

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**WEDNESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 1886**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Wednesday, 24 November, 1886.*

Bowen towards Ayr Railway.—Postponement of Motions.  
—Notice of Motion.—Crown Lands Act of 1884  
Amendment Bill—third reading.—Gold Fields Homestead Leases Bill—third reading.—British Companies Bill No. 2—third reading.—Liquor Bill—consideration in committee of the Legislative Assembly's Message.—Fortitude Valley Railway.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN took the chair at 7 o'clock.

## BOWEN TOWARDS AYR RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL presented the report of the select committee on the proposed railway from Bowen towards Ayr, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

## POSTPONEMENT OF MOTIONS.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—With the consent of the House, I will postpone notices of motion Nos. 1 and 2 until after the disposal of the Orders of the Day.

Motions, by leave, postponed.

## NOTICE OF MOTION.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I beg to give notice that to-morrow I will move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as will admit of the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day.

I take this opportunity of stating that this motion has reference only to the Appropriation Bill and the Treasury Bills Bill, in case circumstances should necessitate this House availing itself of the facility which the motion will give.

## CROWN LANDS ACT OF 1884 AMENDMENT BILL.

## THIRD READING.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

## GOLD FIELDS HOMESTEAD LEASES BILL.

## THIRD READING.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, this Bill was read a third time passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

## BRITISH COMPANIES BILL No. 2.

## THIRD READING.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Bill be read a third time.

The Hon. P. MACPHERSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—I had intended to move the recommitment of this Bill for the purpose of proposing some amendments; but I find, on consultation with some hon. gentlemen who have taken a deep interest in the matter involved in it, that they are not disposed to accede at present to any further amendment. In this view, and in view of the fact that the whole subject-matter of the Bill will be dealt with elsewhere very shortly, I will do nothing at present in the matter.

Question—That the Bill be read a third time—put and passed.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly by message in the usual form.

## LIQUOR BILL.

## CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY'S MESSAGE.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Presiding Chairman left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider the Legislative Assembly's message relative to the Council's amendments in the Bill.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the message of the Legislative Assembly in regard to the Liquor Bill was an extremely simple one, and he need not occupy the time of the Committee by explaining it at length. But it was as well to make the observation that he understood that hon. gentlemen generally approved of the amendments of the Legislative Assembly, and that no opposition would be offered to its acceptance. The clause, as amended, would be an improvement, and would enable the original intention of the mover of the amendment to be fully and well carried out. In the proviso at the end of clause 18 it was proposed to insert certain words after the word "that," and a few words after the word "club," making it read as follows:—

"Provided that the provisions of the last preceding paragraph of this section shall not apply to any club with respect to which it is proved to the licensing justices upon the application for registration that it was in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act."

That would enable registration to take place immediately, so that there would be no difficulty in proving that the club was in existence at the time the principal Act was passed, as it had been observed elsewhere, if that matter of registration were left over for a number of years there would be some difficulty in doing that. The amendment simplified the matter, and brought about exactly what was desired by those gentlemen who were in favour of the original amendment. He moved that the Committee agree to the amendments of the Legislative Assembly.

The Hon. W. FORREST said that without saying he would assent or dissent, he would like to hear from the Postmaster-General, if the amendment were agreed to, whether the "mushroom"

clubs said to have sprung into existence would be put down? He was not present when the Liquor Bill was under consideration, but he had read the debates which took place in both Chambers, and he never believed that the registration of *bonâ fide* clubs would put down those mushroom clubs. To his mind those places were simply sly grog-shops, and putting *bonâ fide* clubs to the trouble of registration would in no way help the Government to put them down.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he was not aware of the existence of any mushroom clubs. He had never heard of any.

The Hon. W. FORREST said he thought that was getting out of it in a most—he was going to say contemptible way, but that was not parliamentary—he could scarcely find parliamentary language to express his opinion. If the Postmaster-General had never heard of them, it went a long way towards showing that he was not in the confidence of his colleagues. If the Government never heard of mushroom clubs they were either disingenuous in another place, or else there was no necessity for the clause.

The Hon. F. H. HART said that if the Postmaster-General had not heard of them he believed every other member of the Committee was aware that there were mushroom clubs in Brisbane. There were clubs that ought to be suppressed, and that was the only reason why, instead of interfering with the clause, the Council had tried to meet the Government by putting in the proviso—which had since been amended by the Legislative Assembly. The Government ought to have power to suppress mushroom clubs—disreputable holes; but the amendments made by the Assembly would not assist the Council in their object. They were told that if respectable clubs were registered they could clear themselves, but if they were not, difficulties might hereafter arise. What difficulties could arise? In the present year, 1886, there would be no difficulty in ascertaining what clubs were in existence when the Act was passed in 1885, and how could any difficulty arise in the future as to what clubs were in existence when the Act was passed? He was not prepared to raise any objection to the amendments until he heard the remark of the Postmaster-General. When members of *bonâ fide* clubs were willing to assist the Government to suppress mushroom clubs, which ought not to be tolerated, the amendment of the Council might have received a little more consideration than it had done in another place.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the views of hon. members who supported the amendment in that Chamber had been carried out by the Legislative Assembly. The term "mushroom club" was not heard in the Council when the Bill was under consideration. He had heard it alleged that there were combinations of men starting clubs which were shebeens, or sly grog-shops, but he was not aware of them, and the clause was for the express purpose of excluding all would-be so-called clubs that would not come under the provisions of section 18. Hon. members objected to their own views being carried out when they objected to the amendments of the Legislative Assembly.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said he did not see any use in cavilling over the question whether they were called "mushroom clubs" or not. He knew that clubs which would bear that name did exist, and he heard the phrase used while the Liquor Bill was being passed. The amendment made by the Council was considered sufficient to meet the objections raised in regard to the clause referring to the clubs under the Licensing Act, but the other House took exception to the form of words and gave its

reasons. He could see from them a possible benefit in adopting the amendments to which they were now asked to agree, and, under the circumstances, he thought it would be well to agree to the motion. He was about as sensitive as anybody in regard to the privileges of *bonâ fide* clubs. They did not need the surveillance of the police, but as it seemed to be considered that they would free themselves from that by registering, he could not see any objection. He was afraid it was a little over-sensitiveness on the part of some hon. members to object to registration, and he thought it better to accept the amendments. He might say that they were submitted to him before they were passed by the other branch of the Legislature, and he hoped there would be no further discussion. They were wasting time on a comparatively unimportant question when weightier matters remained to be considered.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said he thought the amendments made by the Legislative Assembly were carefully framed to defeat the object hon. members of the Council had in amending the clause, and, if adopted, the position of clubs, which it was desired to exempt from police investigation, would not be such as was intended by hon. members. The effect of the amendments made by the Assembly would be to provide that the provisions of the last paragraph of the original clause should not apply to any club with respect to which it was proved to the licensing justices upon the application for registration that it was in existence at the time of passing of the principal Act. The only occasion that investigation could take place by the justices would be when a complaint was made by the police about a club, and the annoyance and trouble of defending the summons would have to be undertaken by the members of the club. The necessity for registration otherwise would be as great by a club which had been many years in existence as in the case of a club now being established; but it would only be after proceedings had been instituted that the question of the exemption could come in, and then they would have to prove the existence of the club before the passing of the principal Act. If, instead of the Assembly's amendment being agreed to, the clause were amended so as to allow them to be registered as exempt from the provisions of the section, there would be a good deal of advantage by it; but the alteration proposed was very carefully devised to defeat the object of hon. members in passing the amendments they introduced. He would suggest that the Council should not agree to the first amendment, but agree to the third amendment, the second being merely a verbal alteration. Then the last paragraph would read thus: "Provided that this section shall not apply to any club with respect to which it is proved to the licensing justices upon the application for registration that it was in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act."

The Hon. G. KING said he thought the amendment proposed by the Legislative Assembly was merely an alteration of words, and carried out the spirit of the amendment made by the Council. He hoped, therefore, it would be accepted without any further discussion.

The Hon. W. FORREST said he had asked the Postmaster-General for some information, and he might be courteous enough to give it. He considered that interference with *bonâ fide* clubs the same as interfering with private individuals, because a properly conducted club was to all intents and purposes a private house. As a member of a club he did not object to the inconvenience of registration, if it could be proved that by so doing a public gain

would result. The question was: If *bond fide* clubs were obliged to register, would mushroom clubs be put down? The Postmaster-General said they did not exist; but if they did not, what was the use of legislating against them? Why should respectable citizens be interfered with, if such clubs did not exist? And if they were willing to put themselves to some inconvenience to help the Government to suppress that which was a very great public nuisance—to put it in the mildest form—he thought the least the Postmaster-General might do was to show that if they agreed to the amendments that object would be attained.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the hon. gentleman stated that he was not present when the amendment was proposed in that Committee.

The HON. W. FORREST: But I said also that I read the debates.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Was it fair then to ask that the whole matter should be reopened? He might inform the hon. gentleman that no *bond fide* club would be inconvenienced by the operation of that clause, and no mushroom club, if that meant a club which did not comply with the conditions of that section, could be registered. A club to be registered must be a club that complied with all the conditions specified by the clause in question. The Assembly had agreed to the amendment made by the Council, and simply altered the phraseology slightly. The amendment hon. members were now asked to agree to was precisely the amendment previously made by the Committee.

The HON. W. FORREST: No; not at all!

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Hon. gentlemen on that side of the Chamber had stated so that evening, and they were perfectly satisfied that what they intended was embodied in the amendment as altered by the Legislative Assembly. If the hon. gentleman desired further delay to consider the matter, he would be glad to postpone the clause until the following day.

The HON. W. FORREST said he would ask the Postmaster-General a distinct question, and perhaps he would be good enough to give a categorical answer. If he gave a satisfactory answer, then he would have nothing further to say on the matter. Would the hon. gentleman be good enough to show how the registration of *bond fide* clubs would enable the Government to suppress mushroom clubs?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he could not give a reply “yes” or “no” to the question as to whether the registration of *bond fide* clubs would be the means of suppressing mushroom clubs, but he could say this, that the clause would not permit any club to be registered unless its constitution and objects were consonant with the conditions specified by the clause.

The HON. W. FORREST said he was not satisfied with the answer given by the hon. gentleman, and hon. members were very easily satisfied if they would accept that answer as sufficient, because unless they could suppress the mushroom clubs he did not see why they should interfere with *bond fide* clubs. In his opinion mushroom clubs were simply grog-shops, and the present law was sufficient to deal with them.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said the case seemed to be that the amendment was made upon that clause by the Council adding the proviso, “this section shall not apply to any *bond fide* club in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act.” When the Bill was returned to the Assembly objection was taken to that, on the ground that although the principle was a good one, the wording of the amendment did not provide

the proper machinery for proving at some future time that those clubs were in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act. The amendment proposed by the Legislative Assembly was for the purpose of allowing existing *bond fide* clubs to register themselves as having been in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act. Unless some provision of that kind was made, a great difficulty in time to come would arise in determining whether a club was or was not one of those clubs that should be excepted from the provisions of that clause. Under those circumstances some amendment of the kind made by the Assembly was necessary, and unless some better form could be suggested he thought they had better adopt the amendment of the Legislative Assembly. If it were convenient so to do it would be desirable that the amendment should be made a little more explicit with regard to the registration, and that it should be distinctly stated that one registration should be sufficient, and that the club should not have to register annually. That, he believed, was the real difficulty in the minds of many hon. gentlemen, and if provision could be made that existing *bond fide* clubs should register within six months or three months, or within some other convenient period, he thought that would meet the case and would remove the difficulty that now possessed the minds of many members of the Committee. But he thought, on further consideration of the amendment, that it would involve a very considerable amount of time to alter the amendment in a satisfactory way. And therefore, considering all the circumstances, he thought they would still be under the necessity of adhering to the amendment as originally framed by the Committee. The difference between the amendment of the Assembly and that made by the Committee was, that by the former amendment clubs would be required to register annually and pay a yearly fee of £5, whereas under the amendment as proposed by the Committee one registration would be sufficient.

The HON. W. FORREST said it had been pointed out by the Hon. A. C. Gregory that if they accepted that amendment clubs would have to register every year, and it had also been pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Thynne that the clubs would not escape police supervision. He asked the members of that Committee, the majority of whom were members of clubs, whether they knew of anything with respect to those clubs why they should submit themselves to police supervision? He contended that a club was simply a private house, and unless the Postmaster-General could show the Committee that by *bond fide* clubs registering once annually they would be able to meet the case of mushroom clubs, that clause was altogether superfluous.

The HON. W. G. POWER said he saw no reason why they should not accept the amendment of the Legislative Assembly. No respectable club need have any fear of police supervision. There was not a single house in the town that some inspector did not call at at some time or other, and he ought to be well received when he called.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: What for?

The HON. W. G. POWER: Inspectors called round with respect to back-yards to see that things were in proper order. Every person who sold spirits had to register every year and pay an annual license fee, and he did not see why clubs should not do the same. The clause was brought in to shut up the mushroom clubs that they had heard so much about, and he thought the Government ought to be backed up in their endeavours.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE said he would again caution hon. members that the amendment of the Assembly was not merely a verbal alteration, but affected the principle of the amendment as previously passed by the Committee. He was quite sure that if the amendment was adopted that would be found to be the case when the Bill came into practical operation.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said that after again carefully considering the matter, and listening to the arguments that had been advanced by the different speakers, he saw what never struck him before, that their amendment applied to the whole section, while the amendment of the Assembly limited it to the last preceding paragraph. That only showed how easy it was for one accustomed to examining Bills to be caught tripping; and he now said that he had been caught tripping, inasmuch as he had omitted to observe that the amendment originally proposed covered the whole section, while the alteration restricted it to the last preceding paragraph. He would not like to accept that alteration without very serious and careful consideration, and under all the circumstances of the case he really thought it would be better for them to insist upon their amendment.

The HON. F. T. BRENTNALL said the drift of the argument at last had come to this, that those hon. gentlemen who desired to insist upon the amendment as originally passed by this Chamber really wished that a certain class of clubs which were in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act should not be registered. That was simply what they meant—that clause 18, which provided for the registration of clubs, should not apply to certain clubs which were in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act. That was really the point now in dispute between the two Houses, and he thought that some members of that Committee, whether a majority or not he could not say, were of opinion that if they were to reach the class of clubs which had been designated—why, he knew not—“mushroom clubs,” they must not exclude another class of clubs from registration. If they were to indulge in this bit of class legislation, they would make a serious mistake. They must not overlook the fact that an attempt was being made in the direction of class legislation. What in the world had those high-class clubs to fear from simply being registered? It was proposed that they should be exempted from serious disabilities, and there would be no danger of their being disgraced by legal proceedings such as were specified in the clause if they were registered and could prove that they were in existence at the time of the passing of the principal Act. They were exempted from the proceedings which were regarded as being offensive, and he could not understand why the gentlemen who constituted those high-class clubs should have any fear of being dragged before the police court for proceedings which, as had been stated over and over again, never did take place, and never possibly could take place. If there were no danger, why fear a danger? Every club should be registered, in order that there should be no escape from the comprehensive application of the statutes of the colony. If they made a statute to reach those lower-class institutions, let it reach every kind of institution, and not exempt one because it happened to have a little higher social standing than another. The clause was intended to regulate clubs that were not properly conducted, and the gentlemen who belonged to clubs that were properly conducted should be glad to assist the Government in regulating those that were not.

The HON. G. KING said there was a misapprehension about the clause. There was only one registration and only one fee, and they might readily accept that one registration and one fee if that would be the means of reaching the strata of clubs which were so very objectionable. They would not compromise themselves by assisting the Government to suppress those clubs.

Question put.

The HON. W. FORREST: What about the amendments being put separately? We might agree to some and not to others.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I have taken them *in globo*.

The HON. W. FORREST: Take them separately. I do not object to all of them.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I said I would take them *in globo* and not separately.

The HON. W. FORREST: It would be better to take them separately.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I respectfully decline to alter the position. If the hon. gentleman chooses to move an amendment upon my motion the Committee will decide.

The HON. W. FORREST said he did not catch the hon. gentleman's proposition when he put it in that form. It was most unusual, and he would ask the indulgence of the Committee while he looked at the clause as proposed to be amended.

The HON. F. H. HART said there seemed to be a good deal of misunderstanding regarding the question. So far as he understood it there was no objection on the part of gentlemen who advocated the interests of the old-established clubs, except that they had a very great dislike to go up every year for renewals of their licenses before licensing justices, like publicans. If the Postmaster-General would tell him that when once a club was registered, and satisfied the licensing bench, there would be no further interference or inconvenience, he did not think hon. gentlemen would raise any objection.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he might say at once, most certainly. That was pointed out at an earlier part of the evening.

The HON. W. FORREST said under the circumstances, and taking into consideration the reply that had been received from the Postmaster-General, the matter was very clear and distinct, and he would withdraw his opposition.

Question—That the Legislative Assembly's amendments be agreed to—put and passed.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the amendments of the Legislative Assembly.

The report was adopted, and, on the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly, with a message intimating that the Council had agreed to the amendments of the Legislative Assembly upon their amendment.

#### FORTITUDE VALLEY RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving—

That the report of the select committee on the proposed extension from the Brisbane Terminal Station through Fortitude Valley to Mayne, on the Sandgate Railway, be now adopted—

said: Hon. gentlemen,—The subject matter to which I have now to address myself is one that I feel assured I am right in saying is one of the most important that has come before this Chamber,

because it has reference to the establishment of facilities for the convenience and efficiency and safe working of the existing and future traffic on what will be, in a few years' time, one of the most comprehensive railway systems that obtains within any of the colonies of the Australian group. I hope hon. gentlemen, therefore, in considering this subject, will have regard to the immense mileage of railway that will shortly be controlled by our Railway Department in this colony, and that they will also have in view the circumstance, pregnant as it is with great importance, of convenient passenger and goods traffic and expedition of mail transit, and also that we shall shortly be in railway communication not only with New South Wales, but also with Victoria and South Australia. Having all that on the horizon of our vision we cannot but conclude that the facilities for passenger and goods traffic within the city of Brisbane at the present time are far from ample. You have before you the report of the committee which sat on this railway, and there it will be found from the technical evidence of those employed in the department, that for some time past the extension of the Roma-street terminus into the city, has been deferred in view of the scheme now proposed. The subject has been before the community of Queensland for a very long time. When the first section of the Gympie railway was under consideration, that first section was unfortunately abandoned, and instead of that being constructed as far as the Pine River, with a branch to Sandgate, the Sandgate railway was adopted, with a most unfortunate route. The primary mistake was in taking the Sandgate Railway through the Victoria Park to Breakfast Creek. The question of a central city station was considered at that time, and it is to be regretted that the principle now proposed was not then adopted. However, there is some consolation in what I read the other day in one of the best written reviews that Great Britain produces—that there would be absolute stagnation if there were no human error, that life is really strengthened, that commerce is expanded, and that the life-blood of capital flows into those very spots where human error has been most thickly scattered. That error to which I have alluded is now about to be remedied by the establishment of a central terminus in the city, as well as in that important, populous, and commercial centre, Fortitude Valley. "Will it pay?" has been the question put to almost everyone who has advocated the construction of the line. I answer "Yes," and I will proceed to show that it will pay well. The figures I am about to quote have been made up from returns furnished to me by the department, and I will keep strictly within the existing traffic. £260,000 is the sum put down by the Chief Engineer as a very full estimate for the construction of the proposed railway from Roma street to Mayne, inclusive of the two stations at Fortitude Valley and Ann street respectively.

The HON. J. TAYLOR: Does that include the land to be resumed?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Yes. I prefer to take the cost at £250,000, because our knowledge on the subject leads us to conclude that the lands have been greatly overvalued, and I am positive that the view I express will be proved correct when the result is known, because from the moment private property is entered upon at Ann street until it joins the Sandgate Railway there is not a single business property to be resumed. The whole of the private property may be characterised as cottage property. Some of it is unoccupied, and those portions which are occupied contain cottages from those of moderate dimensions down to what may be called

humpies. I believe the cost of the line will be very much less than I have said, but it will make very little difference to the calculation if we take it in round numbers at a quarter of a million. The interest on that sum will be £10,000 a year. The evidence as to the traffic is conclusive, because it consists of actual facts. The number of passengers who will go to the central station will be 1,000,000 per annum if this railway is constructed, because by that time increases will have taken place in the population to allow for the small number who will get out at the Roma-street station. Taking them at 2d per head, that will produce a revenue of £8,333 6s. 8d. That is irrespective altogether of the passenger traffic that will go along the North Coast line. At the present time the number of passengers travelling along the North Coast route by coach is about fifty per week each way, and when the line is open to Gympie the number will be 250 each way, or 500 per week, not including suburban traffic. That number at 3d. per head will produce £312 per annum, reckoning only fifty weeks. If we add to that the suburban passenger traffic, and the through passenger traffic there cannot be less than 1,000 passengers per week each way, or 2,000 per week both ways. At 3d. per head for fifty weeks that will amount to £1,250. When the line is constructed to Gympie, which will be about the same time as the proposed line, we shall then have a large system of railways connected with the metropolis, and we cannot estimate exactly the amount of passenger traffic there will be when that system is completed. Having in view the resources of the territory north of Brisbane to be tapped by the North Coast system—the mining, agricultural, and timber industries in that district—it is not too much to say that within a very short time after the opening of the line to Gympie, one-fifth of the number of passengers coming to the Roma-street station from the Western districts—Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Roma, Mitchell, Dulbydilla, and other places—it is not too much to say that one-fifth of that number will come to the city terminus from the North Coast system. The immediate passenger traffic from that system will be one-fifth of the traffic that comes at the present time to Brisbane from the whole of the Southern and Western Railway system. Evidence has been given that enormous supplies of colonial produce, in the shape of hay, maize, oats, chaff, potatoes, and other farm produce, are brought through the Valley and delivered at the Roma street station. It has been shown that it costs as much to bring it through the Valley as it does to bring it from Ipswich. I say that subject to correction. The witnesses who are doing business in that part of the city told the amount of their business, and one of them said he believed that six times as much tonnage as he dealt with was dealt with by others in the Valley. He said the amount came up to 6,000 tons; but I know it is a great deal more, because if a goods station be established at Fortitude Valley much of the produce supplied from the town would be supplied from this station. Most people who require corn, oats, and chaff, live outside the town. I have, therefore, taken 10,000 tons as the quantity that will be carried into the Valley when the line is made, and that, at the agricultural rate taken from the *Government Gazette* of the 23rd December, 1885, would produce a revenue of £125. Now, let us come to wool. We know that a few ships have been loaded at Bulimba with wool that has come down the Southern and Western Railway. I am not disposed to attach much importance to that, because the quantity of wool that would be discharged there will be

small in proportion to that which will be discharged in Brisbane. In three years' time there will be say 2,000 tons of wool per annum carried over the line, and that will produce a revenue of £75. That is only over the part to be constructed. Other goods traffic I estimate at a small proportion of what comes to Roma street. I have taken one-tenth. We know the population of the Valley is something like 25,000 people.

The Hon. P. MACPHERSON : 16,000.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : The population of the Valley proper is 16,000 ; but if we include the population in the immediate vicinity, it amounts to 25,000 or 30,000. We know that one-tenth of all the goods received at the terminal station must have relation to the Valley population, and that will give a revenue of the small sum of £125 passing over the proposed line. I also take a small proportion of the firewood and coal traffic which now comes in at the Roma-street station—namely, £700 per annum, making a total altogether of £10,608 6s. 8d. I have shown that this is the revenue that would at once accrue from existing traffic if the proposed railway is constructed, and I am quite convinced that the estimate is very much below the mark—that the goods and passenger traffic will be very much greater than I have stated. Here, then, we have a revenue of, in round numbers, £10,500 to meet the interest charge of £10,000 on the quarter million of money which the carrying out of this work will involve.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR : What about the working expenses ?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL : I am coming to that. I have shown how at the smallest estimate of the traffic the charge for interest can be met—how the interest on the cost of construction can be met by the traffic that will take place immediately the line is opened to that point and station facilities are established—and I think it is a fair thing to conclude that the natural increase of the traffic will go at once to pay working expenses ; but the working expenses will be comparatively small, because we are not going to provide for the whole of the existing traffic at this new station. There will be only passengers leaving and arriving at Ann street, and both goods and passengers at the station in the Valley. The staff at the Roma-street station will be greatly diminished by the establishment of these two stations, so that it is fair to state that the required staff for the proposed line will not be very great. We have it in evidence that if this scheme be not carried out immediately a considerable expenditure will be incurred for providing increased accommodation for passengers at the station in Roma street, and also for the extension of the goods shed at that station. That is stated in the evidence of Messrs. Curnow and Thallon, and I think also in the evidence given by Mr. Stanley. The natural increase will then, I contend, contribute all that is required for the working expenses, because it will not be necessary to make the new station as efficient as the present station at Roma street, as part of the traffic will be removed from there. If, however, we do not carry out the scheme, the station at Roma street will, as I have said, have to be enlarged. There is another view I wish to put before the House. It is quite clear to my mind that the cost of the duplication of the line from Mayne to the Roma-street station, which it has been fully shown is necessary for the growing requirements of the traffic, will, with the necessary adjuncts in the shape of points, and extra sidings, together with the cost of increased passenger accommodation and the extension of the goods shed at Roma street, amount

within six or seven years to no less a sum than £100,000. It is quite correct from a business point of view to take that £100,000 off the expenditure on the proposed line from the Brisbane terminus through Fortitude Valley to Mayne, because this work, if carried out, will, as has been emphatically shown in the evidence, save that sum of money in the period I have mentioned. Therefore, we are left with a cost of only £150,000, the interest on which is, of course, very much less than the amount of interest I have based my previous calculations upon. The interest would be £6,000, and the revenue will just be the same. There is yet another view that I will present to the House. The Chief Engineer gave evidence before the committee to the effect that in the British Isles, and I think he also stated on the Continent—though I am not quite sure about that—it is customary for railway companies to debit the cost of the central stations to the whole mileage of the system benefited by the termini. He also proved, what most hon. members already know, that it has been the policy for many years past of those railway companies to get their passenger stations into the very heart of the business centres of cities in the old world. From that point of view it is reasonable to charge our Northern coastal system, and our Southern and Western system, with the probable cost of this scheme. What would be the result of that ? I find that the total mileage of the lines centring in Brisbane—present and projected—including the Southern and Western Railway and branches, the Coastal line and branches, and the Central Railway and branches, is 1,600 miles. The rate per mile, if the cost of the Valley extension is distributed—taking the cost at £260,000—would be £162. If we look a little further ahead—and I think we ought to do so—I am satisfied that in the natural order of things most of us will live to see the day when a railway will be constructed from Ravenswood to Clermont. I need not say much about this matter, because the question is not before the House. I may, however, point out that Clermont is a good deal north of Rockhampton, and the two townships of Ravenswood and Clermont are within 200 miles of each other, and the country is eminently practicable for the building of a cheap railway. This information I am able to give from official work that has been done within the last six months. That railway will, I am sure, be made within ten or twelve years, and if we add that, the total mileage of all lines centring in Brisbane, present and projected—including the Southern and Western Railway and branches, the Coastal line and branches, the Central Railway and branches, and Northern line and branches—inclusive of this connecting line between Ravenswood and Clermont—will amount to 2,057 miles, which should be charged with the benefit of excellent central passenger termini in the City and Valley. The rate per mile to be debited, if the cost of the Valley extension is distributed over the entire system—taking £260,000 as the cost—will be £126. I think it is only fair to put this view before the House, because every through passenger to and from Brisbane will benefit by the establishment in the city and Valley of stations, which will be alike creditable to the Government and to the colony ; and if the work is delayed much longer it must necessarily cost a great deal more money than it will at the present time. But, apart from the question of revenue from traffic meeting the interest on the cost of construction, I feel bound to say that, after carefully examining the route proposed, it is one which will interfere with no existing interest. It does not interfere with any business from one end to the other, and the work can be most expeditiously and

cheaply carried out at the present juncture. The price of steel rails—and there will be a number of them required—is only one-third now what it may be six months hence. I can quote from the *European Mail* to show that steel rails are being sold now at 70s. per ton f.o.b.; and when we consider the local circumstances with regard to the proposed line, and the market at home with respect to steel rails, the large population that will be benefited by the construction of this line; and when we also consider that Brisbane will be enormously benefited by it, that there will be a great saving of time to the business men who are building up the place, who are helping in its government, and establishing its reputation by developing its commercial enterprise; when we further consider the depth of water in our river, that enables vessels like the “Jumna” to reach our wharves; and when we consider that in three years hence we shall be able to report to the commercial men of the world that there is exactly the same depth of water in our river that they have in Sydney Harbour: we should be, I think, unworthy to be regarded as men of enterprise if we hesitated to make the termini of the railways here a credit alike to the metropolis and the country. I sincerely hope that this matter will commend itself to the favourable consideration of the House. If it be passed—and I believe it will, as the project is so sound that it will stand the closest examination upon its merits—I believe the Government will not be doing their duty if they do not most expeditiously carry out the work. The line should not dawdle for a long period of years in the manner that some of the railway projects of this country have been crawling along during the past eight or ten years. There is no reason why we should not alter our public works policy in respect to railways, and do so with advantage to the country. I will read to hon. members a paragraph from the *European Mail* of the 8th October last, with reference to the Panama Canal. At page 19 of that journal it states:—

“During the last few months the work on the canal has been much simplified by giving it to five well-known firms of contractors, whereas before there were not far from thirty in all. These five syndicates report directly to the administration of the canal company, making arrangements with the smaller contractors for work they may subcontract to them. This has involved some complications in relation to past agreements, but they are being straightened out so that all shall go smoothly in the future.”

Now, I wish hon. gentlemen to note what follows:—

“It is the interest of the contractors to work as fast as possible, for they are paid so much a cubic metre for soil excavated or dredged. It is for the advantage of the canal company to have the canal completed and open as soon as possible, as this means a saving of interest on the stock and bonds.”

I know that many members here, as well as elsewhere, will agree with me when I say that we ought to carry out our railways with much more speed than we have been doing. At the present moment in America there are 6,000 miles of railway under construction, and something like 15,000 miles more are projected, half of which will be under construction in two years and a-half. I will just read another extract from the *European Mail*. I happened to take up the paper to-day, and it seemed to me that the paragraph I am about to read was suitable to our circumstances. At page 29 it refers to the splendid steamships that are now being constructed instead of the old ones. We wish to have speed on our railways, and also to establish those necessary adjuncts to railways—namely, fairly

commodious and handsome railway stations in the centre of the city. The quotation from the *European Mail* is as follows:—

“The departure of the ‘Orizaba’ with her full complement of passengers suggests a very important question for the consideration of all ocean steam shipping companies, and one which, if report be true, has already been solved by the directors of the P. and O. Company. It is reported that seven new steamers of 7,000 tons each, and capable of doing the journey to Australia in thirty-five days, are to be immediately built by this company for the colonial trade. The fact is, directors are beginning to find out that it is absolutely impossible to get a profit out of slow steamers, which originally cost vast sums of money to build, and are engined, decorated, and arranged without regard to economy; and, as the *Daily Telegraph* points out in a leading article on the steam shipping trade, it would be far wiser for their owners to sell such ships for old iron, and in their stead to build others which can be remuneratively worked, even at the present low rates of freight. Better, far better, would it be for all concerned in shipping if the inevitable were accepted, and the impossibility of a return to former high rates, resulting in large dividends, were steadily recognised. Instead of waiting until the present depression which weighs down every great interest and every branch of commerce, has passed away, why cannot the controllers of capital take advantage of the cheapness of building materials and of labour, and of the improvements of science, whereby a saving in propulsion is secured, so as to build steamers of foreign design, which, under proper management, can be made to pay, even at the low rates of freight now ruling? There is no country in the world which can compete with the United Kingdom in possession of these advantages. When we read that steel rails of the best quality, which formerly cost £17 per ton, are now being shipped at £13 10s. per ton, it is evident that steel is being produced, or at any rate can be procured, at a price which must enable ships to be built and equipped for sums which would seem incredibly small in the eyes of such men as Brunel and Scott Russell, who presided over the birth of that costly experiment, the ‘Great Eastern.’”

The gist of that extract is this—that it contains the hint of a far-seeing man, who counsels the people of the old country to take advantage of the labour market, and the low price of steel, to push on certain works. In the work we are now contemplating steel will be largely used in connection with the bridgework; and there might be a telegram to-morrow which would upset the labour market, or cause the price of steel to jump to £10 or £12. It is well I should point out the advantages of buying that steel at a cheaper price for the bridges of the proposed line. I will now refer to the dissent of one of the members of the select committee. It will be found on page 4 of the report, the second paragraph of which reads as follows:—

“The existing line of railway is sufficient for the present traffic, and, if a second line of rails be added, will be adequate to meet all the probable traffic of the Northern line; and that the cost of the additional rail would not be one-twelfth of the proposed Valley line of railway.”

I thought at the time I first read this that there might perhaps be some of the material which would afford a ground of objection to the proposed scheme. But after reading over the evidence carefully again, notwithstanding that I had heard it all, how any man can say that the present railway is sufficient is beyond my comprehension. We had it from Mr. Thallon and Mr. Curnow that the existing line is not sufficient for the present traffic. They say that the extension of buildings has been deferred, to the great inconvenience of the existing traffic, because of the scheme being in abeyance. The timber and produce which will come by the North Coast Railway will more than match all the produce that comes from the Darling Downs district, including the productions of Laidley, Gatton, and that quarter. Still there would be an inconvenience, and one which would produce a greater degree of congestion than subsists at the Roma-street station at present. The clause declares that there will be an increased traffic.



I must object to the third paragraph, because there is nothing in the evidence to justify the assertion. The Hon. Mr. Gregory says:—

"The Valley railway would not materially facilitate the passenger traffic from or to stations beyond the suburban limits of Brisbane, its principal object being to recover to the railway the suburban passenger traffic which has been diverted to the tramways in consequence of the tram-cars taking up and setting down passengers along the whole route, and thus being better suited to the requirements of the public than a railway with stations three-quarters of a mile apart."

I differ from that. I hold that this scheme is not for that purpose. The Government have no idea of that kind. It is simply according to what Mr. Thallon said, that some of the passengers who get out at the Exhibition, or perhaps start from the Albion, may take the railway. There is plenty of work for the tramways and omnibuses as well as for the railway, and this railway is not proposed for the purpose of recovering the traffic belonging to the tram-cars. Then again, in paragraph 4, Mr. Gregory states that the interest charged will be £15,000 per annum. Mr. Stanley's highest estimate for this line is £260,000, which at 4 per cent. would be £10,400; therefore Mr. Gregory is over £4,000 out in his statement. He says there is ample room at the Roma-street station for the erection of buildings more than sufficient for any probable increase of traffic for many years. That there is ample space there can be no question, but that is not the point. We have plenty of places in Victoria Park, one part of which is nearer than Roma street. The question is whether in view of the mistakes made by Melbourne and Sydney we should not take advantage of the suitable time, in view of the phase of the question as to the enhanced price of material and the price of property, in order to establish what Sydney and Melbourne would give a great deal to have done. If a delay takes place it will not be creditable to those who are the cause of such delay. Now is the time when such a work will be productive of the best results to the population of the city of Brisbane and the southern part of the colony, as well as giving the economy and safety to which I have before alluded. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying, as a business man, that this is one of the best railways ever put before the Parliament of Queensland. I believe that view is supported by the evidence of those who are disinterested in every particular; and believing it to be all that, I say I have no hesitation in asking you to give it your best consideration, and heartily contend that it is a work that will do the country an immense good.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—The importance of the question before us is such that I do not feel justified in adopting the course taken by the Postmaster-General in rambling all over Australia, and, in fact, all over the world, to try and bring forward something in support of the railway. My intention is to confine my remarks to the practical question really before us—that is, is it desirable to construct this railway for the amount set down as the probable cost, and when constructed will it afford the accommodation and benefit to the country which the hon. the mover of the motion claims it will? At the same time I feel that it is a subject not to be dismissed with a few cursory observations, and with that object in view, while I have no intention of detaining the House beyond a very few minutes, I will state a few facts to controvert some of the statements of the Postmaster-General. My intention is to propose a motion which will afford every hon. gentleman in the House, who possibly may not have had the time and opportunity that the hon. gentleman himself or possibly I have had, of considering the question at their convenience.

My intention is, after a few observations, to move that the House go into Committee of the Whole, with a view to considering the question. As for adopting the report merely upon a set speech from each hon. member, I look upon that as being most unsuitable. It would necessitate, in the first instance, each one of us remaining on our legs until we had exhausted the subject, and which would prevent the measure being passed to-night. We could come to no decision in anything like a reasonable time. The few points to which I shall refer before making the motion I shadowed forth are comprised in the following observations: First of all the cost of the line is to be a quarter of a million. The hon. the Postmaster-General tried to show that that quarter of a million ought to be considerably reduced, because, if the line were not constructed, they must expend a large sum upon the present station. I need not stop to go into the fallacy of that, because there are other hon. gentlemen who are quite as capable as I am of exposing it. Taking the hon. gentleman's statements as they come, the next question referred to is that of compensation. He very properly warns the public that they are not going to get £86,000, or anything like it, for compensation; and they might take warning by that and see whether the game is worth the candle. The hon. gentleman totally omitted to point out that, by duplicating the present line from Roma street to the Racecourse Junction, the whole objection he raised as to the risk of crowded traffic, would be done away with. Then the hon. gentleman goes a step further and endeavours to show that there is a probable traffic of about a million people who are brought into the city and who are returned. We cannot get the line right into the city at the very best; it will only be fifty or sixty chains, say three-quarters of a mile, and passengers would only be delivered that much nearer than otherwise. It can be shown that the difference would not amount to that, and that thousands and thousands of passengers would go by the tramway just the same; therefore there is a rank fallacy in that statement. What I want to draw the attention of the House to more particularly is, that the object the Postmaster-General lays such great stress upon—that of bringing passengers nearer to the city—as being such a great boon, can be met by expending a sum of about £40,000. Hon. members expected the Fortitude Valley line would enable passengers from Gympie, Rockhampton, Emerald, and the far West and the Gulf country, to come direct to Brisbane; and that passengers from Europe, and heaven knows where, would land on the north coast of Australia. We are to go to all this expense to bring them in two or three minutes earlier than if they come by the present line. So that that sends the whole of his arguments to the winds. Then he objects to the point being raised that it would interfere with the tramways. Well, he may object to it inasmuch as it would not interfere, and I believe that the railway will not touch the tramways, or affect them to any great extent, and that he will get no less traffic on account of the tramways. But who will want to go through three-quarters of a mile of tunnel to be put down two stations between Roma street and Mayne, instead of getting into a tram-car quietly and stepping out where they want to! So that that point will not bear investigation. I only have one or two more observations to make before concluding. The Postmaster-General makes some reference to "security." I do not know what security the passengers are to get by coming down the Valley. There will be great security in going through a long smoky tunnel I am sure, and it will be smoky, with trains running through it every twenty minutes. Judging from the

railway tunnels I have seen at home, they appreciate the necessity for ventilation there; but ventilation works are expensive, and cannot be adopted here to any extent. Then he speaks of the want of accommodation that exists in Brisbane. I can tell him, and I am quite sure there are other hon. members who can endorse my statement, that there is no city in Australia that is so well provided with railway accommodation at the present moment as Brisbane. I have been in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide for a sufficient time to enable me to study the railway systems. I have used the railways there freely, and I say that none of those towns are so well provided with railway accommodation as Brisbane is with the Southern and Western Railway and the South Brisbane line. Therefore it was a farce to argue in that way. The argument was not to the point, because the line could prove no appreciable benefit at all to the city. Then he laid some stress on the profit that would result from the large number of passengers who would travel on this line. Now, the fact is that I do not believe that for twelve months 500 passengers would take advantage of the line; consequently that is another fallacy, because, after all, the whole question resolves itself into the payment made for being carried less than a mile. There are a number of points which I could argue to show that the line in no sense can be considered of advantage to the city, and if carried out at all should be constructed so as to give nearer access to the city and the wharves. But I will not detain the House longer. If the motion is put to the House in the form now proposed by the Postmaster-General, it will prevent hon. gentlemen who favour the view of carrying out a part of the line, and not the whole of it, from discussing the question properly. It will prevent them from discussing both sides of the question, and, as I said before, would prolong the debate to a considerable extent, and in many respects very uselessly. The amendment which I am about to propose will have the advantage that it will, if carried, enable hon. gentlemen, who may not yet see the different points involved at the moment either for or against the motion, to weigh both sides well. It is for the benefit of the whole House that I make the motion, and I therefore now move that all the words after the word "that" be omitted with a view of inserting the following—"this House does now resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the policy and probable cost of the proposed extension from the Brisbane terminal station through Fortitude Valley to Mayne and the Sandgate Railway."

The Hon. W. F. TAYLOR said: Hon. gentlemen.—The amendment just moved by the Hon. Mr. Gregory is certainly somewhat surprising, I think, to most members of this House, and it is not very complimentary to the members of the select committee who sat a good many hours endeavouring to elicit evidence as to whether this line should be recommended to this Council or not. As one member of that select committee, I think the Hon. Mr. Gregory might have waited a little while, at all events, to hear what further opinions members of that committee might have to add to those already expressed in the report which is now before the House. Any objection that could have been taken to the report of the select committee has, I think, been fully taken by the Hon. A. C. Gregory, who was a member of that committee; and if those objections are gone into with anything like an unbiased mind, and with the desire to arrive at the truth of this matter—whether this railway should be constructed or not, whether it is likely to facilitate the traffic of the railway systems into this city, and help passengers to travel easily between the centre of the city

and various points along the lines which will converge into this city—then I think we shall have no difficulty in putting all those objections on one side, and going straight at the question whether this line shall be constructed, and if constructed whether it will answer the purpose intended.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY: Take the whole or none!

The Hon. W. F. TAYLOR: The hon. the Postmaster-General has gone into the question, and I think proved very conclusively that the line must sooner or later be constructed. As the city goes on increasing in size and population, it will be absolutely necessary that some such system as the one proposed shall be adopted. The evidence has shown us that the existing facilities at Roma street are quite inadequate for even present requirements. The traffic manager states most distinctly that applications for extended accommodation have been held in abeyance pending the decision of the question we are now considering; and, in addition to that, applications for a goods station and increased passenger facilities at the Exhibition station have been held in abeyance. We have seen also by the evidence of the Chief Engineer, Mr. Stanley, that to meet present requirements, putting aside altogether the increased traffic that will come when the North Coast railway system is completed, the duplication of the line from Mayne to Roma street will be absolutely necessary. The question then arises, how much will these necessary additions cost, and for what length of time will they be sufficient to meet the requirements of the case? The hon. the Postmaster-General has estimated in round numbers that in order to meet the requirements which I have mentioned it would be necessary to expend a sum of £100,000—duplicating the line from Mayne, increasing the accommodation at Roma street, making a bridge over the Bowen Bridge road, and other necessary works. But I will not go quite so far as that; I will confine myself strictly to the figures furnished by the Chief Engineer and the Commissioner for Railways. Mr. Stanley states that the cost of duplicating the line from Mayne to Roma street will be from £25,000 to £30,000; Mr. Curnow states that the cost of increased accommodation at Roma street, to meet the requirements in the next five years, will be £15,000, and for a further period of five years a further sum of £10,000; and in addition to this it will be necessary to construct a bridge over the Bowen Bridge road at the Exhibition, at a cost of about £11,000. Now, this latter work hon. members who have occasion to go along that road will consider a very necessary one at the present time, even when the traffic is not anything like what it may be expected to be during the next twelve months or two years, when the number of trains running along that line will probably be doubled. I have occasion to cross that line frequently on my business to the hospital, and nearly every time I lose about ten minutes through being blocked by the gates being shut. They are ballasting the line now, or something of the sort, and the gates are nearly always shut; consequently we get a crowd of vehicles collected together, some of them not of a very nice description—I suppose hon. members will understand what I refer to—and there we have to wait patiently, sometimes with fractious horses, until the gates are opened. On one occasion I saw a very serious accident there. A young horse took fright and ran against the gates, knocking the trap to pieces and nearly killing the driver. In any case it will be necessary to construct this bridge, and the sooner the better for all persons who are obliged to travel on that road. We find, then, that

an expenditure of about £66,000 will be absolutely necessary in the next year or two to meet the increasing requirements of the traffic; and this £66,000 does not represent the amount which will be required in the distant future; it is simply the amount that will be necessary during the next year. What amount will be required in the remote future—I mean by that the next seven or eight years—we cannot tell, although Mr. Curnow has stated that probably an additional sum of £10,000 will be necessary. So that if we take the sum of £66,000 as the cost of necessary works on the present line, and take the estimate of Mr. Stanley of the cost of the proposed line, including resump-tions, at £264,000, the sum actually required to meet, even in an imperfect manner, the present requirements, would be one-fourth of the sum required to make a perfect line connecting the Southern and Western Railway and the North Coast railway systems, and affording every facility for working the trains on those lines, and giving the people who reside in the suburbs an opportunity of getting to the heart of the city by rail instead of having to get out of the train at the Exhibition or at Roma street. I have no doubt that Mr. Stanley's estimate is correct, though one gentleman told me last night that the line would cost a million of money. On engineering matters, as on medical matters, we often find that those people who know least give the most dogmatical opinions. Probably some hon. gentleman will say that the line will cost half-a-million; but I should like to know on what data. We have the opinion of a professional expert, who has calculated the cost of every inch of the work, and his opinion is that the sum of £174,124 will be the cost of construction; and we have further the evidence of another gentleman, who knows the value of property, that £86,000 will cover the cost of the land to be resumed. Against these facts, of what value are a number of opinions? I might say that Mr. Stanley's estimate is beyond the mark—that the line will not cost £50,000—and if I do so I shall have as good data as those who say it will cost £500,000. So that in dealing with the subject, we must take the facts laid before us, and from them I think the conclusion to be drawn is that for about four times the amount it will cost to afford proper facilities for the traffic to and from Roma street a perfect system of communication can be established between the North Coast line and the Southern and Western Railway systems. If this proposed railway was going to be a dead loss, one could understand very serious opposition to its construction; but, far from its being so, it has been shown conclusively that this railway will actually pay the interest on the outlay, and also working expenses; and I am prepared to say that it can be worked at an actual profit in the course of a few years. The Postmaster-General showed conclusively that even with the present number of passengers booked at the Roma-street station—about half-a-million per annum—calculating this number at 4d. per head, which is not a very large amount, it will give over £8,300, which will very nearly meet the interest on the money required for construction. But I think the Postmaster-General was very modest in forming this estimate, because I have it on reliable authority that we may expect a larger number of passengers in the immediate future. Mr. Curnow's estimate was 500,000, and in a couple of years it will be 624,000, at 4d. per head or 2d. per mile; and that will give £10,400. The traffic manager states that the number booked at Roma street is 500,000 per annum, and the effect of the extension to the city will, in his opinion, extend the passenger traffic enormously beyond the present rates, so that after the line is completed we may with

safety estimate the traffic at quite 1,000,000 instead of 500,000. In company with other members I went over the proposed line, and I must say that it appears to me to be planned with the greatest possible care, both as to economy and the most feasible way to take the railway, at the same time having due regard to its efficiency. The streets will be interfered with in no way. Albert street, the first that will be touched, will be crossed by a steel bridge the full width of the street. The railway then proceeds by cutting. Turbot street will be crossed by a bridge, Edward street in a similar way, and the railway will then reach the proposed site of the central station in Ann street. From this it will be continued by means of a tunnel to Warren street, and so on to its junction with the North Coast railway at Mayne. The question may be asked: Suppose the line is constructed, what will be done with the present line? We have it in evidence that the present line will be very useful indeed in conveying heavy traffic between the North Coast line and Roma street, and in course of time it will form a sort of circular suburban line, and in that way contribute very materially to the settlement of the parts in its immediate neighbourhood. Mr. Stanley says:—

“I consider that, looking to the future development of the traffic, it is a most essential part of the railway system. I do not consider that the Southern and Western and the North Coast systems will be complete without it.”

That is the opinion of the Chief Engineer, a gentleman whose ability in his profession is undoubted, and a gentleman who cannot possibly have the slightest interest in saying what he does not believe and what he knows is not the fact. That statement alone is quite sufficient to convince me, were other arguments not forthcoming, that this line is a most desirable and essential one. He further says:—

“I consider that the present line will be quite inadequate to the requirements of the traffic; and that traffic, if carried on by it, can only be so at considerable inconvenience and loss of time.”

That must be the opinion of anyone who takes the trouble to think the matter out. The North Coast trade will be run to Roma street into a sort of siding, and shifted about in all directions. The loss of time must be very considerable, and the confusion, danger, and obstruction to traffic likely to arise will be very great indeed. Then we have it stated as an actual fact, that by increasing the facilities to passengers we shall increase the number of passengers. Mr. Stanley says:—

“It is a well-known fact that the greater the facilities given to passengers travelling by railway, the larger the traffic becomes. In fact, increase of facilities for travelling induces traffic.”

Mr. Stanley also says, speaking of the cost of the line, that although it will be a costly work, yet the advantages to be derived from it will more than counterbalance the outlay. Considering that the work involves bringing the railway into the heart of the city, I do not think it a very costly scheme. But the longer the work is delayed the more costly it will become. That must be the opinion of everyone who thinks the matter over for a moment. We all know how enormously the value of land in Brisbane has increased during the last few years, and we can easily form an estimate of what its value will be in the near future. The present is a most opportune time for the construction of the railway on account of the slight depreciation that has lately taken place in the value of land. We have every reason to believe that that depreciation will be only temporary, and that in a year or two at the outside that depreciation will

not only have disappeared, but the value of land will have increased at least 50 per cent. The longer the scheme is delayed—come it must, there can be no doubt whatever about that—the more expensive it will be. That is the opinion of a gentleman whose experience in these matters is almost unrivalled. But I will not occupy your time, hon. gentlemen, in going through all the evidence in connection with this important subject, and it is quite unnecessary for me to endeavour to alter opinions that are already formed; but I am certain that any hon. gentleman with an unbiased mind, who looks through this evidence, must come to the conclusion that the proposed railway is not only very essential and necessary for the reasons stated, but that it will in reality be a source of profit to the colony.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I think it will be convenient at this stage that we should take a division on the amendment now before the House. We can then proceed with the discussion.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: I must call the attention of the House to the fact that the hon. gentleman who spoke last did not confine himself to the amendment before the House. I hope that hon. gentlemen who follow him will do so.

The Hon. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I am glad to find, in what I was just about to say, that I am supported by the opinion of the Presiding Chairman. What I was going to say was that I regret exceedingly that as we have another question before the House than the one to which the Hon. Dr. Taylor addressed himself I am unable to answer him. But when the proper time comes I shall point out, from the very basis on which he grounded the whole of his argument, how utterly fallacious his argument is, and that it is without foundation. With regard to the question now really before the House—namely, that we should resolve ourselves into a Committee of the Whole—it will, if carried, have the effect of preventing long set speeches, and we can apply ourselves to the discussion of each item separately, and thereby both trouble and inconvenience will be saved to hon. members on both sides.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said: Hon. gentlemen,—Before the amendment is put, I should like to offer some reasons for adopting the course proposed by the Hon. Mr. Gregory. The figures and estimates which have been put before the House this evening for the first time by the hon. the Postmaster-General are figures and estimates which no doubt have considerable bearing on the question before us, and which may require a considerable amount of investigation. By the strict rules of debate which are laid down when the House is not in committee, we are to a great extent precluded from asking for further information on those figures and estimates. The Postmaster-General, yesterday, in asking for an adjournment of the House till 7 o'clock this evening, stated that his object was to have time to see returns which were to be supplied by the Railway Department, and which he expected to receive yesterday. I think it is only fair that hon. members should each have an opportunity of having those returns, not merely in the manner in which they were given by the Postmaster-General, but in such a way that we may be able to consider them carefully, and to obtain such details as may be required to elucidate the very good speech which the hon. gentleman made this evening.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I did not get the returns I expected.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: If the hon. gentleman has not got the returns he expected to

obtain, and which he considered necessary for the purpose of speaking fully and properly upon this motion, then it appears to me that the House is asked to come to a resolution upon defective information. The Postmaster-General considered it necessary to ask for an adjournment to enable him to look over information which he expected to receive, and he now says he has not received it.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: He never expected it.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Possibly he never expected, but I give the hon. gentleman credit for hoping to receive the information he told the House he was expecting to get, and if he has not received it it has arisen from one or two things—either the policy of this railway has not received that full attention which it ought to have, or else the returns were not favourable to the object which the hon. gentleman was prepared to advocate.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is not speaking to the amendment.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: I trust I am not going beyond the amendment. I am speaking of the desirability of going into committee on this matter, because in committee we will be better able to ascertain the facts from the Postmaster-General than we can in an ordinary debate in the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: This is a question of policy and cost.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: If the hon. gentleman wanted information on the policy and cost of this line for his own guidance it shows either that he was not satisfied that the policy and cost had been sufficiently explained, or that he felt he should have some further information to induce hon. members to support this scheme. I therefore think that the discussion of the question in committee will be very much more satisfactory than debating under the rules of procedure which apply to discussions in the House. The hon. gentleman has touched in his speech upon a great many matters, and if every member wished to speak on each point it would require some days to get the resolution through the House. I therefore hope the hon. gentleman will consent to the amendment proposed by the Hon. F. T. Gregory.

The Hon. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—Before going into committee, and without entering into either the merits or demerits of this question, I would ask you whether this House is justified in passing a resolution involving so large an expenditure of money, when the resolution only passed the other House on the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees; and whether in the exercise of our constitutional right we ought not to throw out the resolution altogether, and give the other Chamber time for further consideration? I do not think there could be a better opportunity for exercising that right, or one in which we would be more justified in resorting to such a step.

The Hon. W. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—I am surprised—I am more than surprised—that the Postmaster-General does not consent to the amendment without further discussion. If he gave his consent there would be no necessity for delaying the House by a discussion on the question whether we should go into committee or not. It is to that point I am now addressing myself. The mere fact that the Postmaster-General resists the amendment shows a desire on his part to stifle this discussion. The hon. gentleman knows that there is no such convenient way of discussing any subject as in committee. None of us desires to make a long speech or to listen to long speeches, but I defy any gentleman to

immediately answer the specious platitudes that have fallen from the Postmaster-General. I will give an illustration of the arguments of the hon. gentleman. He instanced the wonderful construction of railways in America to show that we are very far behind that country, and said that there are 6,000 miles of railway now in construction in America. But if we had 80 miles under construction, we would have relatively the same mileage as America with 6,000 miles. We have, however, 420 miles under construction, which is five and a-half times the length of line under construction in America.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Question!

The Hon. W. FORREST: I am addressing myself to the question.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: You are not discussing the question.

The Hon. W. FORREST: I am addressing myself to the question as to whether it is advisable to go into committee on the resolution submitted to the House. I think I have not gone very far from it, and I ask the hon. gentleman how he can reconcile it with his conscience to attempt to stifle this discussion, and not allow hon. members an opportunity of taking into consideration the present state of the revenue in connection with the proposal before the House? I will show, either when we go into committee or in addressing myself to the general question, that the general revenue, but more particularly the railway revenue, is falling off to an alarming extent; and here we are asked to commit ourselves to an enormous expenditure, on meagre information and more meagre discussion, because the hon. gentleman will not consent to the discussion taking place in that way which is the most convenient. I hope the hon. gentleman will not further oppose the amendment. It will not in any way facilitate our work if it is rejected. There are hundreds of other ways in which the matter can be dealt with. We can move the adjournment of the House and do any number of things. I have no desire whatever to delay the debate for one moment. As far as I am concerned I have not the slightest desire to obstruct. I simply wish to elicit information on the proposed railway in the best way it can be obtained. If we cannot get by legitimate means—which is, by going into committee—an opportunity of eliciting information, we will have to try some other means.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER said: Hon. gentlemen,—I am one of the oldest members of this Council, and I have seen much stonewalling in the old times; but it never led to any good results, and I hope my hon. friend, Mr. W. Forrest, does not intend to begin.

The Hon. W. FORREST: I have not the slightest desire to do so.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER: I have very much reason to regret—

The Hon. W. FORREST: I rise to a point of order. I have stated that I have no intention whatever of delaying by stonewalling. The hon. gentleman, notwithstanding my denial, bases his argument upon the fact of my stonewalling.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER: Hon. gentlemen must all admit that the hon. gentleman held out threats to use all means of delaying the discussion. I suppose that means stonewalling. The hon. gentleman who has just sat down made out an excellent case for the committee, but the Postmaster-General said only that if we adjourned the House for a few hours longer he would be able to give all the information required. I did not make up my mind which way to vote upon the question until to-night. The Postmaster-General has certainly

endeavoured to do his best. It is proposed that we should go into committee upon the motion, but we have had a select committee already. I would not like it to be said that I endeavoured to shorten the discussion.

The Hon. F. T. BRETNALL said: Hon. gentlemen,—It is a long time since I have seen a better illustration of the well-known old proverb about a man "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel" than we have had to-night. Already during the session this Council has passed railways almost without discussion. I myself was sat upon last night because I raised some objection to a railway being passed *pro forma*—a railway that will cost every penny as much money as this railway will. This Council would have passed that railway without the slightest discussion, if I had not objected to a report coming up without any evidence, and now we are asked to go into committee—for what purpose? To turn over again and again—as often as it may suit hon. gentlemen—the consideration of a railway which is going to cost about a quarter of a million of money, and we are going into committee because the revenue has fallen. Hon. gentlemen want to show us that we cannot afford to spend this money; but we could afford to spend as much money on a railway in another direction without any discussion whatever, because it would go into the pastoral country of the West.

The Hon. W. G. POWER: It was 66 miles in length.

The Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: Yet we cannot afford to make a railway amongst thousands of human beings. I repeat I have not seen for a long time a better illustration of sensible men straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel than is exhibited to-night. I am going to take my spectacles off in order to look into the motive of this amendment. I can see to read plain print with my spectacles; but not without, but I believe that without them I can see through the motive of this amendment. What is the motive of it? The Hon. W. Forrest himself has let it out; aye, the Hon. Mr. Thynne let it out before him. It is true that no word was said by the Hon. Mr. Thynne about stonewalling. It is said that more information is wanted. But if we go into committee what additional information can be given? Is it to be proposed that we call the Engineer-in-Chief to the bar of the House and examine him? The examination has taken place already in the select committee, and hon. gentlemen have all the evidence in their hands at the present moment, and they will get no better evidence if they sit for a week upon the consideration of this question. I do not believe hon. gentlemen will get a scintilla of evidence more than they have now. Certainly they will not get a scintilla which will better help them to come to a conclusion than the evidence now before them. I think we can see the object of this motion plainly, even with dim eyes, without the assistance of glasses. The object is to turn the subject over and over, and give hon. gentlemen who want to talk an opportunity of doing so, *ad infinitum*, in committee, as they cannot do in the whole House. I hope, having given this indication of what my opinion is of the amendment, we shall divide upon the question, and show that we do not intend to be bamboozled in this matter.

The Hon. A. HERON WILSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—It is not my intention to allow this question to go to a division without stating what I think about the matter. I entirely agree with the remarks of the hon. gentleman who has just sat down, but this is an important question to the colony, and the hon. the Postmaster-General

has foreshadowed that it is the intention to make this a charge to the North Coast Railway; in fact, a charge to the whole railway system of the colony.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Not at all.

The HON. A. HERON WILSON: He has foreshadowed that; consequently I think that the discussion should in no way be suppressed. There are many hon. gentlemen in this House who, like myself, cannot speak at length on a subject; but, although a member may not be gifted with language, he may see little points now and again which would bear materially on the subject; and I believe that, if the Hon. the Postmaster-General would allow this matter to go into committee he would not only suppress long speeches, but enable members of this House to express their opinions briefly, and endeavour to do the best they can for the colony at large. I hope the hon. gentleman will consent to go into committee without division; and if he does so, I am sure that every hon. gentleman in this House will do his best to bring the matter in question to an issue, and to prove whether this proposal is likely to be for the benefit of the colony or not.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put, and the House divided:—

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The Hons. F. T. Gregory, A. C. Gregory, A. H. Wilson, J. Taylor, A. J. Thynne, J. C. Smyth, W. Aplin, G. King, W. Forrest, W. G. Power, W. F. Lambert, and F. H. Hart.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I regret very much that in consequence of the division that has just taken place, it devolves upon me to make a much longer dissertation upon the subject than most likely would have been necessary had we gone into committee; therefore hon. gentlemen will have no cause for complaint if I address them at some length. In the first place, the hon. the Postmaster-General has told us that they are going to commit an error in order to get capital into the colony. I think that was a magnificent statement to start off with, and if we are to understand that we may do evil when we think good may come of it, I think we need not look so closely into the argument as we otherwise should. In the next place, we are told that there will be a million and a-half of passengers along this line, and that they will pay 2d. a piece, but that the part of the line beyond which they will travel is to supply a portion of the cost of this line. That is quite a new system. We are to tax the Maryborough, Gympie, Bundaberg, and Western lines, and each of them is to have a special contribution levied upon it in order to pay for this railway. The Postmaster-General states that there are a million and a-half of passengers on the line, and, of course, the hon. gentleman made the estimate as high as he possibly could, but even then he would find a considerable deficiency after paying the interest upon the construction of the line, and where then is the cost of working and maintenance to come from? That will certainly be a great loss to the country. The amount of traffic at all likely to go to the Valley station is most insignificant—a few hundred pounds, and such as will hardly pay for sweeping out the various stations on the line. Again, even accepting the estimate of the Postmaster-General as to the

number of inhabitants of the Valley, and the number of passengers likely to go along the line, it will follow that every man, woman, and child in the whole of the Valley will have to travel on the railway every day in the year, besides double the number of times on holidays, to make anything like an adequate return. That is quite a new way of estimating the probable traffic along a railway, and I can only say that in other places the railway departments would be highly delighted could they depend upon even one-tenth of such an estimate.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I did not take the population of the Valley into consideration at all.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: The hon. gentleman said we would get a million passengers from the Valley and about half-a-million from the district round about. The statement the hon. the Postmaster-General has last made is borne out, however, by the evidence, which shows that we can only look to the suburban passenger traffic for any return from the line.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I did not take the Valley population into account.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: The hon. gentleman said there would be a million of passengers on the Valley line, besides 500,000 on the North Coast line, and that all those passengers would travel on the Valley line, and I have pointed out that even if they did the traffic would not pay the interest on the cost of the line.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: You made a mistake with respect to the interest.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that, although we nominally pay 4 per cent. on our debentures, when the little arrangements are made with regard to paying the loss from debentures and paying the interest out of the loan itself, and by selling the debentures with the interest added from a back period, say six or twelve months back from the time they are sold with interest accruing, though they can make it appear on paper that they sell them nearly at par, we know for a fact they are sold at about 5 per cent. discount. Indeed, the whole question is one that will not bear looking at. However, this is not the place to discuss that question, and it is sufficient to mention that the interest we are paying is fully 5 per cent. Then the Postmaster-General says we ought to charge the cost of the line to the Valley to every line in any way connected with it, and that all should bear the expenses of the Valley line.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I gave that as my hypothesis.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: I need only refer to some of the questions put in the evidence given to show what may be said with regard to the hypothetical view of the subject. There are plenty of questions something like this: "If the line is extended to Gladstone or to Gayndah, and if the line is completed to here and to there, and all these lines have a large amount of traffic and a large number of passengers, and all those passengers are coming down to Brisbane, will that increase the traffic over the Valley line, and at Brisbane?" And the natural answer to such a question is "Yes." That is the hypothetical argument used, and I must, I suppose, consider the whole of the Postmaster-General's speech as hypothetical. The Hon. Dr. Taylor, in his speech—which was unfortunately out of order—objected to our going into committee on this railway, on the ground that it would be discourteous to the select committee; but when the Postmaster-General withdrew the

notice of motion he gave last night for the adoption of the report of a select committee, he did exactly the same thing, and took the question over the heads of the select committee. So that the hon. gentleman's objection cuts both ways. Then the Hon. Dr. Taylor made a serious error with reference to his estimate of the duplication of the line, which he said would cost from £25,000 to £30,000; but I find, on reference to the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief, that it would cost £25,000 to £30,000 to duplicate the line from the Roma street station to the Racecourse Junction. And the result would be, as I stated in my dissent to the report of the select committee, to bring it to about one-twenty-fourth of the cost of the Valley line. Then we have it in the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief, the traffic manager, and the Commissioner for Railways, that the Valley line will in no way supersede the continued use of the present line, so that we would have a double line through the Valley and a single line through Victoria Park. But the traffic manager also says that the present line is sufficient for the present traffic, and, if duplicated, sufficient for any amount of traffic likely to go through for many years. Then the Engineer-in-Chief is asked whether the public safety would be endangered by not adopting the Valley line, and he says it would not make any difference, and that the public would be just as safe with the existing line as they would be with the Valley line. Then, in the estimate of compensation, the value of lands to be taken does not apply to lands under which tunnels will run. It is not estimated that any compensation will be paid for lands undermined by tunnels. But it is tolerably certain that the owners of the land will demand, and that they will get compensation to a very considerable amount. As regards the cost of the tunnels—800 yards, at £88 per yard—that comes to something about £70,000; and there is no provision for ventilation. We know perfectly well what it is to go through the Victoria Tunnel, and that is a short one. Those in the rear carriages are pretty well smoked, and when trains run through every ten minutes from each end it will not be bearable in this hot weather; and in summer time those individuals who went in with white clothing would have to put a label on themselves in order that it might be known that they were not aborigines when they came out. Ventilation will be found to be indispensable, and will be a very costly item. The Engineer-in-Chief naturally is asked whether he approves of such a line. Certainly the Engineer-in-Chief would, under those circumstances. He says it is not his business to make any inquiry as to whether the line is going to pay or not. That is out of his department. The larger the work—the more money spent on it—the more he can add to the list of works which he has carried out; and, of course, it will redound to his credit as engineer that he has carried out an enormous and expensive work. But as the owners of that work, I think the public will not be at all pleased to have the money spent in that way. Still we can understand why the Engineer-in-Chief takes credit in the work. He says he can carry it out, and it will be a great credit to himself when done. I think it would be no credit, but a discredit to us for making it. In another part of the evidence he says there is not room for a station at Turbot street, but he afterwards admits that that was a mistake, and that there is plenty of room. In fact, he states that he quite misunderstood the question, and that he understood the question to be, whether there was room to have a passenger station just where the line turns, at the back of the market, to go across Albert street. He says there is room, but that his objection to that is, that

it will not be able to go on to the big tunnel. Now, I know the Engineer-in-Chief has been anxious to carry the line on, to show that so far as an engineering question is concerned it is quite practicable. But the matter is nothing new. It has been well considered. Before the agitation for this line was ever commenced—before any person took it in hand to consider it—I had drawn plans and taken the gradients from close to Ipswich down to Queen street, through the Valley and down to the Bulimba reach. I have therefore a pretty good knowledge as to what would be practicable and what not, in connection with the question of levels. It has been clearly shown by the traffic manager and by the Commissioner for Railways that no through traffic except for special trains and some extraordinary excursion trains would ever pass the present Roma-street station without being re-made up. And further, the evidence of the traffic manager was to the effect that the passengers who came down by the line from Ipswich on excursion days preferred to get out and take a turn round the station and then go on. Then we find that in order to get traffic on the line the Postmaster-General suggested that the Narrows between Gladstone and Rockhampton should be dredged; but if we have to go so far afield as that, what prospect have we of the line ever returning anything? Further on the evidence of the Engineer-in-Chief is to the effect that it will only cost £42,000 to go as far as Ann-street station, and that the rest of the cost, some £220,000, will be incurred by the extension from Ann street to Mayne. Then we have had the statement that more accommodation is required at Roma street, and at question 194 it is said:—

"We are pretty fairly provided, but we are not provided for an increase. I might say, if there was no prospect of building the city station, we should certainly have to provide more accommodation at the Roma-street station."

There is a statement that for the present that station is large enough. In answer to a subsequent question, the traffic manager says that there is plenty of room for any extension of the present station. At question 241, the Commissioner states that the line would be no convenience to passengers by the main line from a distance, and that the Roma-street station was just as convenient as any other station. Now, we come to a very important part of the evidence of the traffic manager. In answer to question 273, he finally says:—

"For the three months ending 31st October, the number of passengers booked at Brisbane—I am speaking now of Normanby, Exhibition, Mayne, and Albion—was 63,380. During the same period last year the number was 74,840, so that there has been a decrease of 11,500."

Then he was asked how he accounted for that, and the answer was—

"By the opening of communication through the natural channel of the tramways. If it goes by a circuitous route, it may develop a new trade, but the traffic will fall to its natural channel at the first opportunity."

Well, what that means it is rather difficult to say. Then in another portion of his evidence he says that the cause of the decrease in the traffic has been that the passengers have gone by the omnibuses and other vehicles. For instance, at question 327 he is asked:—

"You consider the present line from Roma street towards Sandgate to be adequate for the present ordinary traffic? I have pointed out that we are losing traffic, and I attribute that loss, first to the line being circuitous, and second to the opening up of communication by the natural channel, that is the tramways."



He says the natural channel is the tramways. Now, we can easily understand what a very little chance there is of the railway taking the tram traffic. If you are in the Valley you can come into town every five minutes, and be put down where it is most convenient; but if you come by rail, you must either walk out to the Valley station, or walk into Ann-street station, and, in any case, if you take the Valley station you have to be let down in Ann street, some little distance from Queen street. Therefore it is impossible that the railway can supersede the tramways, and I think the tramway company need not trouble themselves about the competition of the railways any more than the gas company need fear the competition of the electric light. Even several residents of the Valley, when asked their opinion about the working of the traffic, said they considered that the principal part of the public would prefer travelling by the trams, because the trams would pick them up anywhere and set them down nearer their destination than the railway possibly could, although they thought the railway might be a little more comfortable than the tram. Now, no provision is made for this line being taken down to the wharves. The Engineer-in-Chief says that as the line is designed it would not be practicable to extend it down to the wharves. Now, there is no doubt that one of the defects of our system in Brisbane—as in some other cities in Australia—is that no proper provision is made for connecting the land traffic with the sea traffic. We go to great expense dredging our rivers to allow large vessels to pass up, but we make no provision for taking our land traffic down to them by the cheapest possible method, and with the greatest possible despatch. It is because of the long delay in filling these large vessels that a great many of them have hitherto been kept away. Then the question arose with regard to pine timber coming into the Valley station and along the Valley line, and it was stated distinctly by a witness who was interested in it—Mr. Dath—that no timber ought to be brought past Breakfast Creek—that the most economical method would be to take it off the rails there, throw it into the creek, and raft it up to the various mills along the bank of the river, and that on no account would he or any other saw-miller about Brisbane ever think of doing anything else if they had the opportunity of floating their logs from Breakfast Creek. Now, how this line can possibly be made to pay I really cannot understand. It is estimated that the Valley portion of it will cost £218,000. That is not my estimate; it is stated by the hon. the Postmaster-General, who drew up the report of the select committee, as a very moderate estimate. I fear it is a very moderate estimate—far less than we should actually have to pay, and that would involve us in an annual charge—taking the whole line—of at least £12,000 a year. By the hon. the Postmaster-General's own figures, which of course are most favourable to the line, we see that he does not hope to get more than £10,500 per annum as the gross receipts, so that there is a distinct and definite loss upon the undertaking. Besides that, we have to take the cost of maintenance and the working expenses. The working expenses of railways in Queensland have generally been a great deal more than 50 per cent.—generally 75 per cent.—and I do not think any line has ever left a net profit, even upon the working expenses, of 50 per cent.; so that by his own showing we should be at a loss of more than £5,000 a year besides maintenance. Taking the other items in, the loss will come to about £7,500 a year. Now, how under the conditions now existing, with a very heavy debt on the country, can we expect to be able to carry on works like this? There is £170,000 on the Loan Esti-

mates for this line. Part of that has been expended in surveying and matters of that kind and out of this £170,000 odd we are to have £260,000. That is not much out of £170,000

“Happy is the soldier that lives on his pay,  
And spends half-a-crown out of sixpence a day.”

Are we going to follow that rule? It might do for those who take up the business of liquidation, but I doubt whether it would pay those who have to liquidate. Had it been proposed to bring this line to Turbot street, or even to Ann street, I should have supported the proposal, because I think the situation of the Roma-street station, although suitable for heavy traffic, is not convenient for passengers going to the centre of Brisbane. As I stated before, my original design was to have put the station down as far as Turbot street, to the site at present held by the corporation for their town hall, and there was at that time every facility for doing so. It would be possible even now to bring it as far as the markets; but that would be 350 yards from Queen street, though it would be the most convenient place to have a railway station, the street there being wider than Broadway in New York. It would be most convenient for passenger traffic, and it would be very near to the principal hotels. But I know there are some who think that a station in Ann street would be more convenient, and I am not so wedded to one particular spot as to say that if the majority think Ann street better I should be willing to concede the point. We have it in evidence that the line could be brought to Ann street for £42,000. At the present moment we have an immense number of unemployed, and it is no doubt desirable, without starting what may be called a system of relief works, that while there is abundance of labour we should start a work like that. The expenditure of that £42,000 would also give employment to a great number of tradesmen in the erection of a station at Ann street. If we stop there I think we shall have done a piece of good work, but when we are asked to spend £220,000 to go about a mile and a-half further only, and to have one single station in that length, I think that those who vote for it must show that they consider the condition of the colony like the affairs of a bankrupt who, when he begins to realise his position, directly rushes into all sorts of expenditure to make it appear to the outside world that he is a man of extraordinary wealth, and endeavours to avoid the final crash, which, when it comes, is much more severe than it would have been had he wound up his affairs when he found they were becoming unprofitable. Considering that we have now a series of railways that will involve a further Loan Bill for £15,000,000, in addition to the remains of the £10,000,000 loan, I say that if such a state of affairs had been caused by the late Government there would have been a great outcry on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite. I say that the Government have no right to enter into contracts involving the expenditure of such enormous sums of money, requiring ten years for their completion and an enforced continued expenditure far beyond our capabilities. What is the condition of the colony? It has been spending for many years a £1,000,000 a year. The present Government have increased that until the expenditure is now about £2,000,000 per annum; and now they want to increase it to about £4,000,000. If the loan expenditure were stopped by its being impossible to obtain money in the home market, our present revenue would fall 50 per cent. We should lose £1,000,000 of loan expenditure, and another £500,000 of ordinary revenue;



and the colony would be reduced to the most lamentable condition. I think hon. gentlemen would hardly like to contemplate what that condition would be. We are in fact, to a certain extent, compelled to go on borrowing for public works for the purpose of keeping ourselves afloat; but if we recklessly increase our loan expenditure it must ultimately be followed by a serious collapse. I do not think that argument will go very much further. It is perfectly clear from the evidence, notwithstanding the statements made by hon. members on the other side, that the work will be unprofitable, that it will not meet a pressing want, but will saddle us with a very heavy annual debt. Further, with the exception of a very small section, even the people of the Valley are not in favour of the line; and we must bear in mind what occurred when the motion passed in another place. The chairman in giving his casting vote said, practically, "We will throw the onus of refusal on the Council." Hon. members are well aware of those circumstances; and if they choose by simply having a majority on their side of the House to carry out this work they must take the responsibility of what may follow, and they will not be able to plead that they have not been forewarned. They are very much like naughty children in a straw yard with a box of matches—"Let us have some fun with the matches and the straw." But if an accident happens the Government cannot be exonerated from the charge of indiscretion, and something worse—namely, a want of attention to their proper duties and to the important trust vested in them. For my part, I cannot take such a responsibility as is involved in passing such a motion; and if the majority decide to do it they must take the consequences.

The Hon. P. MACPHERSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—As one of the assenting members to this report, I feel that I am bound to address a few words to the House upon it. I do not intend to detain the House at any length. I regret that on this occasion I am compelled to differ from hon. gentlemen with whom I have been intimately associated. I regret that I have strayed from the fold on this occasion, but I do not think that I am entirely lost or that I am entirely stolen. I regret especially to have to differ from the Hon. Mr. Gregory, and I more than regret that that hon. gentleman has, in this House, laid, as it were, an indictment against the Chief Engineer for Railways simply because the Chief Engineer does not happen to agree with his particular views. I look upon the whole question as simply one of administration. I gave my vote on the evidence adduced to the committee, and I intend to quote from that evidence to such an extent as I hope will satisfy the House that my vote was justified. To deal with preliminary matter, and to have a preliminary canter—we are told that something fabulous will be demanded for the land about to be resumed for railway purposes. I have had a conversation with a very dear and respected friend of mine—a man named Macpherson—who occupied the position of railway arbitrator for a good many years, and he informed me—liberal as he used to be in his awards and allowances—that the estimate of £86,000 is not at all an unreasonable one. I will not enlarge upon the whole of the evidence.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Read it all.

The Hon. P. MACPHERSON: I am not prepared to read it all. I shall simply quote such parts of it as particularly bear on the 3rd paragraph of the committee's report, namely:—

"III. That the scheme, if carried out, will develop general traffic on the Southern and Western and North

Coast systems of railways as existing, and on the authorised extensions thereof when completed, and will also result in an immediate increase of the suburban passenger traffic."

I consider that the most material part of the report, because in the very short time of three or four years, or three and a-half years, when the North Coast system is completed, Brisbane will be the focus of 1,200 miles of railway communication; and we can scarcely realise what that means. Before quoting from Mr. Stanley's evidence, I must again say that I dissent from what the Hon. Mr. Gregory said in reference to Mr. Stanley's views. Mr. Stanley is the Chief Engineer for Railways; the Hon. Mr. Gregory unfortunately is not; and I prefer to take Mr. Stanley's views on the question. I shall go through the whole of the evidence bearing on this one point, as I want it to be recorded. The following quotations are from Mr. Stanley's evidence:—

"3. What were the reasons for propounding this scheme—for bringing it up to its present stage? One of the reasons which led to this scheme was, to give the city of Brisbane additional railway facilities by bringing the main line in to a central point within the city. It was also considered desirable that Fortitude Valley, as an important part of Brisbane, should have equal advantages in this respect. But I may state that I consider the chief advantage to be gained by the proposed extension is a connection with the North Coast system, which will enable trains to be run through without the inconvenience and delay caused by reversing at the present station in Roma street. Brisbane and Fortitude Valley will then be on the main line connecting the Southern and Western and the North Coast systems.

"4. Apart from the convenience of working the traffic which you have just pointed out, will there be any advantage to the passenger traffic? Undoubtedly so. There will be very great advantages by offering additional facilities for communication between the suburbs, the city, and Fortitude Valley; besides the advantage accruing to the through traffic for the Southern and Western districts and along the North Coast.

"20. What are your views with respect to the probable flow of traffic on both the Southern and Western systems and the North Coast system;—that is to say, in four years' time?—Have you any opinion to express with respect to the probable traffic;—whether it will increase, or otherwise? I should say it will increase very largely. Judging by the way in which the traffic has developed, I believe a large accession of traffic will be obtained from the North Coast line.

"21. Are you of opinion that this central station and extension of the railway through the Valley, as proposed, is requisite in the interests of the working of the traffic, and for the public convenience in connection with the two systems of railway? I consider that, looking to the future development of the traffic, it is a most essential part of the railway system. I do not consider that the Southern and Western and the North Coast systems will be complete without it.

"52. What I wish to know particularly, and what the committee wish to know, is, whether this scheme is, in your opinion as an expert—it is one which you have, as you stated, given great consideration to—the very best scheme for the purpose intended, namely, the connection of the two systems of railway, the establishing of a central station in the city, and the giving a station to a populous part of the Valley? I have given the subject much personal consideration; I have examined various routes which have been proposed; and I am fully satisfied that the plans now submitted to the approval of Parliament are the best that can be selected.

"128. By Mr. Macpherson: Then the gist of your evidence, Mr. Stanley, is this: That, in your opinion, these works are necessary, and that the present is a favourable time to execute them? I certainly think so.

"129. The time is favourable, I presume, looking at the state of the labour market? Yes. We are getting work done cheaper than or as cheap as ever before.

"130. And the present value of land? Yes, I think so.

"131. And you say these works cannot be considered as advantageous to Brisbane alone, but as forming an accessory and an adjunct to the Southern and Western and North Coast systems? I look upon that as a necessary adjunct.

"132. Can you say that these works can be considered as advantageous at the present time, as forming a beneficial adjunct to the North Coast and Southern and Western systems? I think so, certainly."

Mr. Stanley, as I need not remind hon. gentlemen, occupies one of the most responsible positions in the Public Service; he rests his professional reputation on his evidence; and he states clearly and authoritatively, as a matter of railway administration, that the construction of this work should be proceeded with. I may also say that I have had the pleasure and the honour of Mr. Stanley's acquaintance for the last seventeen or eighteen years, and I believe there is no more cautious man in his estimates in Queensland. I now come to Mr. Curnow's evidence. Mr. Curnow is not a man who indulges in wild speculative ideas. There is no man in the Railway Department better cognisant of its working. He has been in it for many years—almost, I might say, from the beginning—and he is not a man who would commit himself, at all events, to any wild speculations. Here is what he says, in answer to question 214:—

"One other question I should like to ask you. Would the proposed extension of the railway and the establishment of those two stations add much or little to the facilities, and convenience, and safety of working the traffic that is certain to extend when those works are completed, including the works of the North Coast system? I think I can answer that by one word, and say, yes."

Mr. Thallon's evidence does not refer to this particular point, and I am only addressing myself to the one point; I am not going jerryman-dering all over the evidence. Mr. Thallon is asked, at question 298:—

"Do I understand you to say that the contemplated extension would not facilitate the traffic into the town by the Northern and Southern and Western systems? It would facilitate the traffic, because it would carry it further into town, both from the north and the south and west."

And in answer to question 305, he says:—

"I believe there will be a through traffic with regard to goods, because we are now shipping agricultural produce to northern ports, and some of that at least would go by rail. Then there would be the traffic in timber coming from the North Coast Railway to Ipswich."

Then further on, at question 335, we have this evidence:—

"Where would the goods traffic come from that you anticipate would go to the Valley station:—What class of goods traffic—purely local, or to and from a distance? The goods traffic, I anticipate, at the Valley would be mostly goods for delivery there, such as coal, metal, firewood, and agricultural produce."

I now come to a part of the evidence which has not been touched upon to any great extent; that is the evidence of gentlemen outside the department. First of all there is the evidence of Mr. Corrigan. Everyone who knows that gentleman knows what a shrewd, enterprising, intelligent, active, and respectable man of business he is. Mr. Corrigan is asked at question 374:—

"I suppose, Mr. Corrigan, you will be able to give an opinion whether the Valley goods station would not receive as much agricultural produce as the Roma-street station would, if the Valley station existed? I believe it would."

Again, further on, at question 382—

"Do you think there will be any increase on the existing consumption of those articles that you have mentioned in the Valley during the next five or ten years? Oh: yes; double or treble."

"Is the population increasing in that quarter? Very fast; faster than in any other place about Brisbane, as far as I can see."

"Would that station be availed of to any extent by passengers, having in view that the North Coast system will be completed very shortly—in a few years:—and do you think it would be much benefited, be much availed of, for the Northern Railway? Certainly. I think it very inconvenient for the Valley people to be going out all the way to Roma street."

Mr. Corrigan then proceeds to elaborate upon that point. Next comes Mr. Dath; at question 455 he is asked:—

"Have you still that subject in serious contemplation if the railway be constructed?"

The subject referred to is a private branch line to Bulimba. Mr. Dath answers as follows:—

"I believe at the present time, if the railway was constructed, we could get our timber from about eighty miles from Brisbane at a saving of 2s. 6d. per 100 feet. The timber, so far as we are concerned, would be brought from that distance. Of course, there is timber nearer at hand than that. But at the rate, say, of 2d. per mile—I think that is about the present rate—it would cost us about 3s. 6d. per 100; and we could get it delivered at the railway for about 2s. 6d.; that would be 6s. to be delivered in Brisbane. Now we pay 9s. for that same timber; and bring from that district to Brisbane 250,000 feet. It is pine."

"Would that come by railway or any part of it? That would all come by railway."

"Is that per annum? No; per month. Recently it cost us about £375 a month."

"For pine alone? For pine alone; then there is hardwood. Of course, that is out of the question without the railway; there are millions of feet of hardwood in the same district that the pine comes from. We reckon if the railway goes right through, as it will do, we shall bring at the very least about 160,000 feet per month."

"That would all be in log? The hardwood will be all in the log."

"That 160,000 feet of hardwood per month you would bring down by railway, if the railway was constructed; and it would be an augment to your business? Six months ago it would have been. But I must state that the Oregon timber has now taken it out of our hands. Six months ago we could have doubled the quantity of business."

Then at question 471 he is asked:—

"Mr. Dath, would the completion of the Valley scheme and the Gympie line add to the population in the timber districts from Caboolture onwards? Yes."

"And increase the amount of employment in those districts? Yes, decidedly it would."

"Beyond what it is at present, would the increase of population consequent on the development of the timber industry be much or little? It would be very large, because the timber traders would come toward the line of railway to procure timber. It is a difficult matter to get timber in places accessible for moving it to market. This country through which the railway will go has never been touched."

"Have you been over this country? Yes."

"Will you state what you think of its timber resources, having special knowledge of that subject? Of course from Brisbane the first place is Pine River where there is a large quantity of pine, which has scarcely been touched, and which will, when worked, come by railway. After you pass the Pine River up to Macgregor's there is very little timber of any description unless it comes from Durundur, where, in fact, I may state, there is a saw-mill somewhere near."

"Is that what they call the Woodford Saw-mill? I think so. There is a good quantity of timber there, and it has never been touched before on account of the distance."

"The railway will help its consumption? If the railway goes there it will help its consumption, for there is a chance then that the timber can be got away."

"From Macgregor's mostly? Then, Mellum Creek and Cochin Creek, only four miles distant, between which and the Junction there is a saw-mill; and then all the resources of the Blackall Range—pine, beech, and cedar, principally cedar."

"Any hardwood? Yes; a considerable amount of hardwood there."

"Enormous quantities of it? Yes; enormous quantities of this class of timber there."

"And beyond Mellum Creek? Going beyond Mellum Creek you come to the Maroochie district. You are on the hard timber, with beech, pine, and cedar."

"Is there any quantity in that district? Great quantities in that district too. We have never gone to it for the sole reason that it has a bad harbour, and the insurance companies will not insure. That has not been touched yet."

"Will the supply of timber last on the route for some years? Last longer than I shall ever live."

"Last for a generation or two? I should say so; last for thirty or forty years—may be fifty. Then from Maroochie to Noosa district, no man can have any conception of the quantity of timber there."

Then there is the evidence of Mr. Lennon, which is on a par with that given by Mr. Corrigan. Then follows the evidence of the active and energetic member for Fortitude Valley, who volunteered himself as a witness. He gives very strong evidence, and I may say that I do not know any man, with the exception of Mr. Corrigan, who deals more in farm produce than Mr. McMaster. There is, I think, no better judge of that class of produce than the latter gentleman. Mr. McMaster is asked a question—591:—

“Do you anticipate any increased production from the land when the line shall be completed? Very much—of agricultural produce.”

“Where will the principal supplies come from? From the South Pine River, and from a portion of the North Pine River; from the Caboolture on to Durundur, and beyond to Mooloolah; from the Blackall Range and the Buderim Mountains; and I hope, sir, that I shall see a branch railway to enable us—I mean men in business—to get supplies not only from Durundur but from the Kilcoy district. There is some excellent land along there. I have travelled that district personally, and I know the quality of the land between Durundur and Kilcoy is excellent. If the farmers had the means of getting their produce to market, which is not at present the case, there is certain to be great production there, and a railway there would command abundant traffic.”

“Has there been much produce imported from other colonies during the last three years, when drought has been the normal condition? Yes a very great quantity.”

“Do you know if drought affects the district you speak of? Not so much as the interior. The coastal line is more favoured, in my opinion, with storms and rains than the interior.”

“If the railway to Gympie had been in existence five years ago, do you think that we should have been dependent upon sources outside the colony for agricultural supplies? Not nearly so much. If you will allow me to state my opinion and my experience of what I know of the farmers in that district, I shall be glad to do so. If the farmers of that district had inducements to get their produce to market, they would very much increase the production of their land; thereby we should be enabled to keep thousands of pounds that we send south for produce—maize, potatoes, butter; cheese I would not say; and hay and oats. Also give the farmers facilities for getting a market, and I believe they would increase the productiveness of their farms very much.”

I will not quote any more of the evidence. I simply quoted what I have, to show that as a member of the committee I attended to my duties. My hon. friend, Mr. Thynne, appeared to think we scamped our task, but we went into the matter very carefully. I will detain the House no longer. I will vote for this line for this reason—and I do not blush to own it—there is not a single wrinkle in my face that will contract or expand when I say it—I will vote unblushingly for it: I have lived in the city of Brisbane for twenty years; Brisbane has done me many a good turn, and I am going to pay a small instalment of my debt of gratitude to Brisbane by voting for this motion, and I would walk fifty miles to do so.

The HON. A. HERON WILSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—I have very little to say. This is a railway that will cost a large sum of money considering the shortness of it, and it is a matter that Australia looks upon with a very doubtful eye. I have travelled over America, Canada, Great Britain, and the Continent, and I noted particularly that immense sums of money were being spent in the large centres of population in centralising the railways, so that the goods and passengers carried by them might be brought as near as possible to the centre of population. I say that the railway we have in Brisbane is totally unsuited to the times. It is what I consider a spendthrift terminus. There is a small line of my own, only 11 chains in length, and we only use 7 chains of it, but it costs as much for the shunting into and out of it as it does for running over 7 miles of the general railway. Now, this is a matter that is going to cost the country £300,000.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: No, no!

The HON. A. HERON WILSON: I am putting it in round numbers, and including every expense that can possibly occur. We have yet to pay for the right of undermining people's houses. The time is coming, and will very soon come, when such a line which will be for the benefit of the chief town in Queensland will have to be made. If we look at the evidence, the first thing we see is that the station is inadequate—that we should have another station—the cost of which will be £100,000, which will reduce the other expense to £200,000. And what will we have? For that £200,000 we will have a line which will to a great extent relieve all the shunting, will cause less men to be employed, and which will save a considerable amount. It is a continuous line; we will be able to make a circuit, and when we take into consideration that we are now making a great national line—a coast line to the North—the traffic upon which no Brisbane man can estimate, and which traffic is bound to centre in Brisbane, it will be one of the best things the colony has ever undertaken. I have studied this, and have been over the line half-a-dozen times, because I was so doubtful about it. The thing has been thrown into my teeth scores of times as a swindle—that it is throwing away a tremendous amount of money which will never return interest; but I know something about railways and the cost of carrying by railway, and I know very well, from what I have seen in other countries, that the great desideratum is to have the whole traffic brought as near the centre of the town as possible. What was done in Glasgow? I remember the time when there was a splendid station and more traffic than there is here; but it did not suit apparently, and they spent millions of money in carrying a line not half as far as we are now proposing.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Seven and a-half millions.

The HON. A. HERON WILSON: I believe the Postmaster-General is right in his statement as to the amount. I was only a lad at the time, but I remember the absurd arguments then used that the money would never be returned, and yet now it is admitted that nothing better was ever done in Scotland than the construction of that Glasgow South-Western Railway. It will be even better here because we will have this as a paying line I am certain, and it will be one of those lines which will increase the settlement round about the Valley; and I hope we will live to see the day when we will consider the passing of this line as one of the best things we ever did. Considering the immense amount of money involved, I was not going to allow myself to be dictated to upon this subject in any way, and I have consequently gone over the whole matter carefully, and I believe this will be one of the best paying lines once it is constructed that this country has initiated.

The HON. J. C. HEUSSLER said: Hon. gentlemen,—I shall not occupy more than a few minutes. This spending of enormous sums of money is the result of awful blunders in former times. If, in the first instance, the Brisbane railway station was made in accordance with the recommendation of the engineer we would not now be having all this discussion. We would have had the railway station in the immediate neighbourhood of Queen street, and we could have had a splendid central station, because in those times, I well recollect, we had still the water reservoir unoccupied, and Roma street could have been done away with altogether or shifted, and we would have been able to start the railway across the river, north or west. Those blunders were made, I may say, from political spite on the part of the then Minister for Works. I

was not here in those times, or I would have protested from morning till night against that blunder, which I consider was really a crime; and a great statesman said one time that a blunder in politics or statesmanship was much worse than a crime. I must say our opponents of this evening have made the best, and perhaps in some instances a legitimate, use of their imagination. I do not believe in any of the figures either for or against the line, as I believe none of them indeed can be correct. After reading carefully this report and evidence, and after getting information from a great many people able to give information upon the subject, I have formed my own opinion upon the matter. When an hon. gentleman to-night interjected "Oh, oh!" I was right in saying that I had not up to to-night made up my mind as to how I should vote, because I only finished the reading of the report to-day, and I had a conversation only yesterday with the Hon. A. H. Wilson on the subject. That hon. gentleman's remarks were really so practical that I could not resist them, and, moreover, they were in accord with my own experience of about a year ago of Europe. In London, Brussels, Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Leipsic, Dresden, and Berlin, they have all gone in for central lines, and I have considered the enormous sums of money those people have spent for central railways and stations. In Berlin they have not only one central station, but two or three within a thousand yards of each other. If you travel to Berlin, say from Dresden, you have only to say in what particular street in Berlin you wish to be put out, and you will be landed near it, and will have only a few hundred yards to travel to reach your hotel, or wherever you may wish to go. The evidence given by Mr. Dath before the committee had particularly struck me, though the Hon. Mr. Gregory did not give that importance to the income likely to be derived from this railway from the carriage of timber, which I think it deserves. Mr. Dath was asked "If this North Coast line was opened, and the Valley deviation was not carried out, would you send any timber by rail?" And the answer was, "No, none at all." I think that is a really important matter. The Hon. Mr. A. H. Wilson has referred to the enormous cost of shunting, and that would be avoided by the construction of the railway proposed. Besides the railway going by the hospital will be little use if this is carried out, and that will save the construction of a bridge near the hospital. This level crossing of a railway is an immense nuisance, especially if you have any traffic; and about the hospital there is a great deal of traffic. Many times I have seen the inconvenience and often danger there. There has been everything said that can be said. I can say nothing new, and will just add that I shall vote in favour of the motion.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: I cannot see this motion put to a division without having my say upon it. And what I have to say upon it will, I trust, be in language easily understood—the meaning of which cannot be misinterpreted in any way. I reserved my decision as to what course I would take on this motion until I had completely read the evidence. I approached the question without any interest one way or another, and I felt after reading the evidence that it would be impossible for me to vote for this motion. I think that the evidence brought before the committee is in itself sufficient to condemn absolutely the whole of the proposal, and I wish that my condemnation of it shall be in terms as explicit and clear as they possibly can be. I look upon this proposal as one of extravagant waste of money, which cannot possibly produce any beneficial result to the colony at large. I say it will be a positive injury in the course of time to

Fortitude Valley, because it will debar them from getting more suitable railway communication, which would be of great advantage to them, whereas the communication offered to them by this line will be practically of no advantage to them. The large amount of money proposed to be expended on this line is almost enough to make one stagger when we look at the advantages offered. As a bald fact, what is offered is a railway station in Fortitude Valley within forty chains of an existing railway station.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: That is only a piece of a great chief station.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Whether it is sheep or lambs we are dealing with, or anything less innocent than sheep or lambs; whether the hon. the Postmaster-General is anxious to buy sheep or lambs, or to buy stations with goats, I leave with him to select when he has got the money to spend upon it. I say the proposal is such an absurd one to my mind—to spend £250,000 upon supplying the Valley with a railway station within forty chains of where they have already a railway in existence,—that I am driven to search very closely into the evidence for it. I do not want the Postmaster-General to interrupt me. If he does, he will get sharp answers, but if he allows me to proceed, I will bring conviction even to his mind that the cost is such that he will regret exceedingly. The Postmaster-General represented to this House that the cost of the railway including everything will be £250,000. I would refer that hon. gentleman to the statement made by his colleague, the hon. the Premier, who stated in the most distinct and positive manner that it was not expected that that amount would anything like construct the railway. There was a positive admission in the other House by the Premier that the Government had no expectation that the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief would be at all adhered to in the construction of the line, but that they intended to go on with the line as far as the money would allow them to do, and then they would have to come to Parliament for another sum. Yet the Postmaster-General comes to this House and bases his argument upon the full and complete cost of the line being £250,000. That, I think, is not very ingenious conduct for a member of the Government to follow, especially in the face of the public declaration of the Premier that there was no expectation that that amount was anything like sufficient to do the work. I have heard that probably this line would cost £500,000 to finish, and by the time the long tunnel and other works are completed I have no doubt the estimate of the Engineer-in-Chief, to which some hon. gentlemen are inclined to adhere, will be greatly exceeded. We have had many experiences where estimates for railways have been brought forward, and where tenders have been invited for the construction of those lines, and where the amount of the actual contract cost of those lines has in some instances been two and a half times as much as the original estimate. I allude to one instance—the Sandgate line. The estimated cost was £4,000 a mile; the actual cost was £10,000 a mile. I say in the face of that we ought not to take the Chief Engineer's rough estimate of the Parliamentary plans as anything like the approximate cost of the Fortitude Valley line. The Hon. Mr. Heussler was perfectly right when he stated that he did not believe in the figures produced. There was a great deal of imagination in them. And the imagination worked in two ways—it has worked downwards when the cost of the line was spoken of, and upwards when the estimated returns were referred to. In speaking of the estimated cost of the construction of the line, I quote what the

Premier said in another place:—"£175,000 would not be sufficient to construct the whole of the line. Hon. gentlemen asked how much it would cost. He had no precise estimate." "Would it cost half a million?" "No, it would not be that." So that we have here something between £175,000 and £500,000 for this proposed work. I would further allude to what has taken place in another place, where this very resolution appears to have been carried by the casting vote of the gentleman presiding over the deliberations of the Committee of the Assembly, and to the extraordinary reason given for the casting vote—namely, that the matter would have to be decided in another place. I say it is not the recognised rule with regard to the voting of the President or Chairman of a deliberative Assembly. The general rule is that the vote shall be given in such a way that the matter shall be reserved for further discussion. It was certainly not reserved for further discussion in the Assembly by putting it out of the power of the Assembly to further deal with it. We also have the extraordinary exhibition of a leading political man—a man representing, at all events, an important section of the community giving a vote for which he publicly expressed his sorrow—in fact, expressed his shame at having given a vote which was the means of having the railway sent to us for consideration. That was the way, hon. gentlemen, in which the matter was introduced to us for our consideration, and I say that, taking that circumstance alone into consideration, the matter is one which we ought to receive with very great caution; and that circumstance alone is almost sufficient to induce me to vote against the resolution. But I am not obliged to go upon that alone; in fact, I have many other good reasons for voting against the railway irrespective of these unfortunate, and I may say unpleasant, circumstances connected with the passing of this line in another place. The chief reasons which are advanced in support of the construction of this line are contained in the evidence of Mr. Stanley; and if we analyse it we see that it divides into two classes. He says first: The reason for propounding the scheme is to give the city of Brisbane additional facilities by bringing the main line into the centre of the city; and it was also considered desirable that Fortitude Valley, as an important part of Brisbane, should have equal advantages in that respect. He went on to say that he considered the extension to Fortitude Valley was an extension of the North Coast system, which would enable passengers to run through without the inconvenience and delay of changing at the central station. Now, I say that that is the principal plank upon which this railway is founded, and that assertion was made to me before I saw this evidence. It was an assertion which weighed very much with me at the time. But I would ask hon. gentlemen now whether they do not consider Mr. Thallon, in his evidence, has completely demolished every foundation that that statement had; and it will be noticed that Mr. Stanley was very cautious in giving his evidence. He said, in answer to several questions, that he would rather they would ask Mr. Thallon; and when we read what Mr. Thallon says, one cannot help wondering that the railway officials did not put their heads together a little before they gave evidence before the committee. I am quite prepared to give Mr. Thallon credit for having given careful and candid evidence, and for having given his evidence in a tone which I think demands from everybody the greatest respect both for the individual and for the opinions he expressed. I will first allude to the question which my hon. friend, Mr.

Macpherson, quoted from Mr. Thallon's evidence, No. 298, and which was asked by Dr. Taylor—

"Do I understand you to say that the contemplated extension would not facilitate the traffic into the town by the Northern and Southern and Western systems?"

Now, the question itself is a very good indication of the evidence that was brought before us, because the way in which it was put evidently contains the impression which Mr. Taylor had of the bearing of some of Mr. Thallon's evidence. The answer which was given was of very doubtful value:—

"It would facilitate the traffic, because it would carry it further into the town, both from the north and the south and the west."

That is the full answer. Then there is another question which has not been quoted, although it immediately follows:—

"Would it facilitate the making up of trains, or would it do away with the necessity for making up trains and shunting, to a certain extent? No; I do not think there would be any advantage in that way."

"There would be no advantage in working the trains by that extension? You are speaking of through trains?"

"Yes? No advantage."

So that, hon. gentlemen, Mr. Thallon expresses his opinion as clearly as words can convey it, that the first reason of Mr. Stanley, that the extension of the line would enable trains to be run through without inconvenience and delay, is utterly fallacious.

The HON. E. B. FORREST: He is talking about the station at Ann street.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE: The hon. gentleman says Mr. Thallon is talking about the station in Ann street, but if he had read the evidence through, as I have done, he would find that the questions were put in the expectation of getting answers from Mr. Thallon to show that the construction of the line would be a great saving in the labour of shunting—an imaginary thing which has been created in the minds of those not familiar with the working of traffic. It is quite evident that in this matter Mr. Stanley has been at fault, because Mr. Thallon says that no advantage will be gained.

The HON. E. B. FORREST: That is quite a different thing. Read questions 327 and 333.

The HON. A. J. THYNNE: I intend to read a little further. Dr. Taylor asks again:—

"You have shown us that the rate of increase of traffic during the last four years has been very marked on the suburban lines. If the North Coast system is completed, which will be in about four or five years, and when the Southern and Western system is completed, do you anticipate any through traffic at all between the two systems—either goods or passengers? Well, I believe there will be a through traffic with regard to goods, because we are now shipping agricultural produce to northern ports, and some of that at least would go by rail. Then there would be the traffic in timber coming from the North Coast railway to Ipswich."

The next question is—

"306. And do you think this extension will facilitate the working of that traffic? I cannot say that it would."

"307. Do you think it could be as easily worked with the present line, if duplicated; and that this will answer all the requirements of that traffic in the future? The goods traffic?"

"308. All the requirements? Do you mean the through goods traffic?"

"309. Through goods traffic and all the requirements of the passenger traffic on the two systems, North Coast and Southern and Western Railways? Well, I have no definite idea that there will be a large through passenger traffic. The traffic of both systems will have to terminate in Brisbane."

"310. In any case? In any case?"

Mr. Thallon was not speaking there of the extension into Ann street; he was speaking of the general policy of the construction of the line; and I consider he has completely disappointed the expectations of those who called him in the hope of finding in him an advocate for the line. He does not go to the extent Mr. Stanley goes, of saying that one of the advantages of the line is that there would be a very pretty circuit by which suburban passengers could start from Ann street, go down to Mayne, and return by the other line to Queen street again. A more fantastical idea, I think, has never been put before a body of men for their consideration. Question 327 is—

"You consider the present line from Roma street towards Sandgate to be adequate for the present ordinary traffic? I have pointed out that we are losing traffic, and I attribute that loss, first, to the line being circuitous, and second, to the opening up of communication by the natural channel, that is, by the tramways."

Now, I will say a word about the trams. We have the evidence of a gentleman very much interested in this proposition—so much interested, that although he is a member of the other House, he came voluntarily to give his evidence—and even he says that instead of going from Ann street to the railway station in Brunswick street, notwithstanding that he would probably travel free of charge, he would prefer to jump on a tram which passes his door and get into town that way. There we have a direct condemnation of the idea that the railway could, under any circumstances, compete with the trams and omnibuses that are running in such large numbers in the city. It is useless to hope that it could come into direct competition with the trams unless it ran along Queen street, or parallel to Queen street, with a stopping-place at every block. Now, I will point out one thing which struck me very forcibly with regard to the estimates which the Postmaster-General gave us this evening. I complained that those figures were given to us for the first time this evening, and that we have not had sufficient time to investigate them. We have not had the same privilege of discussing railway proposals as is afforded to members of the Assembly, who discuss them always in committee. It appears to me that the hon. the Postmaster-General, in making his estimates of what would be saved or earned by this railway, is like a man who found his covering somewhat short, and thought he would take a piece off one end and put it on the other. If the Postmaster-General anticipated that by making the extension into the city he would gain a quarter of a mile, he would certainly lose the fares on the length of line between Roma street and Mayne; so that the hon. member has failed to prove that there would be any practical increase in the returns from the passenger traffic. On the other hand he has carefully avoided calling attention to the fact that by having two or three stations along the line he would have to provide a sufficient number of men for the requirements at holiday times, when large crowds of people travel by railway. If that provision were not made, the work would be badly done, and the Government would run an increased risk of accident, and of consequent serious loss. I was struck by the neat way in which the Postmaster-General got his estimate of the interest just covered by the estimate of the returns. The estimates seem to have been made purposely to tot up a certain amount, and I do not think we can attach any value to them. We are told that the staff at Roma street would be diminished; but the staff would still be required there, even if the traffic went further into the city. The Postmaster-General has estimated the cost of the duplication to Mayne at £100,000, including

the cost of the additional buildings; and I would like to know where he gets that estimate. At question 71 Mr. Stanley was asked—

"Have you any idea what the cost of the duplication would be?"

And he replied:—

"I have never prepared estimates for duplicating the line into Roma-street station; but, speaking roughly, I should think the cost from Roma street to the Racecourse Junction would not be less than from £25,000 to £30,000."

I do not know where the other £70,000 is going to be spent. I say that these figures quoted by the Postmaster-General are on the face of them perfectly absurd and unreliable. And I can scarcely imagine how the Postmaster-General can expect us to suppose that it would be a fair thing to debit the cost of the proposed extension to all the mileage of railways connected with the city of Brisbane. I think it is an unfair proposition in one sense and a puerile proposition in another sense, for how it will affect the question at issue I cannot see. He has said that the line will not interfere with any existing interest; but the line which does not interfere for good or evil with any existing interest is the worst line that can be advocated in any place. One hon. gentleman seems to have taken umbrage at my remarks on the work done by the select committees. I see in this instance a large quantity of evidence, but as to the value of some of that evidence there may be great difference of opinion. In illustration of that it will be sufficient to refer to the evidence of Mr. Lennon, who said that the total output of goods carried by the railway on his account would be 250 tons per annum.

The Hon. E. B. FORREST: That is only one man, and a good man too.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: I am willing even to take the quantity of goods the Postmaster-General estimated as being the traffic likely to be carried over the line in a few years' time—namely, about 10,000 tons of agricultural produce, which will produce a revenue of £125. It seems an absurdity to follow the arguments offered in favour of the line. The proposal is one which originated badly; it has brought discredit upon that part of the Legislature which has dealt with it, and it will bring considerable discredit upon this Chamber if it is adopted. We shall not be doing our duty in passing the line—I am afraid it will be passed—under the circumstances, and I feel sure that instead of feeling pleased in the future on account of what we have done, if the line is adopted we shall have cause to feel grief and shame. I do not hesitate to state that the proposition has my hearty opposition.

The Hon. E. B. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—As two hon. gentlemen on the other side have promised to read the whole of the evidence, I shall not waste time by referring to it, because we shall have an opportunity of knowing all about it when we hear it read. I would like, however, to set right the hon. gentleman who last spoke in reference to Mr. Thallon's evidence. The hon. gentleman supposed that the evidence of Mr. Thallon was opposed to the line; but in the latter part of his answer to question 259, he said:—

"From what I have known of the increase of traffic in other places, I should say the opening of the central station in Brisbane will insure an enormous increase upon the natural increase we may expect on the present traffic. The traffic is greatly hampered by the distance which passengers have to walk from the Roma street station."

If any hon. gentleman will tell me now that Mr. Thallon is opposed to the line in the sense in which the Hon. Mr. Thynne said, I can only say that I do not understand English. I will trouble

you with one more quotation, and then drop it, as far as the evidence is concerned. Question 262 in Mr. Thallon's evidence is as follows :—

"If we establish a central station and carry the line through the Valley to another passenger station there, would you expect a greater increase than that which would result if the station arrangements are not altered? A very much larger increase, if the new stations are opened."

I should like to ask hon. gentlemen after that if they think, with the Hon. Mr. Thynne, that Mr. Thallon views this line with disfavour?

The HON. A. J. THYNNE: The general tendency of his evidence is against it.

The HON. E. B. FORREST: The general tendency of those two questions is not against it, unless it be from a lawyer's point of view. But it is close upon 1 o'clock, and high time most of us were at home and in bed. What I have to say can be put into a very few words. I have read every word of the evidence, and the conclusions I have come to are not the same as those which the Hon. Mr. Thynne has arrived at. I am of opinion that clauses II., III., and IV. of the Committee's report have been thoroughly established. Clauses II. and III. are as follows :—

"II. That they are satisfied that the proposed railway and passenger and goods stations will afford increased facilities for the working of the existing traffic, and will contribute greatly to the convenience of passengers and traders.

"III. That the scheme, if carried out, will develop general traffic on the Southern and Western and North Coast systems of railways as existing, and on the authorised extensions thereof when completed, and will also result in an immediate increase of the suburban passenger traffic."

Anyone who has travelled much on our suburban lines must have seen that they are at present languishing for want of being extended into the town. It is absurd to talk of the railway being of any use in a suburban sense so long as it only comes as far as Roma street. Anyone arriving by train has simply to tramp it into town or take a cab, and the walk from Roma street is not a very desirable thing for anyone in a climate like this. Clause IV. of the report of the committee says :—

"That greater efficiency and safety in the working of the traffic to and from the city will, in the opinion of your committee, be assured by the carrying out of the proposed works."

I fully believe that, and in my opinion the whole of those clauses are established by the evidence. There are two or three other things that appear to me to have been established by the inquiry held by the committee. One is, that the extension to a more central part of the city is necessary for the suburban traffic. Every witness examined shows that that is an absolute necessity, and we can come to no other conclusion than that it is necessary that the line should come into the city. The next thing established is that the extension to the city, and no farther, is impracticable. It has been shown that the extension to the city only cannot be worked satisfactorily, and in support of that I will refer hon. gentlemen to Mr. Thallon's replies to questions 327, 332, and 333, and more particularly to his foot-note to question 333. If we believe, as the Hon. Mr. Thynne does, that Mr. Thallon is an authority on this matter, we can come to no other conclusion than that the stoppage in the city would be a distinct blunder. Another point I have observed in this evidence is, that although between 600 and 700 questions were asked nobody has ventured to suggest a better route. The suggestion that this line should stop in the city may be called an alternative route, but even Mr. Thallon, whose evidence has been so largely quoted by the Hon. Mr. Thynne, says that that is absolutely impracticable. They cannot do the shunting or the

reversing, or whatever they call it, if the line stops at a central station in the city. These are the conclusions I have come to from a very careful perusal of the evidence, and I say that any hon. member who has arrived at that conclusion has but one duty to perform, and that is to vote for the proposed extension. I mean to vote for it to-night, and I hope it will be carried.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: I shall resume the chair in a quarter of an hour.

The HON. W. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—I did not intend to speak at present because the Hon. Mr. Brentnall just commenced to speak and had not finished when the Presiding Chairman adjourned for a quarter of an hour.

The HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: I did not commence to speak.

The HON. W. FORREST: Well, I shall certainly not detain the House long, because I know that anything I may say, or that any other hon. member may say, will have very little effect. If I spoke with the tongue of men and angels it would not alter the vote of one member of this House. I am perfectly confident that talking is utterly useless. There are too many logs to roll—and they have been rolled very well up to the present time. There are other contingent conditions existing, other railways to be passed, and it is a case of the well-known Scotch proverb, "If you claw my back I'll claw yours." I must point out that I am taken rather unawares in getting up just now, and I am not exactly prepared. With reference to the proposed extension from the present terminus to Mayne on the Sandgate Railway, I think one of the most important points in connection with it has been omitted by almost every speaker. Evidence has been quoted to show what might be done if we had this branch railway, and hon. gentlemen have spoken as if there was no line running between the same places at the present time. As we have already got a railway between Brisbane and Mayne, I contend that the proposal before us amounts to a question of duplicating the line; and there is not more than half-a-mile difference in length between the proposed and the existing line. The question is, whether the country can afford such an expense? If we commit ourselves to making the proposed line, it will mean an expenditure of between £400,000 and £500,000 before it is built. The Hon. Mr. Brentnall, in speaking on the proposal to go into committee, stated that if we did we could not get any better evidence than we have. I shall quote a few of the questions to show the nature of that evidence. Mr. Curnow, in speaking of the probable cost, said :—

"Do I understand that you are unable to give the committee any information as to the probable cost of the lands proposed to be resumed? Well, I can make a rough calculation on the valuation that I obtained previously.

"Will you kindly give the committee what information you have on that point? Of course, as you are aware it would be very difficult for me to give anything but an approximate valuation, but I should calculate about £36,000 for land and buildings.

"And does the estimate include the lands along the whole line of the tunnel? Well, I include any damage that we may have to pay for tunnelling under the lands. I do not apprehend that we shall have to pay fully for those lands.

"On the surface? No. Of course, it is rather a ticklish question to deal with. It might become a legal question. I would rather not say anything about it."

We are asked to commit ourselves to this expenditure upon such evidence as that. Mr. Curnow really does not know what the probable cost will be. He is unaware as to whether the Government or the country will have to pay any compensation for tunnelling.



The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: That is not the point he has in view.

The HON. W. FORREST: He was afraid it might become a legal question, and he would not answer it. He was questioned distinctly:—

"My simple question is this:—Does your estimate of £38,000 include payment for the surface of the land under which the tunnel will pass? No.

So that it is quite likely that more will have to be paid. The Hon. the Postmaster-General went on and told us about the wonderful advantage the line would be to the country, and pointed out how wool would be shipped at Bulimba; and yet, it will not interfere with vested rights. If it will not interfere with vested rights, it will have to develop a new sheep country.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I never used the words "vested rights."

The HON. W. FORREST: The hon. gentleman said it would in no way interfere with vested rights.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I said "business properties."

The HON. W. FORREST: I repeat what I said; the hon. gentleman stated it would not interfere with vested rights, and at the same time wool was to be shipped from Bulimba.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It has been shipped there before.

The HON. W. FORREST: Yes; but this is to be an enormous business. I fail to see that this line will develop the resources of the colony. No great business can be done without interfering with vested rights. The hon. gentleman's idea reminds me of Paddy's idea of lengthening his blanket, by cutting it off at the bottom and stitching it on to the top. The money should be spent in developing the interior, and not in making railways parallel with each other. I might point out to hon. gentlemen that the lines are nearly the same length. The Engineer-in-Chief was asked the question, "Supposing the railway is made, how much will it shorten the distance between Mayne and the present terminus? I suppose he misunderstood the question because he answered, "About a mile and a quarter." He was asked the question again, what would be the difference in the distance, and I put my finger upon the places on the plan, and he replied it would not shorten it by one-quarter of a mile. We actually save by this duplication of the line about ten chains, and we put the country to an expense of over one-quarter of a million. The proposal is a startling one considering how the colony wants developing. The Hon. Mr. Macpherson gave a very good keynote of what is proposed to be done when he said Brisbane had done him many favours, and now he would do Brisbane a favour. The Valley is to be benefited by this extension at the cost of the country, and that is what I object to. The Hon. F. T. Brentnall gave us a quotation from an old proverb; but it looked as if he were quoting Scripture.

The HON. F. T. BRENTNALL: It is none the worse for that.

The HON. W. FORREST: The hon. gentleman talked about straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. I also will quote Scripture, and it will apply to this motion as well as that of the hon. member: "He that would build a house must first calculate the cost," or words to that effect. Have we calculated whether we can afford this railway? I will give hon. members a little information on that point without taking into consideration the falling off in the land revenue, which I cannot

work out, but of which every hon. gentleman is aware. The falling-off in the revenue for the last three months ending 30th September is £76,585; six weeks have now expired since those returns were made out, and there is no sign of a revival, and I ask hon. members if, in the face of these figures, we are justified in duplicating a line of this kind.

The HON. F. H. HOLBERTON: Give us the figures for last month.

The HON. W. FORREST: I have not got them, but I repeat that there is not the slightest sign of a revival. If this expenditure was for the purpose of opening up good land, or even for the construction of a line through a farming district, there might be some reason advanced for it, because it would assist the development of the country; but this will not assist the development of the country or increase the producing interests in any way. The business of the country could be carried on equally well for many years to come, whether this line is made or not. I do not know whether hon. gentlemen have taken the trouble to calculate what this expenditure is likely to be. I believe it will cost about £500,000, which at 4 per cent. would amount to £20,000 a year for interest, and that will be at the rate of 1s. 7d. per head for every man, woman, and child in the colony; while I do not believe the line will pay even working expenses.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Then your opinion is better than the engineer's?

The HON. W. FORREST: I do not know whether it is or not, but I can give some opinions upon which my calculation is based. Mr. Thallon states, amongst other things, that the passenger traffic is falling off on our suburban lines at the rate of about 1,000 a week, and that if this railway were made we would recover that. That is one of the strongest reasons he advanced for constructing the line. But when we speak of 10,000 or 20,000 passengers a week it seems an enormous number, though when we reduce them to pounds, when they only return 3d. each, it comes to a very small amount. I scarcely think we would get all that traffic either, and it would certainly be no reason for making a railway through the Valley to Mayne. Does any man in this Chamber imagine for a moment that passengers will give up the advantage of being able to jump into an omnibus or a tram passing their doors when they can stop and be let down wherever they like, for the sake of travelling on a railway through a tunnel forty-five chains long in a climate like this? I would like to show hon. members the plan again in case they may have forgotten it, and in order that they may see how much the proposed extension is going to save in distance. I repeat that it will not save more than ten chains.

The HON. A. HERON WILSON: Don't you see it will make a loop line that will save endless expense in shunting. If you were an engineer you would see that.

The HON. W. FORREST: I must just say that one hon. gentleman quoted the remark of a celebrated French statesman, that a blunder was worse than a crime, and the Postmaster-General, in proposing the acceptance of this line, pointed out that success very often arises from human errors, and that shows what different conclusions may be arrived at by different minds. All I can say is that if success will arise from error in this case, this is likely to be the most successful railway we have ever had proposed, because it is certainly the biggest blunder ever introduced in this House. As I said before, the adjournment of the debate



will be moved, and if it is not accepted, I may yet proceed to read the whole of this evidence, so that I need not therefore devote more time to it just now.

The HON. W. F. LAMBERT said: Hon. gentlemen,—From what has been said to-night with respect to this proposed railway it would be very desirable that the Postmaster-General should have an opportunity to reply to the many speeches that have been made in opposition to it. More information is desired, and to enable the hon. gentleman to give the desired information, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The Hon. Mr. Lambert is under a misapprehension, as was also the hon. gentleman who formerly spoke in reference to my desire to reply. I have nothing to reply to. I am exactly in the same position as other hon. members are in this respect. I have made my speech in support of the motion, and I have nothing to reply to beyond that. Other hon. gentlemen may controvert what I have asserted as they please, or they may withhold observation or comment as they also may please. I do hope that the House will come to a decision forthwith in respect to this matter. This is not a subject to be discussed in the sense suggested by the Hon. Mr. Lambert. I simply made a speech as an individual—as a member of the Government, of course, also. I feel that the subject before the House is one deserving of the support of the country and of hon. members of this Chamber. But if it so happens that the vote is against the line—there is an end of it. Beyond that I do not go. I do not intend to speak before this Chamber again on the subject.

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

Question—That the report of the select committee be now adopted—put.

The HON. W. F. LAMBERT: Hon. gentlemen—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Spoken!

The HON. W. F. LAMBERT: I have moved the adjournment of the debate—that is all.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Spoken!

The HON. W. F. LAMBERT: I appeal to the ruling of the Presiding Chairman.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman moved a different motion. He moved that the debate be adjourned—that is not speaking to the question. The hon. gentleman is quite in order.

The HON. W. F. LAMBERT: The question before this House is one of very great magnitude. There is a great difference of opinion between hon. gentlemen sitting on that side of the House and on this side of the House as to the cost of the proposed extension from Roma street to Mayne. I speak for those who are very badly represented in this Chamber—those who have to assist to contribute to the Government of the country. There is a very strong feeling in many parts of the colony—in fact I may almost say in every part of the colony—against this proposed extension. It is considered by the residents of Queensland away from Brisbane as a very selfish action of those interested in Brisbane alone to ask for this luxurious expenditure while the colony is known to be in a state where economy should be the order of the day. As to the evidence taken before the select committee, I have seen many reports on proposed railways, and we know very well that every gentleman in the employ of the Government, when the Government wishes to pass a railway, must naturally be inclined to give it some favourable support.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I must really rise to a point of order. I think it is desirable that the business of the House should be conducted under the Standing Orders. Now, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Lambert) has made a motion on the main question, and I respectfully submit that he is not in order in again addressing this Chamber in the manner he has been doing now. No one can speak to the main question twice surely. I submit that the matter be referred to the President for his decision.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. gentleman is not in order in speaking to the main question. This is what "May" says:—

"A member speaking to a question of order must confine himself to that question and may not refer to the general tenor of a speech. So also a member who has moved or seconded the adjournment of a debate may not afterwards rise to move or second the adjournment of the House, having already spoken in the debate."

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Hear, hear!

Question put, and the House divided:—

#### CONTENTS, 16.

The Hons. T. Macdonald-Paterson, J. C. Heussler, D. F. Roberts, H. C. Wood, A. Heron Wilson, A. Raff, J. D. Macanish, W. F. Taylor, F. T. Brentnall, J. Swan, W. Horatio Wilson, F. H. Holberton, W. Pettigrew, E. B. Forrest, P. Macpherson, and J. S. Turner.

#### NOT-CONTENTS, 10.

The Hons. F. T. Gregory, A. C. Gregory, W. Forrest, A. J. Thynne, W. F. Lambert, W. G. Power, W. Aplin, J. C. Smyth, G. King, and F. H. Hart.

Motion resolved in the affirmative.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved:—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from the Brisbane Terminal station through Fortitude Valley to Mayne, on the Sandgate Railway, commencing at 0 miles 17 chains 0 links, and ending at 2 miles 34 chains 60 links, in length 2 miles 17 chains and 60 links, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 20th October.

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

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 2 o'clock.