

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

FRIDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 1886

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beg to state, of my own personal knowledge, having been present during the whole of the time, that the facts therein stated are not correctly set forth. The Presiding Chairman had left the chair, and hon. members were talking in a desultory manner amongst themselves. The House, in fact, was not sitting at the time. One hon. member said, "I should like to have a smoke." Another hon. member said to a third, in quite an ordinary way, "I will show you, if you will come out with me"—meaning to go out with him into the Library—"that you are altogether wrong." That harmless little remark was represented in the *Courier* as a challenge to fight. I think it is a most disgraceful perversion of facts, and I think that when the House is not in session, and the Presiding Chairman is out of the chair, we may converse here and do as we like just as much as if we were in the smoking-room. What I find fault with in the *Courier's* report is its perversion of facts—that an ordinary conversation, having really nothing in it, should have been reported to the public in this manner, and that an undeserved stigma should have been cast by the first newspaper in the colony upon this House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I take this opportunity of saying that it was somewhat of a surprise to me to read this morning that a quarrel had taken place last night between the Hon. W. Forrest and myself. I can dispose of the statement in one word. No such quarrel, either on personal or political matters, ever occurred.

The HON. W. FORREST said: Hon. gentlemen,—As a matter of personal explanation I may say that I was as much surprised as the hon. the Postmaster-General to read that I had had a quarrel with him last night. So far from quarrelling, I may say that after we left the Chamber we spent a very pleasant hour together. I often quarrel in the way of argument—if quarrel it can be called—with hon. members, but I never carry my quarrels outside the House.

The HON. J. D. MACANSH said: Hon. gentlemen,—I was sitting here, close to the Postmaster-General all the evening, and I can endorse all that he has said. Nothing of the kind occurred. The Presiding Chairman was out of the chair, and there was some talking and laughing and chaffing going on amongst the members who remained in the Chamber. Beyond that there was nothing; and it is to be deplored that such a report should have been put into the papers, and be carried to the southern colonies, where similar scenes have taken place occasionally, leading them to believe that our House here is no better than theirs. I will take this opportunity of making a personal explanation as to why it was that I did not speak on the question of the Warwick to St. George railway last night. It was my intention to have spoken, and believing as I did that that line of railway was second to none that has been brought before Parliament this session, I intended to have said a good deal on the subject. But it was arranged that some other members should speak before me, and I was therefore awaiting my turn. Unfortunately I missed my chance. When I was about to speak, the Presiding Chairman, to whose decision I shall always bow, ruled that the Hon. Mr. Raff and myself were too late. I had a good deal to say on the subject, and if I had the opportunity of making my speech, the conclusion arrived at would have been very different from what it was. Even if what I had to say did not persuade some hon. gentlemen on the other side to vote for the motion, at all events the time I should have occupied would have

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 26 November, 1886.

Personal Explanations.—Postponement.—South Brisbane Mechanics Institute Bill.—Maryborough to Gayndah Railway.—Cleveland Branch Railway.—Laidley Creek Branch Railway.—Bowen to Ayr Railway.—Gladstone to Bundaberg Railway.—Cooktown to Maytown Extension.—Treasury Bills Bill.—Appropriation Bill No. 2.—Adjournment.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN took the chair at half-past 2 o'clock.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

The HON. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—Before proceeding with business, I wish to bring under your notice an article which appeared in the *Courier* of this morning, headed "Scene in the Legislative Council," and beginning "A most discreditable scene occurred last night." I

enabled the Hon. Dr. Taylor, who was entirely with us, to have reached the Chamber and voted, with the result that the motion would have been carried. I deeply regret that through my unreadiness—I cannot say less—an important railway has been lost to the country.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—When I rose to speak last night I said that if the Hon. Mr. Macansh wished to speak I would give way to him, but he did not attempt to do so. He has now given us the reason why. As to this attack in the *Courier*, I take very little notice of such things. But they have made one great mistake. They have made out that I was in a muddled state. I had not tasted a glass of wine all the day; I had taken nothing but water and soup, and therefore I could not have been very far gone. The only way to prevent this sort of thing in the future is to ask the Presiding Chairman not to allow this reporter, whoever he may be, to come into the House any more. That will put a stop to these abusive attacks.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said: Hon. gentlemen,—In my opinion the remarks that appeared in the *Courier* this morning respecting the Hon. Mr. Taylor were merely to the effect that he was in good spirits. He had taken a lively interest in the matter under discussion, and I do not think the remarks in the paper can be construed as having any other meaning than that. More than that no one can say with respect to the hon. gentleman.

POSTPONEMENT.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, all the notices of motion on the paper were postponed, in order to allow the Orders of the Day to be dealt with.

SOUTH BRISBANE MECHANICS INSTITUTE BILL.

On the motion of the Hon. A. J. THYNNE, the House went into Committee of the Whole, to consider the message of the Legislative Assembly in regard to this Bill.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said the amendment made in the Bill by the Assembly, enabling the managing body of the institute to mortgage their present building instead of the property which they intended to acquire, would meet one of the difficulties which they had felt. He would move that the Legislative Assembly's amendment in clause 5 be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE moved that the Committee do not insist on the insertion of new clause 6.

Question put and passed.

The Committee resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions to the House.

The report was adopted, and the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly, with a message intimating that the Legislative Council agreed with the amendments made by the Legislative Assembly in clause 5, and the omission of new clause 6.

MARYBOROUGH TO GAYNDAH RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—Having considered the position of affairs with reference to the adoption of the plan and book of reference of the Warwick to St. George railway, I may at once intimate that I do not intend to proceed with that line.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR: Hear, hear! You have taken a great weight off my mind.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Notice No. 13 will, therefore, not be proceeded with. I now beg to move Notice of Motion No. 1, which stands in my name, and is to the following effect:—

“That the report of the select committee on the proposed line of railway from Maryborough to Gayndah be now adopted.”

I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House in dealing with the motion, because there are hon. gentlemen in this Chamber who are more intimate with the character of the country through which the railway will pass, and the various resources of the district, than I am. But I may be permitted to say a few words as to the soundness of the policy of adopting this proposed railway from Mungarr to Gayndah. It has been clearly shown by the evidence that the first section will tap a splendid tract of country which contains timber of various kinds, and that these great timber supplies are practically inexhaustible. It is also shown that the Maryborough timber industry is now suffering severely in consequence of the competition of American imported timber, and this railway will enable the timber to be brought more easily to market, and will give great facilities for getting large logs to the timber mills. Hon. members will observe that this line may be practically regarded as a due west line. The course from Maryborough is almost west as the crow flies, and the proposed first section ends at Clifton, at a distance of 25½ miles. We know that the success of the Wide Bay and Burnett district, and the development of the town of Maryborough, are largely due to the existence of the timber industry, and it will be a sad blow indeed to that important town if the policy involved in the construction of this railway is not approved of, because the railway will enable immense supplies of timber to be brought to the town from a great distance. Of course there are other industries in the district besides the timber industry, which the railway will doubtless also develop. But if the timber supply be not tapped, then the timber industry of Maryborough will have suffered a severe blow, and there can be no doubt that the population of the town will greatly diminish. There is considerable population in that district, and I think the census discloses the fact that the population of the Wide Bay and Burnett districts is 41,811. The population in Maryborough, exclusive of the population I have referred to as being that of the district, is 12,106 whites, to say nothing of the coloured population. So that we have, in round numbers, a population of from 53,000 to 55,000 people, the great bulk of whom are dependent upon the maintenance of the timber mills in Maryborough, which not only supply our own ports, but the other colonies as well. Some years ago it was quite a common thing for vessels to load with hardwood and pine for Sydney almost weekly at Maryborough, and I believe one or two agencies of the Maryborough mills were established at Sydney or Melbourne. The keen competition, coupled with the long distance which logs have now to be drawn, has doubtless diminished the exportation of timber to the other colonies; but I am quite satisfied that by offering facilities of transit millions of logs of timber that are known to exist in this part of the country will be brought down to the mills, and the industry will be established on a sound footing for the next fifty years. Now, having referred to the general resources of the country, I do not think I need specially refer, except in passing, to the large quantity of minerals which are known to exist in that country, besides the large extent of pastoral and agricultural country that will ultimately be tapped. We must bear in mind that when this

railway reaches Gayndah, and before it reaches that town a considerable amount of good country is passed through, and when the line reaches Gayndah most excellent pastoral and agricultural country is met with. That a large population will settle on the route of the railway, and beyond Gayndah, I have not the slightest doubt. There is no reason why that country—some of which is described as being not inferior to the Darling Downs country, and indeed as closely settled as some parts of the Darling Downs, in such places as Laidley Creek—should not become thickly populated. I feel that this is a railway that will bear examination, and it can be dealt with by this House, I think, and feel, and hope, in no other way than by approving of the resolution that I have moved.

THE HON. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—When this line was referred to the committee, I was decidedly opposed to it, and at the present I am decidedly opposed to it as it stands. So much of the line as is now proposed to be carried out will not force us to continue the line onwards in the direction set forth, and on which I do not agree. The fact is that, notwithstanding all the witnesses that were brought forward, and the evidence they gave as to what the line would lead to, it was very singular that not one of them was aware that it would be possible to divert the line away to the south-west through a gap in the range, and into a far finer piece of country than anything that this proposed railway would go through. Considering that the 25 miles will lead up to a point at which such a deviation can be made, I think it is highly probable that if this line is passed before the question comes before us again the inhabitants of Maryborough will discover what great facilities they have lost for opening up a good district, which, singularly enough, has been a sort of unknown land to them. Well, I do not in any way agree with the Postmaster-General when he says that, if the timber industry was to collapse, Maryborough would collapse. Far from it. The resources about Maryborough are so very great, both with regard to the mineral productions and the agricultural land, that there is very little risk of any material injury being done to Maryborough by a reduction in the production of timber. At the same time it would be undesirable that any interest should in any way be curtailed. I am not at all inclined to support this line of railway, but, at the same time, I will leave it to the House to decide. I know that when the first 25 miles were made it would be possible to turn the line to account, and make it very much more useful than if it was run on so as to compete with the Mount Perry line, instead of going through much better country to the south-west.

THE HON. A. HERON WILSON said: Hon. gentlemen,—What I will say will be very brief, because I think hon. gentlemen have had the evidence long enough in their hands to give it consideration and satisfy themselves that the evidence clearly shows that this line will pay from the very beginning. The hon. the Postmaster-General has shown us what the population of the town and district is, and if hon. gentlemen will think of it they will see that it is one-seventh of the population of the whole colony. When the £10,000,000 loan was passed, £250,000 was put aside for the express purpose of building a line from Maryborough west, and Gayndah was the place mentioned to which it should go. Now, Maryborough has not got a single railway of its own. The only line that it has is a national line—part of the coastal system—from which it gained a little in trade with Gympie; but that will soon be taken away when

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the line is extended to Brisbane. Now, with regard to the evidence. My hon. friend, Mr. Gregory, states that the first 25 miles will be of very little use; but I think I know the country even better than he does, and the agricultural land I can state is far more abundant than anyone in this House would believe. I hold in my hand a letter from a friend of mine who states that he has only just returned from a trip up the line as far as Mount Shamrock to within 15 miles of Gayndah. He states that he went up to see the agricultural farms, and that the country looks like paddocks of lucerne. Well, gentlemen, if you have country like that, where the grass grows so luxuriantly that it looks like lucerne, you cannot say it is poor country; and therefore, I have no hesitation in stating that as soon as these farms are thrown open the applications for them will be three and four deep. I have not the least doubt that these farms will be rushed, but it depends a good deal upon this railway, and if the railway is not approved of, then the land will lie there unoccupied until doomsday. I may state that the mills of Maryborough are drawing timber a distance of 35 miles from the outskirts of the reserves, and that is one great reason why we are not able to compete against American timber. I am quite sure that the Postmaster-General was perfectly right in what he stated, that if the timber trade was withdrawn from Maryborough it would only become a town of passing. I have been in the district for twenty-three years. I know it as well as possible, and I can endorse what Mr. Gregory states with regard to its mineral resources. For instance, there is a new goldfield known as Mount Shamrock, and I have heard some experts say that field is far before what Gympie was in the early days. Look what Gympie has done in the last eighteen years! I believe that Gympie is now the second or third town in the colony in point of population. And if Gympie has reached that position in eighteen years, what may not Mount Shamrock and Chowery Creek be in the same time, for, as I say, the show there is said to be better than it was first at Gympie? Before the Gympie and Maryborough railway was made the population of both towns was hardly as much as the population of Maryborough is to-day, and there can be no doubt that the construction of that line has assisted largely in the increased population and importance of both Maryborough and Gympie. It is unnecessary for me to enter upon the details of the evidence, but there are one or two points to which I would like to refer. Concerning the evidence given by Mr. North, I may say that he does not know much about the country, as will be seen from his answer to the question—"How far have you been on either side of the line?" His answer to that was, "About five miles"; and I know to the contrary that, except about Clifton, where he used to go now and again for good feed, he was never more than about a mile on each side of the line. He was asked what was the general character of the country for construction purposes, and the reply was, "It is fairly good; the earthworks are not heavy." At question 17 he was asked, "Between the Maryborough line and the end of the section is there good timber for sleepers and bridge-work?" and the reply was, "I do not think so; it has been culled." At question 34 he was asked—

"But you have given us to understand that over the whole distance of twenty-five miles it has been culled? I did not mean to say that.

"You mean to say that it has been culled for the first ten miles of this line? About ten miles."

I grant that for seven or eight miles the timber is culled, as the proprietor of the Mungarr mill

built a small branch line there and culled the timber near it; but from that point right on to Clifton there is as fine timber as was ever brought to Maryborough, and I make that statement because I am getting it myself. Mr. North's statement is the only derogatory statement in the whole of the evidence, and all the other witnesses admit that it would be a splendid line to construct, as it would open up a large amount of agricultural country, and would be the means of settling a large population in the district. I think it necessary only to refer to some of Mr. Davidson's evidence. Mr. Davidson says, in answer to question 101, "The soil is good"; in answer to question 103, "It is fairly watered"; and to question 105, "It is good scrub soil." At question 125 he is asked, "Would it settle a large population?" and the answer is, "Considerable." At question 122 he is asked—

"The rich lands of Gigoongan, Glenbar, Teebar, and Clifton—how far do they extend from the railway? About 5 or 6 miles; and they extend for a considerable distance running up the creeks."

I know for a fact that had this man North gone 3 or 4 miles off the line, he would have got to the Teebar, Gigoongan, and Glenbar rich soil flats. The whole of the report goes to prove that this line to Gayndah will settle a very large population, and be the means of keeping the industries of Maryborough going for a generation.

The Hon. J. TAYLOR said: Hon. gentlemen,—This line is known in the House as a "log-rolling" line, and I may say that the information that has come to my ears about this line has perfectly astonished me. It looks considerably like a "log-rolling" line, when we find it supported by an hon. gentleman who spoke dead against the Government, and then voted for other lines. The hon. gentleman made out a very poor case indeed for the expenditure of the vast sum of money which the construction of this railway will involve. I have had the pleasure of talking to a gentleman who comes from a few miles out of Gayndah, and he told me that two bullock-drays a month carry all that is required in Gayndah. A young friend of mine who lives near Degilbo says that a more wretched proposition was never invented than the proposed line. It will be a very difficult line to make, and will cost a large sum of money, and it is one of those lines which this House should throw out at any cost.

The Hon. F. T. BRETNALL said: Hon. gentlemen,—It is not my intention to take very long in discussing this line, because I do not know the country; but from a cursory consideration of this report, and from information which has come to my ears—and which is certainly not similar to the information received by the gentleman who preceded me—I am fully satisfied that this railway is one which this House should carry. I am a good deal surprised that gentlemen who are manifestly prepared to vote for railways in any part of the country, carrying certain kinds of colonial productions, seem indisposed to assist in making a railway that will help one of the most important, if not the most important industry in the colony. The Hon. Mr. Taylor said just now that this is a "log-rolling" line, and the primary object of the railway certainly is that it shall be a log-carrying line. There is very little "log-rolling" about it, except it be the rolling of logs from the ranges to put them on trucks on the railway. I do not know of any political "log-rolling" in connection with it. I assume that the Hon. A. Heron Wilson exercised his own intelligence in the votes he has given on the railways that have already been passed by this House. I say this, as it is my

intention to vote for this line. Mr. Wilson has never intimated to me the slightest wish that I should vote for it, and so far as I am concerned I am perfectly free from any accusation of "log-rolling" in connection with it. I made no proposition to the hon. gentleman, nor did he make any to me. I shall give my own independent vote, on my deliberate judgment that, if the timber industry is to be maintained in this colony, it behoves the Government and Parliament of the country to render it every facility, as the competition with imported timber is now so great. Unless the large resources of timber in the colony are made accessible in the way it is proposed to reach these timber resources at Mungarr, the timber industry of the colony must go down, and an immense number of people will be thrown out of employment. Already that competition is made patent enough by the number of unemployed men we have. It has been made apparent that the industry is at present in a very low condition, and it behoves us to make an effort to revive that industry by the construction of such a railway as this. We are all willing that railways should be made in all parts of the colony where they are wanted, though we may know that some of them will not pay at present; but do not let us pass a railway of this kind that is going to penetrate immense timber resources, simply because it is a railway going through a timber country. We know that it frequently occurs that good timber country is found to be good agricultural country, and after we have taken the timber off it we will have something left behind which can be utilised in perpetuity. I hope the House will carry this resolution.

The Hon. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—Reference has been made to the report and the evidence by which it is sustained, but no reference has been made to the draft report furnished by the Hon. Augustus Gregory, which is included in the paper, and I would like to draw attention to that draft report before we come to any decision upon this line. The report says:—

"I. Evidence has been taken showing that the country in the vicinity of the proposed railway possesses enormous timber resources of great value, and considerable areas of agricultural land; and also discloses the existence of large tracts of excellent agricultural and pastoral land above Gayndah—the proposed terminus.

"II. That the mineral resources of the district will be materially developed by the construction of the proposed line.

"III. The estimated cost of the proposed work appears to be moderate considering the nature of the country.

"IV. The Committee recommend that the plan, section, and book of reference be approved."

The draft report, however, furnished by the Hon. Mr. A. C. Gregory, is as follows:—

"Your committee have examined the witnesses named in the margin, and find that the proposed railway is the commencement of a line which it is intended shall be ultimately extended to the Upper Burnett district at Gayndah, that its length will be 25 miles 27 chains 50 links, and that its estimated cost is £1,01,508.

"That the line traverses a rough country, which necessitates curves of 7 chains radius on gradients of 1 in 50. The land is generally of second-class quality, the good timber has been culled from the forest, and pine timber has now to be brought from the ranges beyond Gigoongan. That, except timber, there is no evidence of the existence of any important traffic, and that even when extended to Gayndah it will not facilitate access to the southern portion of the Burnett district towards Nanaingo, while the Mount Perry Railway is only 35 miles to the north, so that the area which a railway from Mungarr to Gayndah would afford access would be of comparatively limited extent.

"Three other railways from the coast towards the Upper Burnett district have already been commenced, one being open for traffic to Mount Perry, as far inland as Gayndah, and only 35 miles to the north.

"That as regards the general policy of railway extension in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts, it appears that of the four competing lines the extension of that to Kilkivan towards Boonara, Mondure, and Baramba would open up the largest area of good agricultural and pastoral land adapted for close settlement, while it would give access to extensive forests of pine and other valuable timber.

"Your committee, taking into consideration that the prospective extension of the line under consideration would involve a large expenditure—£344,000—without equivalent advantage to the colony, do not recommend that it be approved by the Legislative Council."

That is the opinion of the Hon. Mr. Gregory, and I must say, from what I know of that gentleman, his very extensive knowledge of the country, and the accuracy of his judgment, I am very much inclined to take his view of the case.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE said: Hon. gentlemen,—There are one or two features of this debate which are amusing. In the first place, the line is put forward as one intended to save Maryborough from destruction, and in the next place it is put forward as a line intended to supply the colony with timber. It is not very long since the Maryborough and Kilkivan line was before this Chamber, and one of the great reasons adduced for the construction of that line was that it would open up a magnificent timber country that would supply the mills of Maryborough with a large quantity of timber. That railway has only just been completed and has not yet been opened for traffic, and from the arguments offered in support of this line, one would imagine that the timber said to exist there had mysteriously disappeared. If that line was advocated upon true grounds, hon. gentlemen must come to the conclusion that what is now said about the timber supply is merely nonsense, otherwise the House must have been misled by the statement made in support of the Maryborough-Kilkivan line. I am quite satisfied there is a large quantity of timber to be got at by the Kilkivan line; but there has been no attempt yet made to reach it, and from the discussion upon this line this evening, it appears to me it has been initiated solely for the purpose of getting money to spend in the district, irrespective of any ultimate and permanent advantage to the colony. I think the draft report furnished by the Hon. A. C. Gregory puts the matter as clearly as it can be put. Hon. gentlemen must bear in mind the condition of the finances of the colony at the present time. In 1883 the interest charge upon our loans was something like £600,000 a year, and this year, including a sum of about £30,000 as a kind of commission on the floating of loans, our interest charge will be £900,000, showing that in three years our interest charge alone has increased to the extent of 50 per cent. Hon. gentlemen may say that another £300,000 or £400,000 will be a mere drop in the bucket, and will not matter either way. They may treat it in that way if they like, but I repeat that it appears to me that this line has been put forward upon grounds which are not the true grounds for the proposal. The line is one, which has been shown by the Hon. A. C. Gregory to be one that will result in no substantial benefit to the country, and it is one which ought not to meet with the approval of this House.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER said: Hon. gentlemen,—I understand from the Hon. A. C. Gregory that the part of the line we are called upon to deal with will not be in any way useless, but on the contrary it will take us to a point from which hereafter the country may make a railway that will go through a very rich district. I therefore cannot see why we should not vote for this section of the line. I understood the Hon. Mr. Thynne to say that he does

not believe the representations made as to the large quantity of timber country that would be opened up by this line.

The Hon. A. J. THYNNE: What I stated was that I believed the representations upon which the line was brought forward were not the true representations, and that there is an ample supply of timber now available for Maryborough without building this line.

The Hon. J. C. HEUSSLER: Just so. I only say, further, that the more timber country is opened up the better it will be for the colony. Let us by all means open up as much useful country as we possibly can—not going in one favoured direction. There is another question, and that is that a great deal of very excellent agricultural land will be opened up by this line. That has not been referred to by any speaker, and it is an additional reason why we should not slight this railway. I place as much value upon the Hon. A. C. Gregory's statements as any hon. member can, but we each have a right to vote as we think right upon the line before us. I think the Hon. Mr. Gregory himself ought to vote for it. So far as log-rolling is concerned, there is always a little of that going on, and I think the Hon. Mr. Taylor is rather in a glass house in talking about log-rolling. He had better be a little more careful in talking about that. I have read the report, and can only come to the conclusion that it will be a very useful line, and one which will be a great benefit to the second largest town in the colony. We ought not to deprive that centre of population of an industry which is growing to such a large extent. I need not refer to anything that has been said by hon. gentlemen about the timber trade, more than to say that, as we have to compete with American timber, it is our duty to do everything we can to develop the trade in the colony, and that it is a most essential thing in a new settlement. I shall certainly vote for the line.

The Hon. J. C. FOOTE said: Hon. gentlemen,—I try to be as subservient as possible to railways, and consider that we are putting too great a restriction upon their construction. We hear a great many things about railways before they are built, and I have noticed their working after they have been constructed, and my sincere opinion is that the more railways are constructed the better it will be for the colony. I do not think that money can be better expended than in the making of railways. We cannot construct them without increasing the value of our property and doing very much in the interest and welfare of the Treasury. As soon as we cease to construct railways, the complaints about unemployed people will greatly increase, and become more oppressive. The Chief Engineer, Mr. Stanley, in his answer to the committee, says:—

"Have you framed an estimate of the cost of constructing the line from Mungah to Clifton? Yes. For the section now before Parliament, 25 miles 2½ chains, the total estimated cost is £101,898, being equivalent to £4,021 per mile.

"Have you framed any estimate of the cost of the line from Clifton to Gayndah? I have not. I have certain information furnished me by the late inspecting surveyor, Mr. Phillips, in regard to the probable cost, but that can only be taken as very approximate. I can furnish the information if it is required.

"Do you think this railway is likely to pay? I think it holds out a very fair prospect of getting remunerative traffic."

I submit that is always the case. Bad land will always be bad land until we construct a railway. A railway soon opens it to population, which means prosperity to the colony and prosperity to the Treasury.

"Not only will large quantities of timber probably be brought to Maryborough by it, but eventually, I think, there will be considerable settlement on both sides of the line. It is chiefly grazing country, but in certain parts there is land suitable for agriculture as well.

"Anything else but agricultural country? There is the traffic from the mining district. The line passes near Mount Shamrock; and if the copper-mines are worked in that district again, which will probably be the case, we shall secure the traffic from them.

"Do you consider it is the best way of getting to the west, taking into consideration that there is a railway from Bundaberg to Mount Perry, and another from Maryborough to Kilkivan? I consider that of the different routes that have been proposed this one is the best, taking all things into consideration."

As a matter of conscience, I feel bound to vote for the railway.

Question put, and the House divided:—

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The Hons. T. Macdonald-Paterson, J. D. Maccaish, W. Horatio Wilson, J. C. Hensler, A. Heron Wilson, H. C. Wood, D. F. Roberts, F. H. Hart, F. T. Brentnall, J. C. Foote, J. S. Turner, J. C. Smith, F. H. Holberton, W. G. Power, and J. Swan.

NOT-CONTENTS, 7.

The Hons. F. T. Gregory, A. G. Gregory, A. J. Thynne, J. Taylor, W. Aplin, G. King, and A. Raft.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Maryborough to Gayndah, section No. 1, from 12 miles 21 chains 86 links, on the Maryborough Railway, at Mungarr, to 25 miles 27 chains 50 links, near Clifton, in length 25 miles 27 chains 50 links, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on 3rd instant.

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

Question put and passed.

CLEVELAND BRANCH RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving that the report of the select committee on the proposed Cleveland Branch Railway be now adopted, said: Hon. gentlemen,—I hope that this railway will receive the same consideration that the last one did. This line begins at a point on the South Brisbane Railway and takes a north-easterly course, running parallel with the Brisbane River down to a point near Lytton, where it turns to the right and takes a south-easterly direction all the way to Cleveland. I know most of the country, having been over it from time to time, and I think the House will agree that it is desirable that a railway to Cleveland should touch at some point near Lytton, having in view that that is considered a strategic point for defence purposes. After an experience of the traffic that has resulted from the Sandgate Railway, I do not think there can be any doubt that this is a line which will pay not only the interest on the expenditure, but also the working expenses as well. There is a considerable population along the whole route, and many more people are likely to settle there, as there are beautiful sites and healthy country available for a flow of population from the city. In this climate, and in view of the great increase in the population of this city, I think it is wise for the Government of the day to give facilities for the people to live in the country if they choose to do so. On general grounds, and upon sanitary grounds particularly, it is better that the population should not be too thickly centred in our towns and cities. Hon. gentlemen have doubtless examined the plans and sections of this line, and I need add nothing more. The report gives direct information on the subject, by the engineer, Mr. Stanley, and also by the surveyor, Mr. Lethem. The evidence of other witnesses, very old residents there, shows that there are excellent prospects for the railway.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I have not been able to give the same attention to the details of this line as I have to some of the others that have been brought before the House. Having travelled over the country at various times during the last twenty years, and being in a formal way acquainted with the requirements of this part of the country, I do not see the objections to the line that I do to very many of the others of a similar character. In other words, it is a line not simply to run into a district to accommodate a few agriculturists and a few timber merchants; but it is one that possesses advantages that are likely to be a benefit in future. If it had only been a temporary measure to give occupation to unemployed labour, I should have set my face against it at once. But the first half of it is to my mind the most important part, because it gives means of access to the right bank of the Brisbane River, between Brisbane and its entrance into Moreton Bay. Of course there are many parts of that water frontage which are not available either from the shallowness of the water or the steepness of its shores, which render it comparatively inaccessible; still there are a number of points to which the railway would give access in the shortest possible way from the metropolis—points where shipping may lie, and produce be carried away, which it might not be necessary or desirable to have brought to the central wharves in the city. I am looking a good way ahead, as the Postmaster-General does, for I do not say that this line will be very extensively availed of just at present, but it is almost certain that in the near future several points will be availed of in the direction I am looking upon. Then there is the question of relieving the coal wharves here; this railway will enable coal to be loaded further down the river. I am aware that ships going away loaded with coal are obliged to take in a certain portion immediately for the sake of ballast to enable them to get away from the wharves, but that would not prevent their taking in the bulk of their cargo further down the river. Another thing is, that if the Government wharf happened to be too crowded to admit of ships loading at it, they would have to load at private wharves where the charges would be very high; and it would be possible to save expense very materially to load at wharves where other classes of goods were not taken in. It may be said, on the other hand, that there would be the cost of carrying the coal by rail to wharves lower down the river, and there would, of course, be a charge made, something proportionate to the distance the coal has to be carried. Still, I do not believe it would be sufficient to militate against the establishment of coal wharves in the localities I have indicated. Looking at the scheme from a sentimental, or rather from a sanitary, point of view, it would enable persons whose business is in the city of Brisbane to reside out of the city whither it would be easy for them to come in and out daily. I am not in favour of the centralisation of population. It has been the ruin of many parts of the world, and we are beginning to find it so here. We have concentrated in Brisbane and the other large towns of the colony a population which is far beyond what is desirable or healthy to the State, and the more we decentralise the better it will be for the country. We have a very large non-productive population in the towns. They may be employed in building public works or private residences; but that is not what I call productive work. It is very necessary to erect large public buildings and large warehouses; but these are not the class of works which really add to the wealth of the country. They are merely the means by which wealth can be

utilised. Wealth has to come out of the country in the shape of agricultural and pastoral produce, minerals, and a variety of other things. Therefore centralisation is objectionable. However, it is not my place now to offer a long dissertation on that question, since I am advocating the construction of a line of railway mainly to give better means of finding healthy residences to the inhabitants of the metropolis. I only make the statement with regard to decentralisation to show that my motive in recommending this railway has nothing whatever to do with encouraging the centralisation of population in the metropolitan districts. Having looked over the plans, and knowing the country pretty well, I am of opinion that the best route has been adopted. Indeed, had the line been proposed to be carried direct from here to Cleveland, I should not only have had a doubt in my mind about it, but I should have felt it my duty to have condemned it, and prevent its being carried out. Its utility would have been as nothing compared with the one now under consideration, especially seeing that we have another line of railway leading away to the south-east, beyond Beenleigh, in a direction in which it may be extended with advantage. Under all the circumstances, I am prepared to support the motion.

The HON. G. KING said: Hon. gentlemen,—I hope it is the intention of the Government to make a branch line from this railway to the fort at Lytton. But I suppose that as the land defences of Brisbane are there that will follow as a matter of necessity.

The HON. F. T. BRETNALL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I think I may safely say that of all the railway routes that have been under the consideration of the Chamber this session, or are likely to come under its consideration, the one now before the House has been the most discussed. There has been more strife over the route that this line should take than over the route of any other line that has come or will come before us this session. There have been more depositions, I think I may safely say, to the Minister for Works, in regard to the railway between Brisbane and Cleveland, than with regard to any other railway either in existence or in project in this colony. I mention this to show that a great deal of public interest is taken in the question now before the House. I may go still further and say that since the plans of this line were laid upon the table of the Assembly, and transmitted to the table of this House, no other set of plans have been so much studied. I am very glad that there has been this great amount of interest taken in the Cleveland railway. I should like to say first of all that as the plans are represented to us it will be an incomplete line; but it is intended that at this end of the proposed line the connection with the South Brisbane branch should not be the nearest approach of this line to the centre of the city. It is intended by-and-by—I rather expected the Postmaster-General would have mentioned it in moving the adoption of the report—that this line, in connection with a series of lines that run down to the southern part of the colony from Brisbane, shall be brought to Melbourne street. That is a most important matter, because the present terminus at Stanley street is utterly inadequate. It is something like the terminus at Roma street—it does not bring the people near enough to the business centre of the town. If this railway were not to come to Melbourne street ultimately, I should have much hesitation in voting for it; but as it will by-and-by—as the plans themselves indicate—be carried very near to the bridge, I am satisfied that it will be the means of settling a very large extra

amount of what we may call suburban people along its route. For the first four miles along the route there are really magnificent sites for suburban residences. Already there is a very considerable suburban population settled on the first mile and a-half or two miles of the proposed line. I am speaking of the distance from its junction with the South Brisbane branch, not from its ultimate terminus in Melbourne street. Buildings are going up in all directions. But that is not all. It will not only command passenger traffic for the first four miles, but it will nearly touch the river at Hemmant, where it may some time serve the coal traffic referred to by the Hon. Mr. Gregory. One reason, I believe, why the present route was adopted was that it would go within two miles of Lytton fort, to which a short branch could very easily be made, thus connecting it with the metropolis. A short distance beyond Hemmant, Wynnum is reached, and between Wynnum and Cleveland there are many beautiful sites for residences. Until Tingalpa Creek is crossed there is not much land available for agricultural purposes, but thenceforward to Wellington Point there is a large area of magnificent chocolate soil, eminently suitable for fruit-growing. Already extensive orange groves and banana groves have been planted there and are thriving, and I am certain from my own personal observation that a good deal of fruit will be produced in that fertile district. But whether that be or not, there will be a large residential population, composed to a considerable extent of persons engaged in business in the city settled along the route, just as they have gone out of the city to Sandgate, and making their homes there for a part if not for the whole of the year. The Hon. Mr. Gregory said that the first half of the line contained the whole of its advantages. I differ from his opinion on that point, although the first half of the line possesses very many advantages for suburban settlement—that is, for the settlement of people whose business is transacted in the city, and who go outside the city when their business is finished, to their homes; the second half of the line is quite as suitable for people of that kind as the first, as it runs along the shore all the way from Wynnum to Cleveland. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Gregory that, as far as probabilities of settlement are concerned, the Government have decided upon the best route. I am satisfied that in a very few years a large number of people will have settled along the line of this railway, and that it will be of very great benefit to the business portion of the Brisbane community.

The HON. J. C. HEUSSLER said: Hon. gentlemen,—While I agree partly with what has fallen from the last speaker, I differ in many respects from him and the Hon. Mr. Gregory. The line does not run, as it pretends, to Lytton, and in places too near the river, often through swampy country, and only in a roundabout way to Cleveland. It is, as the Minister for Works said, a “jerrymandering” line going in all directions, which would be—he said to a deputation—an absurdity to make, and yet he makes it. For strategical purposes, in my opinion, the line ought to have gone direct to Lytton and branched off at a convenient point towards the head of navigation of Tingalpa Creek somewhere near the rocks, for I would point out that Tingalpa Creek is a most important watercourse, and ought in no way to be obstructed by a railway. I have been over the ground, and I speak from personal knowledge when I say that there is a great amount of traffic on the Tingalpa Creek at the present time. It would be a great pity to destroy the water communication of the people who reside in that locality. Three or four miles from the creek there are extensive coal measures,

and it will be an immense disadvantage to the future opening up of the coal trade there if the line is carried out as proposed. This is a great objection I have to the line. After the station of Coorparoo is passed, and the line is carried on to Lytton on the left, the other arm should go on the right towards Tingalpa, as stated, then round to Wellington Point, and so forth. I think that, for the present, we should have all that is wanted, and that that would be a much better line, because it will go through high and dry ground with many beautiful sites for suburban residences.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed Cleveland branch railway, commencing at Woollongabba, on the South Brisbane Branch Railway, and ending at Cleveland, in length 21 miles 4 chains 2 links, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 3rd instant.

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

Question put and passed.

LAIDLEY CREEK BRANCH RAILWAY.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY, in moving—

That the report of the select committee on the proposed Laidley Creek Branch Railway be now adopted—said: Hon. gentlemen,—I am placed in a peculiar position in dealing with this matter, having carried an amended report in a select committee which is against the work proposed. The committee took all the evidence they could procure, as will be seen from the report circulated among hon. members. The evidence as circulated is very meagre, and refers to a district which is of very small extent. Of course, there is no reason to have a very long or elaborate report, or to take very much evidence. The evidence which was taken is that of the different engineers and other officials who were available for the purpose of giving evidence. The committee adopted the very unusual course of obtaining evidence from the members for the district, who were supposed to be well acquainted with all the circumstances, and everything that might reasonably be said in support of the line here was taken in obtaining the evidence of both witnesses to get as full evidence and information as possible to guide us in coming to a fair decision, and also so that the House might be furnished with all the information that could possibly be obtained. The result has been, putting it briefly, that the committee cannot recommend the railway, and I cannot do better than quote the words of the report:—

“I. Your committee having taken the evidence of the Chief Engineer of the Central and Southern division, and that of Mr. White, one of the members of the Legislative Assembly for the district, it discloses the following facts:—

- (1) That the cost of construction of the 11 miles would be £33,000, and that of maintenance, £1,100 per annum.
- (2) That the interest on the cost of construction may be taken at £1,320, which, added to maintenance, £1,100, and working expenses at £500, gives a total expenditure of £2,920 per annum.
- (3) That, taking the highest probable amount of produce to be conveyed over the line at 10,000 tons (a very liberal estimate), it would only yield a return, at the existing rates for agricultural produce, of some £600 or £700, leaving an annual deficiency of £2,220.”

I think that the whole of the question is met by that report. The district is a very limited one. The line is not the commencement of a line which can be carried further, but the section proposed to be constructed is the entire line. From my own personal knowledge, I can assure the House that the line could not be carried a mile further with any reasonable prospect of

being of any use at all. Under those circumstances, the committee had no other option than to act as named in the report:—

“II. Your committee believe that the construction of the proposed railway is premature, and, therefore, cannot recommend it for approval.”

I think I need not say anything more, but now leave the matter in the hands of the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—I must express my regret that this little railway, for the benefit of the small farmers, is likely to be dealt with this afternoon in a manner antagonistic to the views of the Government. I understand from the views of the hon. gentleman, which have been named to me privately, that it will be useless for me at this stage of the session to make anything of a fight for this line, because it will only end in my being defeated. Hon. gentlemen have been courteous enough to give me their views of the question very clearly and plainly, but I have to express my very deep regret that this House is apparently likely to fall in with the views of the Hon. F. T. Gregory, that this railway is premature. Considering that the line traverses a little district which is extremely rich in its soil, and which produces numerous crops, such as potatoes, hay, corn, and other articles of consumption, I think it is a great pity that the thriving farmers of the district should be deprived of it. However, as was observed in the committee by the Hon. Mr. Gregory, there is nothing to prevent this railway being brought forward next session, and I hope the country will then accept it, and that the decision this evening will only be to the effect that it is premature to the extent of six months.

Question put and negatived.

BOWEN TO AYR RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving—

That the report of the select committee on the proposed railway from Bowen towards Ayr be now adopted—

said: Hon. gentlemen,—I understand every member here present is agreed as to the policy of the construction of this, the first section of what will be a line from Townsville to Bowen, and under the circumstances, and knowing that that is the feeling of hon. members, I will not detain the House any longer, but formally move the motion standing in my name.

The Hon. F. T. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I shall hardly have occasion to use more words in expressing my opinion upon this line than the Postmaster-General in introducing the motion. All I have to say is that I have fortunately—I may say fortunately, as it might have led to a great deal of discussion otherwise—taken some considerable pains to acquire knowledge last year, when on a trip up north, in regard to this very line, it being at that time an undecided question whether the terminus should be at Ayr or Haughton Gap. Still, I took some trouble to obtain information, and the result is such as to enable me to approve of the motion now before the House. Had it not been for that circumstance the line would not have been approved of, because the information which was furnished us by the Government was so meagre, so deficient, so defective, so almost totally wanting beyond the mere plans and sections, that I should have felt myself bound to oppose the approval of the line until we were furnished with better information. This is the third or fourth time that I have had occasion to find the same fault with the action of the Government—that they thrust railways upon us one after another, without affording any information whatever, or sufficient time to acquire it—and I, for one, say that

if any measure of this sort is again brought before the House, I shall oppose it most strongly until the information is forthcoming. The Government bring forward a line from Dan to Beersheba and ask us to pass it without telling us the character of the country, the nature of the products, or the population of the district, and hon. members who are not personally acquainted with the country have no means of obtaining this information. However, as I have stated, in the present instance, after the trouble I have personally taken, I can recommend the line. I am not quite sure that the members of the House have equal information, but I think the committee have been willing to pass a report in favour of this line, which they would hardly have done but for the information which I was able to afford them. I shall therefore support the motion.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Bowen towards Ayr, section No. 1, in length 30 miles, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 4th instant.

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

Question put and passed.

GLADSTONE TO BUNDABERG RAILWAY.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving—

That the report of the select committee on the proposed railway from Gladstone to Bundaberg be now adopted—

said: Hon. gentlemen,—The report you have in your hands is one I can safely ask you to adopt. Hon. gentlemen will observe that the committee were unanimous in their opinion that the railway should be agreed to if the curves were reduced to not less than 10 chains radius, and the grades not to exceed 1 in 50. Having in view the necessity that the highest speed obtainable on our railways should be obtainable on this line, which will be largely a passenger and mail line, hon. gentlemen will very readily agree with the views of the committee on the subject. The Hon. A. C. Gregory gave the committee very considerable assistance in coming to these conclusions. Although it is somewhat of a technical matter, still, as laymen, we know very well that wherever there are sharp curves and steep grades it is almost impossible to travel speedily with any safety at all. This railway will be another link in the chain of what may be termed our coast railway system, and whenever it reaches Gladstone that town will prosper as it has never prospered before. We know that they have there an excellent harbour, and that the place is well fitted to be a health resort, and I believe Gladstone will become a great resort for invalids from many parts of the coastal district, and from the far West, on the Central Railway. The main point in favour of this line, however, is that it is part of the main trunk coastal line, and will be used largely for passenger and mail traffic, and in addition to that, it will develop, as will be seen from the evidence, a great deal of sound pastoral country, and a good deal also of good agricultural country. It was shown to the committee that there are a good many small settlers along the line, and more will be sure to follow the construction of the line, and a fair amount of local traffic will naturally be the result of that settlement. I beg to move that the report be adopted.

The Hon. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—I look at this line as an important line in carrying out the scheme of a coast railway

from the southern border north. This line will take the Coast Railway from the southern border to within fifty miles of Rockhampton. I consider it important that we should approve of the policy of this line, because it will have the effect of bringing what is in reality the best part of the coast of Queensland in direct railway communication with the seat of Government. No doubt gentlemen who reside in Brisbane are of opinion that there can be no finer port than Brisbane, but if we view the fact that the mail traffic coming down from Torres Straits will of necessity run in a more direct line into Keppel Bay than into any other port on the coast of Queensland, and that Keppel Bay is the most commodious and the best harbour we possess, this implies that the mails will quickly arrive at that point, and then they can be transmitted by rail to Brisbane. It requires a run of about 100 miles from Keppel Bay on the way to Brisbane, without going any nearer to that port in a direct line, because vessels have to round Sandy Island, and it is of the greatest importance that the mails should be landed at Keppel Bay and brought in as direct a line as possible to Brisbane. If that could be done they would arrive here in about half the time that would be required for their conveyance by steamer. I think I have said enough to show why this is an important line, and further, why I consider it ought to be so constructed as to be capable of rapid and safe passenger traffic. If the line was to be constructed merely for traffic in goods and timber and what might be called the local traffic of the line, it would perhaps not have been necessary to incur any more expense than would be requisite for constructing a line according to the plans brought before us; but as the plans and sections laid before us are found to include sharp curves and steep gradients, the committee consider such a line unsuitable for rapid passenger traffic. We had no means of ascertaining what would be the cost of the line if it were so amended as to bring these sharp curves and steep gradients to a proper scale, and we had therefore to make what is, in fact, a qualified report to this House. In the first section of the report the committee state:—

“That having considered the policy of the construction of this portion of the North Coast system of railways, and that it will probably be of special value for the transit of mails (local and European), and the conveyance of passengers, they approve generally of the policy of a railway from Gladstone to Bundaberg.”

Then they point out in the next section why they do not unconditionally recommend the plans, sections, and book of reference, as laid before them for the approval of this House, because—

“It appears from the plans and sections of the survey that curves of 6 chains radius, and gradients steeper than 1 in 40, have been adopted; these, however, are disapproved of because they are unsuited for the passage of fast mail trains or the exigencies of military defence.”

The recommendation therefore follows that while the committee approved of the policy of the railway, they were unable to recommend the adoption of the line as it stood, and they therefore, in the 3rd section of the report:—

“Recommend that a new survey be made so as to reduce the curves to not less than 10 chains radius, and that the gradients shall not exceed 1 in 50.”

It might be supposed that this practical shelving of the railway for this session might be detrimental to the progress of the line; but it is perfectly clear that the survey will occupy the whole of the time between the present day and when this House may be next in session. There will be plenty to do in carrying out that survey, and, therefore, there will be no real delay in addition to that which would necessarily have been incurred in making the survey, even if we

had unconditionally approved of the line as it at present stands. I need not detain the House longer, as the motion is only for the approval of the policy of the line, and the committee do not recommend to this House the plan, section, and book of reference as they are before this House, and we suggest to the Government that they should make a fresh survey, and put the line before the House in a form in which I have no doubt we shall be able to accept it.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Gladstone to Bundaberg, in length 106 miles 46 chains 50 links, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 3rd instant.

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

The HON. A. C. GREGORY said: Hon. gentlemen,—If we were to pass this resolution it would be tantamount to reversing the resolution we have just arrived at. Our previous resolution was to the effect that we could not approve of the plans, sections, and book of reference of this railway as laid upon the table of the House, and if we pass this resolution we would be exactly reversing our previous resolution by affirming that we do approve of these plans. The last paragraph of the report of the committee says:—

“That they therefore recommend that a new survey be made so as to reduce the curves to not less than 10 chains radius, and that the gradients shall not exceed 1 in 50.”

The report does not approve of the line as placed before the committee, but states that it would be a useful line if carried out under the conditions recommended. That was thoroughly understood by the select committee, and I therefore, having explained that, shall, as a point of order, object to this motion being entertained by the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said: Hon. gentlemen,—With the consent of the House, I would like to make an explanation in reply to the Hon. Mr. Gregory. The Chief Engineer, Mr. Stanley, gave the committee information during their deliberations to the effect that a fresh survey would only require to be made at two or three points on the proposed railway where the sharp curves and steep gradients existed. I was under the apprehension that the recommendation of the committee referred to that. I have had no communication with anybody on the subject since I left the committee, and I looked upon the 3rd paragraph of the report as an expression of opinion, and as really the decision of the committee, that they disapproved only of the sharp curves and steep gradients, which existed only in two or three places altogether. I may inform the House that the practice is, when plans, sections, and books of reference are approved, that it does not debar the Engineering Department from varying either the route of the line or the gradients. As a matter of fact, I may inform the Committee that the Chief Engineer, Mr. Stanley, does not think there has been any railway that has received the sanction of Parliament which has been constructed exactly upon the route and with the same gradients and curves as were laid down in the plans approved by Parliament. They always find some point where they can either ease a curve or alter the grade. That is always done, and I had in view that that was what the Hon. Mr. Gregory intended should be done in this case. I do not wish that the motion should be in any way inconsistent with the motion we have agreed to. If hon. gentlemen believe that there is anything inconsistent between the first

and second motion after the explanation I have given to members of the committee, because it will not keep back the railway one day—

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: If you withdraw the motion, well and good.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I would first like some expression of opinion upon the subject.

After a pause,

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: There is apparently a want of harmony between the motion that I last moved and the one previously carried by this House, and in order to remove that and meet the difficulty, I propose to amend the motion by the addition of certain words to the end of the first paragraph and to make it read as follows:—

That having considered the policy of the construction of this portion of the North Coast system of railways, and that it will probably be of special value for the transit of mails (local and European), and the conveyance of passengers, they approve generally of the policy of a railway from Gladstone to Bundaberg, subject to such modification as may be necessary for carrying into effect the recommendations of the select committee.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: I have taken the proposed amendment into consideration, and think it will solve the difficulty upon which I raised the point of order.

Amendment agreed to.

Question, as amended, put and passed.

COOKTOWN TO MAYTOWN EXTENSION.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL, in moving that the report of the select committee on the proposed extension of the Cooktown to Maytown railway be now adopted, said: Hon. gentlemen,—This short additional length of line is necessary in order to reach permanent water, and a part of the country which will prove useful as a camping ground, where teams will be able to meet the railway, which will then receive some traffic that it has not up to the present obtained. The country and hon. members of this Chamber understand the subject so well that I need not delay one moment longer in giving further explanations.

The HON. J. D. MACANSH said: Hon. gentlemen,—I may point out to the House that this is one of the railways that has been brought before the House without any information whatever. There is no evidence. Although I was a member of the select committee, I was not aware that the committee had held any meetings at all, until the report was placed upon the table. I never received any notice of any meeting. I think we ought to have a little more information than we have received so far.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved—

1. That this House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension of the Cooktown to Maytown Railway, section 3, from 50½ miles to 67¼ miles, in length 17 miles, as received by message from the Legislative Assembly on the 4th instant.

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

Question put and passed.

TREASURY BILLS BILL.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Legislative Council, a Bill to authorise the issue of Treasury Bills.

The Bill passed through all its stages without amendment, and was ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, by message in the usual form.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 2.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, forwarding, for the concurrence of the Legislative Council, a Bill to authorise the appropriation out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of certain further sums towards the service of the year ending on the last day of June, 1887, and for the year ended on the last day of June, 1886.

The Bill passed through all its stages without amendment, and was ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, by message in the usual form.

ADJOURNMENT.

The POSTMASTER - GENERAL: Hon. gentlemen,—I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until half-past 11 on Thursday forenoon next. I have also to announce that it is the intention of His Excellency the Administrator of the Government to prorogue Parliament in person.

Question put and passed

The House adjourned at half past 5 o'clock.
