and yet see inseparable difficulties in our way the moment an hon. gentleman gets up and advocates the establishment of an agricultural school. One would think that would be a very simple thing to establish; and what he asks is that out of our 427,000,000 acres of land we should set apart a square mile here and a square mile there all over the colony, in centres of population, so as to endow these agricultural schools. After the admirable speech of the hon. member for Darling Downs came the interesting speech of the hon. the Premier, who told us that some few years ago he himself had prepared a Bill embodying the very idea that has been placed before us to-night in the motion of the hon. member for Darling Downs; and I am satisfied that with his great intellect he will not find it at all difficult to work out the details of this scheme. After that we had considerable light thrown on the question by the hon. gentleman's colleague, the junior member for North Brisbane. There is no person to whose speeches we listen with greater pleasure, in spite of the interjected jocular remarks of the hon. member for Balonne, than we do to the quaint, humorous, and suggestive speeches of the hon. junior member for North Brisbane. It is no use people laughing, because the more they laugh the more he goes on, and the more brightly the corruscations of his humour and wit delight the House. I know hon. members on the Opposition benches like to hear him.

Mr. MOREHEAD: They do not listen to him.

Mr. JORDAN: Yes, they do; and no one listens to him with greater delight than the hon. member himself. There is no one who possesses more information on those great questions that are connected with the building up of the great interests of this colony than the hon. junior member for North Brisbane. Now, he has told us how this thing is to be worked out very simply. What did they do in the United States of America 100 years ago? They set apart a square mile in all the townships of the States. The land at that time possessed no value at all, but it has become valuable, because the United States are now thickly populated. And so with us. We have room here for a very large population. As population grows—as these squattages provided for by our new Land Act are settled upon—as those farm lands are settled upon in localities suitable for agriculture, all over the alluvial country on our creeks and rivers and bays, towns will spring up and every square mile we now set apart for agricultural colleges will increase in value every day, and provide an ample fund for this means of education. I, sir, am one who do not believe in the system of education at present in force in this colony, and never did. Compulsory it is not—only in name; secular it is, for we have excluded the Bible from our schools; free it is, and that is a great mistake in my opinion, for what costs people nothing they do not value, and I do not believe that the working man of this colony would ever object to pay 2d., or 3d., or up to 6d. a week for the education of his children, those being the fees connected with the first system of education established in the colony. I believe every child should be taught to read and write and the simple rules of arithmetic, and if people want education further than that let them pay for it. It is not a question to-night of higher education in the common acceptance of the term; it is a question of education that will teach the people to work. The tendency of the present system has been, I maintain, to teach idleness. We take the children of poor people we import here at enormous expenditure, and at enormous expenditure we give them an education that unfits them for the common duties of life—which makes them dissatisfied with the duties that they ought to perform in assisting their fathers and mothers on their farms and in their business—which fills them with the ridiculous conceit that they are born to do nothing—to be gentlemen and ladies; so that our young women, growing up, look upon taking service in a lady's house as a domestic servant as a degradation. They think it more honourable to serve gin at the bar of a public-house; and our boys think it a degradation to hold the plough—one of the most honourable occupations any man could possibly engage in on the face of the earth. They must be lawyers! Why, sir, we have lawyers enough everywhere—too many of them; but what they prefer above all is to do nothing—to stand propping up posts at the corner of streets, and insulting passers-by. Why, sir, a man cannot walk down the streets of Brisbane on Saturday night, and take his wife on his arm—he dare not do it.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Let him take somebody else's, then.

Mr. JORDAN: They dare not walk along the streets for fear of being insulted. The police have no power, and hardly dare show their faces in the streets on Saturday night. Why is that, sir? Because we are importing the poorest kind of people from the parishes of Great Britain at enormous cost, taking the children of those people and giving them a ridiculous education,

which only results in producing a monstrous growth of vulgarity and conceit, or what has been termed by the Bishop of Melbourne "educated ruffianism."

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. I do not know what "educated ruffianism" has to do with the motion before the House, and would ask if the hon. member is in order, or whether his remarks are relevant to the question? They have seemed to me for some minutes to have been not relevant, and the hon. member seems to have run a little bit wide.

The SPEAKER: The question before the House is to establish an agricultural college, and I think the hon. member's speech has been rather discursive.

Mr. JORDAN: As you have ruled me out of order, sir, I will sit down. I have concluded my remarks upon the subject.

The SPEAKER: I have not ruled the hon. member out of order. I merely said I thought his speech a little discursive.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I think possibly hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House have been put up to obstruct to-night. I think the speech made by the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, and that made by the hon. gentleman who preceded him, can bear no other construction but that of obstructing in order to prevent the bringing in of a motion standing later on the paper. With regard to the motion itself, it seems to me one of the most absurd that has ever been brought before the House. A more absurdly composed resolution, I suppose, never was brought before the House. A more inconsequent series of words I do not suppose was ever compiled even by the hon. gentleman himself. But if there is anything in it at all—if this apparently abstract resolution be passed, where is it to stop? Is it to be all agriculture? Why not mining?—why not carpentering?—why not anything else that may be proposed? I do not think there has been any evening so wasted as this has been in discussing a proposition so vague as this. The Government appear to more than half help the hon. gentleman in this resolution; but I am sure, Mr. Speaker, if you were not in the chair you would oppose the motion as heartily as I do. What have we heard from the hon. gentlemen who have supported this motion—what have we heard from the hon. gentleman who has just sat down? That hon. gentleman likes to have an opportunity of giving us a long address upon education, and the proper way of educating people—that every person in the colony ought to be a farmer, and that every person who was a farmer ought to bring a certain amount of money to the colony, and every person in the colony ought to have sons who would also become farmers. The colony was to be converted into a farming community, and beyond that the hon. gentleman does not seem to be able to go, although he was to a certain extent interested in cutting up timber. But, in the House, he does not think it possible that any honest men can exist but men who are interested in farming and who bring a certain amount of money to the colony, and who, after a certain time, should have a certain amount of land given to them at the expense of others who are—unfortunately, perhaps—not farmers. That seems to be the hon. gentleman's idea; and, holding these ideas, the resolution of the hon. member for Darling Downs seems to square with them. But I would ask this House, what earthly good can the State realise if the resolution is carried? No good can be done to the colony by passing such an abstract resolution as is contained in those words. I maintain that I am indifferent as to whether the resolution is

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carried or not. If it is carried it remains a record of the energy of the hon. gentleman in carrying a resolution that will be of no future utility—and none at the present time, even. Let any hon. gentleman read the resolution and state what earthly benefit can be derived from the passing of it. There appears to be nothing contingent to it. If the hon. gentleman had other resolutions to follow if he succeeded in passing this, one might, with an enormous stretch of imagination, come to the conclusion that he had some definite intention of doing something that he thought would be a benefit to the State. But he has not done so; he has simply asked the House to express an opinion that certain areas of land should be devoted to a certain purpose, and there he stops. There is no request following that, conveying an expression of opinion to the Government that certain reserves should be made. There is no attempt made to carry these resolutions into effect, and, altogether, it appears to me that the resolution, if not put before this House to waste time, at any rate has had that effect. We have had various pathetic appeals from hon. gentlemen opposite and we have had the usual wail of the junior member for South Brisbane, who always tells us that he is misrepresented, and that his words do not carry weight; but that the day will come—must come—when we shall hear him. We have heard other hon. members, the junior member for North Brisbane amongst them. I am very sorry that hon. gentleman is not in his place to defend the wretched statements that he made. I suppose he has gone into seclusion and will appear when it is necessary for him to do so—when the division bell rings. It is a notorious fact in this House that he makes very often a violent speech, waves his hands in the most extraordinary way, and strikes attitudes which cannot be struck by any other hon. member in this House, and then retires into seclusion, and when the division bell rings—sometimes by himself, and sometimes with the assistance of other hon. members—he arrives in time to have his name recorded on the division list. I am sorry he is not present here to listen to these pleasant remarks I am making—I am sure he would enjoy them just as much as I do. I trust that the division will come shortly, and also that another division will come upon a much more important matter, and that is upon the motion of the hon. member for Fassifern, who I hope intends to persevere with it. I shall say nothing more now, except that I hope the junior member for North Brisbane will be present when the hon. member for Fassifern moves the adoption of the report which is next set down upon this paper.

Mr. KATES, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I certainly did not expect much sympathy from the hon. gentleman who has just sat down with any attempt to improve the condition of the farmers, and were I dependent upon his support I should never have brought the motion forward; but when I looked around and saw the people of the United States, and the people of New Zealand, and other countries, taking action in the matter, I came to the conclusion that those people must be fools, and the hon. member for Balonne a wise man.

Mr. MOREHEAD: Well, I believe you are right.

Mr. KATES: Well, sir, a great deal has been said about the farmer, and I am sorry to see that the Minister for Lands has so coldly received this motion. I did not expect much sympathy from him either, because I know he has not much sympathy with the agriculturists of the colony. I rely upon those members of the House—who are, I believe, in the majority—

who recognise the fact that the farming industry has never been treated anything like it should be. With all due respect to the pastoral interest and the mining interest, I say the farming interest is the most important of all. The miners are more likely to be migratory than the farmers. If they are unsuccessful at Charters Towers and a large goldfield breaks out in Victoria, very likely those gentlemen will get their swags and go to Victoria. That cannot be said of the farmers. They tie themselves to the soil—they themselves and their children and their grandchildren. We find that in countries where agriculture has been properly attended to, there is prosperity and happiness, as in the United States of America; and in countries where agriculture has been neglected, there is no prosperity, as in Spain and other places. The farmer is a very valuable man; you cannot kill him—he is almost inextinguishable. It takes ten seasons to kill a farmer, and it only takes two to kill a squatter. When seasons are bad, the farmer says good-bye to his wife and children, and takes work under the municipality or divisional board, or he goes into the interior and takes work at shearing or fencing; and he brings home a cheque and waits for better days. I did not make an elaborate motion; my motion is very plain and simple. It is this: We have 400,000,000 acres at our hand, and I think it is desirable that we should reserve such land as the Government think proper by way of endowment for agricultural colleges and higher education. It is said that the price of land is low now, but it will become very valuable in course of time when the revenue from it will be required to assist the educational institutions. There is no harm in the motion. If the Government reserve any land now, and find afterwards that it is more than they require for the purpose, it is still in the hands of the Crown. They can resume it and dispose of it as they like. When I saw what had been done in other countries in the way of reserving land for agriculture—which after all is the premier industry of the world—I thought myself justified in proposing a similar motion to this House.

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. I propose on Monday that we go on with the motion of which I have given notice, to take into consideration the proposed new Standing Orders, then deal with the two Bills from the Council, and after that go into Supply.

Mr. MIDGLEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I have a motion on the paper this evening which would have come on earlier, but as an act of courtesy I acceded to a request made by the hon. member for Wide Bay and the hon. member for Bowen that the South Brisbane Gas Bill should be disposed of first. I do not know whether there are many who desire to go on with it, but I am prepared to say that I do not intend to allow this motion to be shunted. If there is to be no opportunity given to me to-night to state why the committee on the petition of Samuel Hodgson came to the conclusion they did, and to defend the report which was presented to this House and through the House to the country, I think it is within reasonable bounds to request that there should be a promise and pledge of some opportunity of doing the work I should otherwise have done to-night. Apart from such a promise I shall go on with the motion to-night. I would prefer to have a more favourable opportunity, because it would be an injustice to myself and other members of the committee to go on with the motion to-night, and it would be an

injustice to the man chiefly interested in the matter. I trust it will be in some way arranged that this motion of mine may be taken next week, and an opportunity given for going into all its details. It is the first time I have placed a notice on the paper, and it is my third session in the House. I shall never again be such an ass as to take notice of the whip of the party or any other party. I shall do my own whipping—I shall whip other people, and lay it on properly. I just want some promise that this motion, which rests upon the appeal of a fellow-countryman to this House for consideration, inquiry, and fair play, shall not be in any way shunted. I wish to have an opportunity of speaking on it at some future time—I do not mean some future session, because I do not know what may happen. There may be an appeal to the country, and I may be ignominiously kicked out; or I may not think the game worth the candle, or the honour worth the money. I have been a party to going into this inquiry, and sending the report to the House, and I ask an opportunity of putting the report before the House, and asking them to confirm it, or otherwise, by a vote of this House.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I understand the hon. member asks us to promise that we shall give up a Government day till this motion is disposed of. I cannot undertake that this House shall continue to sit until the hon. member's motion has been disposed of—if that is the general wish, it would be better to go on with it to-night. I will not undertake that both Houses of Parliament shall be inconvenienced because the hon. member, or the person whose cause he champions in this House, did not bring the matter before Parliament till an extremely inconvenient time. A man might wait until Parliament was nearly over, and then come forward and ask that both Houses of Parliament should be kept together until he has his particular grievance ventilated. If the hon. gentleman wishes to justify the report of the committee, I have no objection to going on with the motion now.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—It is no concession to this House or to the hon. member for Fassifern, for the Premier to propose that we should go on with this motion to-night. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that it is a thin House now, and that, as a matter of fact, the motion has been talked out, so far as this sitting is concerned. I do not know exactly what business the Government intend to go on with on Monday. I think the Premier said that he proposed to take Supply, and when that was finished, to go on with the Justices Bill and the Settled Land Bill.

The PREMIER: No, no!

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: That is what I understood the hon. gentleman to say; will he be good enough to explain?

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I did not look so far ahead as that. I said we proposed to take into consideration the new Standing Orders, then the two Bills from the Council, and after that to go on with Supply. I do not see my way to anything further than that.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said: Then we will first have the Standing Orders, and after that the Justices Bill, and the Settled Land Bill.

The PREMIER: No; the two Bills which came down amended from the Council to-day.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH: Oh! those two Bills. I thought the hon. gentleman referred to the Justices Bill and the Settled Land Bill, which also came down from the Council.

Then we have the amendments on those two Bills which came down from the other House to-day, and Supply to go on with on Monday. I wish to direct the attention of the Premier to this fact, that in no session that I have known have private members given so much time to the Government. For a very large part of this session the whole of Thursday has been given to Government business.

The PREMIER: Because private members had no business themselves.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: It is not because they loyally joined together to give because they had no business themselves, but every facility to the Government for carrying on their business, and I think it is not much for any private member or a number of members, to ask that the Government should reciprocate and give up a large portion of their time now to private members. There is no question about the importance of the motion to be moved by the hon. member for Fassifern. It is in the interest of the country that the motion should be discussed, and I cannot understand the hon. gentleman suggesting that the matter should be decided to-night. I believe myself that it is quite impracticable that that should take place. A large number of members have gone away, and I do not believe in discussing the matter under those circumstances. The Government should give an opportunity to the hon. member to bring forward his motion next week—and they can easily do it. The business before us is Supply, and the two Bills mentioned by the Premier. When these have been disposed of, there will be a considerable amount of time at the disposal of the Government. Of course there is no hope that two of the measures on the paper will pass.

The PREMIER: I hope one of them will.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: At all events it will be simply a waste of time to proceed with the Justices Bill—it is so long. I do not know to which of the two Bills the hon. gentleman refers, but I can claim for private members that they should have the time at the disposal of the Government after they have passed the Estimates. We know perfectly well that we shall have a great amount of time in which the matters can be discussed, and we can claim that and ought to get it. The hon. gentleman knows as well as I do that the two Bills now on the paper have been put through to fill up the time during which the other Chamber was doing nothing. The motion of the hon. member for Fassifern deals with a very important matter, and I do not think the Government will be doing justice to themselves unless they give every facility to the members who have conducted this investigation to bring the whole case before the Government and before the House. Of course I need not point out that whether the Government coincide with our ideas or not, and gracefully concede to private members what I have asked, we can easily bring on a discussion on the subject. The discussion will take place; but I think it is much better that the Government should gracefully concede what is asked and make arrangements for it to take place in proper form.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Of course I know that any hon. member can bring forward a motion if he wants to. I cannot promise when the matter may be considered, but I will give the hon. member every facility to discuss the motion.

Mr. MIDGLEY: I would ask when that opportunity is likely to be given?

The PREMIER: Next week.

Mr. MIDGLEY: If the House continues in session till next Friday, that is private members' day, and I know it can come on then.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: Oh, no; the Premier has promised to give every facility.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not know when the Government business will be closed; but I say I will undertake to give every facility for the discussion of the motion. I am not going to give a promise that the debate shall be on Tuesday and then find on Monday night that no business has been done.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think we can ask more than the hon. gentleman has promised. No doubt he will have a very clear idea on Monday when the Government business will be finished, and will then be able to tell the hon. member for Fassifern when the Government will be prepared to discuss his motion.

Mr. STEVENSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not think the Premier has given any promise at all. The hon. gentleman tells us that he will not give a Government day for the consideration of the motion of the hon. member for Fassifern. He only says he will give him every opportunity to discuss it. What does that mean? It simply means that the member for Fassifern is to be hoodwinked, and that if the Government business is finished before Friday the hon. member will have no opportunity of bringing forward his motion. We know perfectly well what took place to-night; we know that the Premier meant obstruction right through. But the hon. gentleman must know that we can bring the subject up and debate it on a motion for adjournment. He might, therefore, just as well tell us what he intends to do, and whether he will give the hon. member for Fassifern an opportunity to bring forward his motion on a Government day.

Mr. KELLETT said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Fassifern has assured me that he is perfectly satisfied with the assurance given by the Premier, and I think all hon. members ought to be satisfied with that assurance.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that the hon. member for Fassifern and the whole House ought to be perfectly satisfied with the assurance given by the Premier. The member for Fassifern has the matter in his own hands, and therefore he can rest assured that the Premier will afford him every facility for bringing his motion forward. I am perfectly satisfied with the assurance given by the Premier, and I believe the hon. member for Fassifern is satisfied too.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—The whirligig of time brings about its revenges. That was a most affecting speech made by the junior member for Cook—to make it perfectly definite, I will say the member who was once rejected by Cook and afterwards returned.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: Rejected by California Gully.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I do not care by what influence he was rejected; the fact remains that he was rejected. He has been returned since, by what means I do not know; but I remember that hon. gentleman who gets up and tells us that we ought to take the assurance of the Premier—I remember when he denounced the Premier as a man whose word he would not take; when he said that he would have nothing to do with him, that he would not sit on the same side with him, that he had neither character, honour, nor capacity; but the hon. gentleman has changed his tune. Perhaps it suits him to do so—perhaps he has reasons for doing so.

Mr. LUMLEY HILL: I have had very good reasons.

Mr. MOREHEAD : I think the hon. gentleman should have explained those reasons to the House before he broke out in such a contradictory way as he has done to-night. I hold a strong opinion against the promise made by the Premier. We have to deal with an important matter—one that not only concerns the report of the committee, but the honour of this colony—the two things are tied up intimately together—and the House should demand from the Premier that there should be a full and free discussion as regards the question of the "Forest King" before Parliament is prorogued. We should not put up with the bare promise of the Premier that some night will be given next week to the discussion of the question, because there is a possibility of that promise not being carried out. The hon. member for Normanby says the promise has not been made; but it would have been considered a promise had it come from anyone else but the Premier. And I think it should be a fixed promise that this matter will be discussed, because it is a matter far beyond the compensation we are asked to pay the owner of the "Forest King"; it is a question that affects the fame and reputation of this colony as regards the South Sea Islands traffic. It appears to me that the Premier wishes to shirk the larger discussion, which must be part and parcel of the discussion, with regard to the report brought up by the hon. member for Fassifern. The House and the colony are fairly entitled to have every means left open to discuss the *pros* and *cons*, and the rights and wrongs, of the "Forest King" question, for it is a matter upon which has been based the most serious charge ever saddled on the colony. We know that the leading public organ in this colony has clearly exposed the wrong that was done in this "Forest King" case. It has been proved in the Supreme Court of the colony; it has been proved now before the select committee, that the statement that went home from the Royal Commission appointed by the Premier and his colleagues was a false one, and that the serious charges levelled against the colony as regards kidnapping was untrue. Now, I think the Premier, if he is really anxious to get at the truth, should be only too glad to give the very earliest opportunity to have this matter fully discussed in this House. I may be wrong—the Premier may be wrong—any of us may be wrong in the conclusions at which we have arrived; but with the evidence before us—and there could be no fuller evidence so far as I can see—let the matter be settled upon that evidence. We have the report of an unbiased committee completely endorsing the verdict of the Supreme Court, and dead against the report of the Royal Commission; and surely that is a matter to be thoroughly discussed by this House, more especially as the Government have seized every opportunity of advertising the immoralities and misdeeds that have taken place in the labour dealings with regard to the South Sea Islands. Therefore, I feel very much surprised that the Premier should not have seized the opportunity of saying that he would give the earliest time that could be spared to a full discussion of the subject, instead of doing as he has done—putting up his dummies, so far as their voting power is concerned—his "talkies" so far as their talking power is concerned—to impede and obstruct every motion on the paper to-night. I agree with the leader of the Opposition that the rights of private members have not been properly considered by the Government this session. They have been asked to give up everything and have got nothing in return. This is a matter concerning the honour of the colony, and the sooner the question is discussed and threshed out—let the result be what it may—the better for

the colony. The Premier has stated that he is desirous of getting through the business; and on some occasions he has charged this side of the House with obstruction; but, even if the session lasts a fortnight or a month, let us have this matter cleared up, and let us see whether or not the colony can fairly be charged with the great crime that is laid upon its back at the present time by the Premier.

Mr. HAMILTON said: All that hon. members want is a fair thing. The Premier has stated now that he cannot specify when this motion can be discussed, because he does not know how the Government business will stand on Monday; but if he can promise that on Monday he will specify a day upon which the matter can be dealt with, I feel certain everyone will be perfectly satisfied.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at thirty-one minutes past 11 o'clock.