

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 1887

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Death of the Minister for Works, the Hon. W. Miles.

Wednesday, 24 August, 1887.

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

DEATH OF THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, THE HON. W. MILES.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—It is my sorrowful duty to announce to the House the death of the Minister for Works, the Hon. William Miles. I am sure that every member of the House will receive the intelligence with as much regret as it gives me to make it, and I intend to propose that this House should immediately adjourn in order to pay the last tribute of respect which we can pay to the memory of the deceased gentleman. But before making that motion I wish to say a word or two about Mr. Miles. He was, as we all know, one of the oldest members of this House. He had attained to the almost patriarchal age of seventy, and afforded a remarkable instance of what a man of indomitable energy and honesty of character may achieve for himself in Australia without any adventitious advantages. He had no advantages beyond his own character, and integrity, and ability, and through many difficulties he achieved, as we know, a position of considerable wealth and of great influence in the community. We knew him best as a member of this House, of which he was a member, with one short intermission, for a period of about twenty-two years. I have myself been associated with him during the greater part of that time, first in opposition to the then existing Government, afterwards as a supporter of the Government of which I was a member, afterwards again as a colleague, after that again for nearly five years in opposition, and now for nearly four years as a most trusted and valued colleague. I have, therefore, had an opportunity of seeing him and observing his character more fully than most of us have had, and I can say, Mr. Speaker—and I am sure that what I say will be echoed by every member of this House—that the colony has sustained a very great loss by his removal.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: For myself I feel that I have lost a staunch friend, a wise counsellor, and a most loyal colleague. The party that sits on this side of the House has lost one of its best leaders and best members. This House itself has sustained, I think, a very great loss indeed, for a man of the sterling integrity and determination of Mr. Miles is not easy to replace. And the colony generally has sustained a most serious loss. I am sure that what I have said will be echoed by every member of this House. I may be pardoned for not saying more; I speak under difficulty and with considerable emotion. I will now ask this House to adjourn in order that we may attend the remains of our late friend to their last resting place.

Mr. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—I only rise to say a few words, quite in consonance with what has fallen from the hon. the leader of the Government. I am sure that this may be said of the late Minister for Works: no matter how brusque his manner may have been—no matter how rough, apparently, his answers may have been—it may be said of him, which may be said of few of the members of this House, that he has not left a personal enemy in this Chamber, and I doubt whether he has left any outside. I hope when our time comes the same may be said of us. I, and all who have sat in this House with Mr. Miles, will miss, for many years to come, the familiar face of the genial Minister for Works either on that bench or on this. I am sure that we all deplore his loss, and I think he has made a gap both political and personal which it will be hard to fill.

Mr. KATIES said: Mr. Speaker,—On behalf of myself and my constituents I wish to express our deep sorrow and regret at the loss the country and electorate of Darling Downs have sustained by the death of my late colleague, Mr. Miles. I am sure that both in public and in private the deceased gentleman will long be remembered as the honest, and kind-hearted, and incorruptible William Miles.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 4 o'clock.