

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 1888

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 19 September, 1888.

Petitions.—Influx of Rabbits.—Questions.—Question without Notice.—Local Authorities Election Bill—first reading.—Australasian Natives Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company, Limited, Bill.—Ways and Means—Resumption of Committee.—Adjournment.

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

PETITIONS.

INFLUX OF RABBITS

Mr. MURPHY presented four petitions from the residents in the districts of Warrego, Barcardine, Adavale, and Barcoo, respectively, calling attention to the alarming spread of rabbits in the colony, and praying for further measures for their destruction; and moved that the petitions be received.

Question put and passed.

Mr. ANNEAR presented a petition from the Tinana Divisional Board of similar purport and prayer; and moved that it be received.

Question put and passed.

Mr. ALLAN presented petitions from the Clifton Divisional Board, and from the Clifton Marsupial Board, respectively, of similar purport and prayer; and moved that the petitions be received.

Question put and passed.

Mr. O'CONNELL presented a petition from the Kolan Divisional Board of similar purport and prayer; and moved that the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. ALLAN asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Is the permanent survey of the direct line from Mumbilla being proceeded with?

2. If so, when does the Minister expect the completion of the working plans of the first section?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. H. M. Nelson) replied—

1. Yes.

2. No instructions will be given for the preparation of working plans until Parliament has approved of the plans and book of reference, which approval it is not intended to ask for this session.

Mr. HYNÉ asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Has the Government let a contract for a number of hopper waggons without public tenders being invited?

2. If so, how many?

3. The name of the firm or firms to construct same, and the price per waggon?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:—

1 and 2. Contracts have been let for 100 hopper waggons urgently required for the Southern and Western Railway, on offers received in reply to invitation by circular.

3. Messrs. Springall and Frost and the Queensland Carriage Company, 60 each, price £45 per waggon.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I would like to ask the Minister for Railways without notice: Are the Queensland Carriage Works at Nundah?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; I believe so.

Mr. GLASSEY: Is the Minister for Railways aware that there is a considerable deal of talk outside with respect to letting this contract to the Nundah Carriage Works? It is said that it was in consequence of the influence exerted by the hon. member for Nundah. That is the talk outside. I do not share in that opinion; I simply mention the matter with a view of putting the Minister in the way of inquiring how far these allegations are—

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith): The hon. member is out of order.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member can ask a question of a Minister without notice, by consent, but not otherwise, and he cannot do more than ask that question.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTION BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan), leave was granted to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to the right of voting at the election of local authorities.

The Bill was presented and read a first time. On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the second reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

AUSTRALASIAN NATIVES TRUSTEES, EXECUTORS, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED, BILL.

On the motion of Mr. REES R. JONES, leave was given to introduce a Bill to confer powers upon the Australasian Natives Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company, Limited.

WAYS AND MEANS.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith), the Speaker left the chair, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to further consider the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Question put.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Jessop,—The Colonial Treasurer at the close of the debate last night expressed a hope that the Committee would get on to the real business this evening. I am as anxious as he is to arrive at such a conclusion for many reasons, and amongst others the fact that the consideration of a tariff involves so many technical questions that I do not feel myself personally able to deal with it; and that there are many members whose acquaintance with business in various forms renders their utterance upon the subject of far greater weight than can appertain to anything I may say. However, I cannot remain silent on one point, and that is the aspect the tariff bears with regard to the northern division of the colony. The debate yesterday commenced with a renewal of the old battle with regard to the Land Act of 1884. I had not the good fortune to be in this House when that Act was introduced, and I am in no way responsible for it; but I am competent to arrive at one opinion, and that is, that the marked hostility of gentlemen on the other side to that Act appears to be chiefly directed to that portion of it providing for grazing farms. There is no doubt that in that portion of the Act they see a danger looming ahead to the vast squatting principalities into which this colony is at present chiefly divided. If it were only for that reason the Act is worthy of some praise. One thing has also been admitted, and that is, that the Act of 1884 has conferred great benefit upon the squatting community by giving them a tenure, which they never had before, over one-half of their runs; and it has further done this much good to the country—it has augmented the revenue by increasing the pastoral rent from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. and a fraction to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per acre in the case of the squatters, while in the case of the small squatter the rent received by the Crown is exactly five times as great as it was under the original tenure. The question under discussion, however, is not the Land Act of 1884, but the tariff now submitted to the Committee. Now, this tariff appears to me to be framed either with a complete ignorance of the North, or else in accordance with a very able and determined scheme which is framed for the purpose of carrying out what I believe to be the true sentiments of many of the gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House. I myself am in favour of a protective policy. I believe that this colony can never attain to the prosperity that its extent and many resources warrant without it; but it must not be forgotten, in framing a protective tariff, that the North is exposed to a great many evils from which the South is utterly free. For instance, the goods which are brought into consumption in the South are delivered at the doors of Southern consumers as cheaply as they can be delivered, and the distributing agencies in the South by water and by rail are nearly as perfect as they can be made, but when you go to the North you will find a different state of things prevailing there altogether. I may also state that there is a strong competition which benefits Southern consumers between two of the mediums of supply—the supply by the British-India Company and the supply from the Southern colonies. The Southern consumer has fighting on his behalf the Sydney freetrader, and on the other side he has the direct importer by the British-India Company's boats; but directly you get to the North the cost of goods increases very rapidly, a very large percentage on the original cost being added, and when they are landed at the ports of supply the evil has only just commenced. Owing to the absence of railway communication, there is, further, a large charge for the carriage of those goods to the consumer—to the mining and pastoral districts

in the North and West. These routes are closed for at least four or five months of the year on account of excessive wet, and in times of drought they are closed altogether. At all events the rates of carriage are very high, and when the goods arrive at the townships of the interior there is still a further distribution to the various small stations and hamlets, thereby increasing in every respect the original cost of the articles. Moreover the capital which is required by a Southern merchant is trivial when taken in comparison with the Northern storekeeper's outlay. The latter has to provide for a large cash outlay for a high rate of carriage, arrange with his agents for the supply of his goods for the whole season, and, in addition to the interest charges involved in such a state of things, he has to give a long credit, especially on the mining fields. The alluvial fields of Queensland at present are of very little importance, and the mining industry is dependent chiefly upon quartz reefing. Take the case of Croydon. The reefs there are just as rich as they ever were. The body of stone is as great as it ever was, and the yield of gold will be as great, or greater, than it ever has been; but at present the outcome of current cash is simply nominal, owing to the fact of there being no water on the field and the machines being unable to crush. Therefore the miner cannot reap his harvest. He must either leave the field or obtain credit from the storekeeper. The storekeeper recognises this as one of the features of his business, and makes charges to meet it. Hon. members must be perfectly aware that all these delays create extra risk, and extra risk means extra charges—and although the prices charged may be, to Southern eyes, very high, and doubtless are very high, I doubt if the average profit made by the Northern storekeeper equals that of the Southern storekeeper. For this reason, that the turn-over of capital of the former is very limited in comparison with that of the Southern man, and although his profits on any individual line may be very great, it is a maxim of trade that wealth does not grow so much from exorbitant profits on a few transactions as by carrying on a large business at a small average profit. Now, I had hoped that this national Government would have given the North some national policy—something to raise the hopes of the people, not only there but all over the colony; but the policy initiated in the Governor's Speech we are all acquainted with, and we know it was simply *vox, et proterea nihil*. For the last four years they have been in Opposition and out of political life, and the first great act in which they take part is a crisis over a pair of boots. A perfectly unnecessary crisis—a crisis that has died away already, and I believe nine-tenths of the people who attended that remarkable meeting in the next street are asking now, "What came we here for to see?"

The COLONIAL TREASURER: You are delivering the wrong speech.

Mr. HODGKINSON: I may be delivering the wrong speech, but if I am I shall by no means be a solitary instance of a person having delivered the wrong speech. I have heard a great many wrong speeches delivered since I have been in this House—so very wrong that, were the men not before me, I could not possibly identify them with the same parties who were claiming the suffrages of the people of this colony at the last general election. It appears to me that the increase of duties is based on two systems. I speak, of course, with great modesty on the commercial details of the question, because I confess that I know very little about them; but there are two great features in the tariff proposals of the Government—the one is taxation by the bulk or on

the number of the articles, the other is the *ad valorem* tax. Of course it does not require me to state that there is one initial objection to all *ad valorem* duties, and that is that they encourage fraud. I think the history of the collection of the Victorian *ad valorem* duties during the last few years should prove that plainly enough. And there is another thing which strikes one forcibly with regard to the new proposals; that not only is the basis of incidence objectionable, but the selection of articles for taxation is, if possible, more objectionable. Now, there is scarcely a thing that is a necessary of life that is produced in the North. I may state that the commercial products of the North are almost entirely confined to cattle, and wool, and minerals. There is a little maize grown there, but not anything like sufficient to supply the requirements of the North. There is also what promises to be a very large industry when developed, which I think the Treasurer would not crush, as this tariff will crush, if he knew its importance. I allude to the growth of tropical fruits. That industry is assuming large proportions in the Northern parts of the colony; it is not only of large commercial value, but it also affords employment to a considerable number of men who, I think the Treasurer will readily admit, are among that class who promote the settlement of the country. They are carrying on a very large trade with the South of Queensland and the other colonies, but more particularly the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, and I have good reasons for asserting that, at the present time, the trade of the North in this respect is usurping the place hitherto occupied by Fiji and the adjacent islands. If this impost on fruit—I am now speaking of green fruit—is to be put on the imports from the adjoining colonies, what else can we expect but retaliation on their part, and the imposition of a similar duty on fruit from Northern Queensland? And a small duty will be quite sufficient to kill the industry there at its present stage; because, although a very promising industry, it is as yet only struggling, and is not strongly enough established in the soil not to be uprooted by the imposition by the adjoining colonies of a similar tax on fruit to that proposed in this tariff. In almost every instance in this tariff there are—I will not use the offensive term bribes—but inducements held out to the representatives of the Southern districts at the expense solely of the North. For instance, the Treasurer very properly proposes to encourage agriculture by a protective tariff on certain articles of agricultural produce. The representatives of those agricultural districts will, I think, be the first to admit that the North is not only their best, but it is also their sole market. They have no Southern market, and it is simply because they wish to be protected against Southern competitors that they want to out-Herod Herod. They wish to put a tax upon flour, which the Treasurer allowed to escape, and an additional tax upon almost everything which can be grown in the Southern portions of Queensland; and this all at the expense of the Northern districts of the colony. These products, as I have already stated, cannot be exported south, and for that reason the farmers wish to be protected against the south; and the people of the North will have to pay a very much higher price for a very inferior article. Whatever may be the capacity of Queensland in the future, its best friends will admit that at present it is not a cereal-producing country, and that it has as yet produced no large quantity of fruit that can compete in quality with that grown in New South Wales, Victoria, or Tasmania. Yet we of the North are asked to bear the whole weight of this taxation in addition to the climatic, geographical, and other difficulties with which we must con-

tend, and from which no Treasurer on earth can free us. I will not attempt to go through the various items in the proposed tariff, because, as I have said, there are plenty of members more thoroughly conversant with the subject than I am, who are prepared to move amendments on several items. I have no doubt the Treasurer will be burdened with matters of that kind. But I will direct attention to a few articles on which the duty is in some cases doubled, and in others trebled. The duty on agricultural implements, for instance, is enlarged from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to 15 per cent. There are not a great many agricultural implements used up North, but there are a few, and I think that unless some compensation is given to the North, we ought not to be called upon to bear this additional burden. We are quite prepared to bear our share of the sacrifice necessary in the adoption of a fair protective policy. I am delighted to see the Treasurer introducing a protective system, as I am a firm believer in protection; but the good of the colony should not be gained at the expense of one section of the colony, and it cannot be gained in that way without leading to circumstances which I shall not mention. Again, the duty on apparel and slops is doubled, being increased from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 per cent. And there is a similar increase with regard to ammunition, caps, firearms, fuse, lithofracteur, and boots and shoes. In not one of these cases is there the slightest chance of the duty leading to the establishment and development of manufactures in the northern portion of the colony. I think it is very paltry and small that a revenue should be expected from lithofracteur and ammunition, by which a direct blow is struck at an industry which more than once has been the salvation of the colony—that is the mining interest. Do not let us forget that this tariff affects the North more unfavourably than other districts of the colony, because the proportion of adults in the North is larger than in any other part of the colony. For this reason the tax will fall more heavily on the population of the North than on the people living in Southern Queensland. There is another danger attendant upon the imposition of high duties, and that is that they defeat the desired end by promoting a recourse to very dangerous evasions of the Customs tariff. We have a long unprotected stretch of country on our southern border, and if there is a strong feeling of indignation, as there probably will be in the North, at this attempt to make them pay the piper for colonial protection, serious attempts will, no doubt, be made to evade these duties which will necessitate a far greater outlay, perhaps, on the cost of collecting the duties than the Treasurer can expect to derive from the imposts. Of course the proposed increase in the duties on bran, pollard, wheat, chaff, cheese, and other articles of colonial production will meet with the approval of a great many members on this side of the Committee. In fact, they so far meet with their approval that I believe one hon. member representing a very large farming district intends to move an increase in the amounts already proposed, and thus still further pile on the agony. There is another item here on which the duty is largely increased—namely, cotton piece goods; and the duty on waste, which is largely used in the North, is doubled, as also is the tax on cutlery, drapery, and haberdashery, engine packing, and fishing materials. There is a very considerable increase, too, in the impost on bottled fruits. All these things are very largely used in the North, where the population is migratory, and nobody has sufficient confidence in the permanency of a particular field to spend large fortunes in producing or manufacturing such articles. The articles of food which are to be so heavily taxed are a necessity in the North, in order

that miners and their families may obtain a needful change of diet. Mining is now becoming such a recognised industry of the colony that the families, the wives and children of miners, are associated with them in the pursuit, and one may see schools and other edifices indicating the establishment of a permanent community, such as can be seen in towns in the agricultural districts of the colony. Therefore you are absolutely penalising the very necessities of life by inflicting these taxes upon the people of those districts, in addition to the great cost of living to which they are inevitably exposed by the very position they occupy. At any rate I would have thought that there would have been a little reduction in the item of boots, especially considering what boots have done for this Government—that they are able to pose before the people of the colony as men defiantly dealing with idle gubernatorial claims. I think, under those circumstances, boots might have been omitted altogether. For myself I should have liked the hon. gentleman to carry his idea of government a little farther, and instead of putting an extra duty upon miners' boots, and every other man's boots, to have reduced the amount necessary for the vice-regal establishment, and go another step in the nationalisation of this colony. But is there not beneath all this something deeper? I am quite certain that the hon. gentleman who framed this tariff is far too shrewd to put it before this Committee with the least idea that it will be accepted. The House is divided into so many parties that it is difficult for any one who holds himself to a certain extent aloof from any of them to know what is going on, but if I had the good fortune to be placed in the position occupied by the hon. gentleman, I can quite imagine what I should do under similar circumstances. Knowing that I had to a certain extent committed myself to the cause of separation, but as the Chief Minister of a great colony I could not openly advocate it, and having in my Ministry two avowed adherents of separation, knowing also that I myself was in favour of land-grant railways—that although I had promised that during this session I would not introduce the subject, I was still in favour of that system of constructing our railways—knowing all this, I would select some gentleman to represent what may be called the Northern section on my own side of the House—that is the Government side—I would admit that gentleman to a certain extent into the counsels of my ministerial cabinet and would say to him, "Don't be frightened. We are putting this tariff before the House; we know that it will arouse your hostility, that you dare not vote in favour of that tariff unless you are able to show your constituents that the price paid for it is of greater value than the sacrifice involved by carrying that tariff. I say select from amongst yourselves one representative of the North; do not recognise those men on the Opposition side as Northern members; you are the cream, the salt of the North; you are the men who had the ability and the power to recognise me as the coming leader of the colony, and to you shall be accorded the credit of giving the Northern constituencies that elevation which is to be extended to them from these very high duties." I have not the slightest doubt, sir, that in the course of the debate motions will come from that side of the Committee for the reduction of the duty on certain items particularly affecting the North, and that they will be accepted with that prudence and grace that characterises the leader of the party to which they belong. But, sir, I would for one moment revert to a compliment paid to me the other evening by the hon. member for Stanley. When quoting one of his favourite authors, he said, "He gave up to party what was meant for

mankind." Have the so-called Northern representatives any sentiment of that kind to prompt them in not fulfilling their first duty—that is, to give expression to the opinions they uttered when before their constituencies, and to endeavour to carry them into effect. It is unnecessary to tell you, Mr. Jessop, or any other man, that we have only to wait for the ordinary course of communication from the North to have a general expression of indignation against this tariff, and a general expression of disappointment in the Ministry that has formulated it and placed it before this Chamber for adoption. But, perhaps, as I have said, this is only speculation. There may be a deeper design at the bottom of this tariff. It may be intended to intimidate this, not in words—in something stronger than words—by acts: "You see it is impossible for me to legislate successfully for the two divisions of the colony, which present such marked features of distinction. If I combine to meet the views entertained by the protectionists of the South, I must make my tariff fall with sufficient weight on articles produced by that section of the colony to shut out colonial competition, and by so doing the real charges of that tariff will fall upon the consumers of those articles—that is to say, the residents of the North. I sympathise with you; as I told you before, I am no opponent of separation. You have an able man ready to assume the lead, a gentleman who has already announced himself as the coming Premier of the North. Why not at once enlist under a common banner, combine, and demand separation. I will not thwart you; I will quietly do all I can to support your demand." I can conceive no more effective manner of aiding those gentlemen who are now actively engaged in promoting separation than the adoption of such a course as attempting—and succeeding probably—in carrying through this Chamber such a tariff as this; thereby proclaiming to the North that they cannot hope for any justice from the South, and the best thing they can do is to unite together and demand separation. Because—here comes in the ability displayed by the hon. gentleman—in proposing to tax agricultural produce coming from the south—a tax which will be supported, and augmented, if possible, by some hon. members in the exercise of their duty to the constituencies they represent—the North is practically between two fires. It has the anxiety of the Treasurer to raise revenue: it has his half-expressed sympathy in favour of separation—to drive the North from this section of the country—and it has on both sides of the House gentlemen who, under the circumstances, will support the Treasurer, and thus raise a cry that Northern members cannot possibly resist. For myself I may state plainly that my objection to separation is based upon my conviction of its inopportunism—to quote a word made use of the other night—rather than to separation itself. I think it would be inopportune, for the simple reason that if the North separated at the present moment those who would constitute its Government must necessarily be representatives of the pastoral and of the agricultural interest. When I say "the agricultural interest," I speak of the only interest in the North which can possibly claim to have any weight as an agricultural interest—that is, the sugar-growing interest. The government of the country must fall into the hands of those gentlemen, for this reason: They, as a rule, are gentlemen possessing capital and education—possessions that, especially if led by such an able gentleman as the one to whom I have alluded, would naturally fit them for the task of self-government; giving it practical form at the start. The only portion of the population who would in any way be opposed to these two sections would be the mining community.

They would exercise but a very spasmodic and transient effect upon the current of politics. But there would be great energy shown on the side of the pastoral tenants, and on the side of the tropical agricultural interest, for this reason: that other interests would be so inseparably connected with the aspect which legislation would assume, that it would be impossible for them to exercise that influence. And what would that influence necessarily be? What forms would that influence necessarily assume? There is not one man among them who, in his heart, is not praying and craving for any modification of existing laws—even for separation—that would once more give him the command of what he is pleased to term cheap, certain, and docile labour. But it is not worth while arguing upon such a subject. What would be the result? Northern Australia immediately becomes the pariah of the Australian group. There is no doubt that, however slowly events are marching, they are marching towards federation; and we do not know what may occur at any moment to precipitate that event. And if once there should be a federated Australia, is it likely that it would permit so large a section of the country as Northern Queensland to stand like the Southern States of America, which for a century confronted the Northern States, the centre of brain power, intelligence, and mechanical skill? Is it likely that it would maintain that enormous section of the territory for the sake of permitting one industry to secure cheap labour? No, sir. In a democracy such a state of things would not last an hour. There would be a demand made that the constitution of that portion of the continent should be assimilated to that prevailing in the southern portion of the continent, and if that demand were not at once acceded to, you may depend upon it, it would be enforced by physical force if necessary. I think I have shown that there are three possible motives underlying this tariff. Of course I am not in the secrets, and am not likely to be, of those meetings held by the Northern representatives, or the three tailors of Tooley street who call themselves the North. What North are they? Do they represent the intelligence of the North? Are they the representatives of the labour and the mining interests of the North? No, sir. They are simply the delegates of certain pastoral and agricultural interests of the North that clash with the interests of the people of the colony, and always will clash, and who are now, like drowning men, grasping at every straw, in the hope that it may keep them out of that vortex of despair into which they are gradually being drawn. It is a very strange fact that at the last general election there was not a single mining community that returned one member in support of the present Government.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about Cook?

MR. HODGKINSON: The hon. member for Cook was put in through the indifference of his constituents to the contest. The entire number of votes polled at that election was under 500. The only opposition made to him was made by a tailor; and we know the remark of a celebrated judge in England when eighteen tailors appeared before him as a panel for a jury, "How is it there are not more than two men here?" alluding to the saying that "it takes nine tailors to make a man." According to that the hon. member for Cook was opposed by one-ninth of a man. The opinion in the district was that there was no candidate worthy to meet him who cared to contest the electorate. I have not the slightest doubt that at the next general election my present utterance will be proved to be true. At any rate one thing will be admitted, that the three

great centres of the mining population—Gympie, Charters Towers, and the great district of the Burke—did not return a single representative in accord with the principles favoured by the hon. gentleman at the head of the present Government. I believe that, as I said before, underlying this tariff are three motives. One is that some selected Northern representative will move certain amendments to this resolution which will be accepted by the Treasurer, and cover the mover and his Northern compeers with the *kudos* essential to their somewhat tarnished act in accepting this tariff without an immediate and indignant protest. That may be one course to be adopted. Another course may be to carry out the tariff in its entirety by the majority at the command of the hon. gentleman, supported by those on this side who represent agricultural constituencies, and who would put on certain articles an even higher tariff than the hon. gentleman proposes. The third course may be to drive the Northern members into a despairing demand for separation, the objections to which I have shown to be of a wide national character, and not for one moment to be compensated for by the material advantages that would result in the North were separation declared between Southern and Northern Queensland. I admit there would be great material advantages, but those advantages would be more than outweighed by the resulting disadvantages. Another objection to separation is that it would involve acrimonious contests as to the respective allotments of what we may call our national debt; and until those contests were settled there would be great difficulty in providing the money essential to carry on the necessary works. There would be almost a complete stoppage of all public works, and public works in this colony employ a far greater percentage of the population than is safe according to the best commercial principles. We do not know the day when we may be in the throes of a crisis should any one of several occurrences, which I can imagine, take place. It would never do to stop the public works in the North now, and to provide money to carry them on we shall have this great system of land-grant railways initiated, with vast areas of country alienated from the State, and in the voracious maw of those land-grabbers who will try to repeat in the North the same game they have been playing from pre-historic times to the present day. And so long as there is the slightest danger of any of those things to which I have alluded occurring, I shall, to the best of my power, oppose separation. These are some of the reasons which induced myself and many other thoughtful men to oppose it. In regard to this tariff I have no doubt that it will be modified. I cannot for one moment believe that the Treasurer will penalise two such great industries as the pastoral and mining in such a manner as they must be if this tariff is unhesitatingly adhered to. I believe firmly that there will be amendments proposed by hon. members sitting upon the other side of the Committee which will, at any rate, relieve some of these items. We are prepared to bear our share of the difficulties incidental to our natural position, and look for compensation in the future that lies before us. But we are not prepared to bear all the burden of the day, or else be driven, "willy-nilly," into a demand for separation. Let us, at any rate, have some reduction in the duty upon machinery. There is nobody who knows better than the hon. gentleman the enormous expense incurred in putting up machinery in the Northern districts. The original cost of the machine is a bagatelle in comparison to the succeeding outlay before it is perfected for work. And there are great hazards attending enterprise in gold-mining machinery.

The Minister for Mines will acknowledge it at once, and I have had experience scores of times that a plant has been rendered completely worthless in less than forty-eight hours, by reason of a new rush setting in somewhere else. All your hopes and well-grounded calculations are knocked on the head at once, simply because of an accidental discovery in some other portion of the colony. While touching upon this point now, we must not forget that we are now on the eve of an alluvial rush that may vitally affect the calculations of the Treasurer in the results accruing from the proposed tariff. Gold has been discovered in payable quantities in New Guinea. I have seen the gold myself, and it is of that character that any man acquainted with gold knows to be a strong argument in favour of its existence in considerable quantities over a considerable extent of country. Owing to various social circumstances, and the continuous drought, and the attraction invariably excited by alluvial in preference to any other form of gold-mining, should this discovery be succeeded by others, should the discovery extend from this small island of Sudest to the mainland of New Guinea, we may witness all the hopes of the Treasurer of deriving a revenue from the North knocked on the head at once by a wholesale rush of the producing members of the community to another portion of the country where the Government will have very great difficulty in getting at them. Should any hon. member so far fulfil his duty to the North as to propose a reduction in some of the present items of the tariff, of course he will receive the support of every Northern member on this side of the Committee worthy of representing a constituency at all, and of every mining member. I firmly believe that the hon. Treasurer will listen to suggestions of that kind with a very fair desire to meet them so far as the exigencies of the financial requirements will permit.

Mr. NORTON said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not rise to reply to the speech of the hon. member who has just spoken, nor do I propose to enter into the discussion of matters which preceded the introduction of this tariff. I intend to speak more particularly as regards the position of affairs as placed before us now, and to express—as I am bound to express in the interests of my constituents, and for the maintenance of those principles which influence me—my own opinions in regard to the tariff which has been submitted to this Committee. I say, in the first instance—and I say it with a good deal of regret—that I experienced a good deal of disappointment when I looked over the Estimates and found reductions had not been made in some of those departments in which I expected to see them. Of course I am aware that the Government, not having been very long in office, have not had time to examine very particularly into the administration of certain departments as yet. In course of time, when they come to critically examine that administration, they will find that reductions can be made, notwithstanding the fact that the Estimates have been placed before us as they have been, and that the hon. Treasurer has said that he has made them as low as he possibly can. The report of the Civil Service Commission laid upon the table has shown us that it is likely that reductions can be made in some departments; and I think a closer scrutiny will show that reductions can be made in two or three others also. I trust that this matter will receive the attention of the Ministry, and that certain reductions will be made. Now, in regard to the tariff, I must say at once that I am no more in love with what is commonly spoken of as protection than I ever was. It is quite possible that a Government, placed in the position the present Government are, may feel

it incumbent upon them to raise revenue by some means or other; and they have thought it desirable to go to the Custom house for the increase they require. That is a matter to be considered. I daresay I shall be told, as I have been told before, that in collecting revenue through the Customs it is not possible to avoid giving protection in some form or other. I am not going to question that. But there is a difference between a Customs tariff, which is designed to increase the revenue, and which accidentally acts as a protection, and a tariff which is designed with the object of giving protection, and, until that protection has had time to take effect, simply brings in a temporary increase of revenue. Of course, after the protection has had its effect, the revenue from Customs must decrease. The objection I have to the tariff as proposed is, that the principle of it is the principle of protection. In relation to this subject I would point out what, perhaps, will seem rather unreasonable to some hon. members who are very much in favour of protecting the agricultural industry. I do not agree with the protection proposed to be given to the agricultural industry. I would point out that there are other causes than the competition of other colonies which prevent a great increase in the cultivation of our agricultural lands. In the matter of hay and chaff, for instance, it is very true that during the last few years there has been very much increase in the amount received from the South. But we must not suppose that that prevents an enlargement of the area under cultivation in this colony. It does nothing of the kind. Up to the time of the drought, which commenced in 1882 and 1883, the importations of hay and chaff from the other colonies were very small indeed. It is really since the drought commenced, and the farmers here were unable to supply the demand for hay and chaff at a time when the requirements were very much enlarged, that these large importations have taken place. I do not know whether hon. members have taken the trouble to inquire into this subject as I have done. I generally keep my eyes on matters of this kind and look carefully into what is being done in the culture of the soil and in the introduction of products raised from the cultivation of the soil. I have been scanning over the statistics on the subject for the last few years, and I will point out that in 1880 the importation of hay into Queensland amounted to only 265 tons, and the quantity of chaff imported in the same year was only 23 tons. In 1881 the imports increased to 696 tons of hay, and 496 tons of chaff. That amount viewed as competition against the farmers here is nothing very dreadful, and it is quite possible that they might still continue to produce those articles and thrive, notwithstanding importations to that extent. In 1882 the increase was not very large either, there being 727 tons hay imported, and 883 tons chaff. But after that time the drought from which the country suffered so long began, and in 1883 its greatest severity was experienced; in that year there was a consequent increase in the importations of hay and chaff—1,570 tons hay and 905 tons chaff. In the following year, when the effects of the drought were still further extended, and there was almost no production here, and when the demand for these articles had been largely increased in consequence of the failure not merely of the crops but of the grass, the quantity of hay imported reached 3,429 tons, and of chaff 5,718 tons. I think those figures point to the fact that it was owing to the severity of the drought that those large importations took place. In 1885 they began to fall off. The quantity of hay imported in 1885 was reduced to 2,800 tons, and of chaff to 4,800. In 1886 the importations of hay fell to 1,300, and the amount of chaff

imported was the same, 4,800 tons. In 1887 the quantity of hay imported again fell off to 1,200 tons, and the quantity of chaff imported fell to 2,700 tons. There we have a marked advance in the importations of hay and chaff—articles most used in consequence of the drought—as the drought proceeded, and directly the rains came and production began again here the importation of those articles began to fall back. I do not know what they will be for this year, but up to 1887 from the close of the drought they continued to fall back. The same argument will apply to grain. I think the figures given in connection with the importations of barley for 1884 must be incorrect; because, whereas up to that time the importations of barley could be counted by hundreds of bushels, they appear to have advanced to a very large degree in 1884. In 1882 the importations of barley were 4,800 bushels, and in 1884 the quantity represented to have been imported was 23,600 bushels. I can hardly think the importations of barley could have increased to that enormous amount in the time, and I am inclined to believe there must be some mistake in the figures. In the following year the quantity fell to 6,300 bushels; in 1886 the quantity imported was 7,700 bushels, and in 1887, 1,700 bushels.

Mr. GROOM: The figures are quite correct.

Mr. NORTON: Then there is something very exceptional about the importations in 1884.

Mr. GROOM: Yes; the malting barley was sent to Melbourne.

Mr. NORTON: I do not know the circumstances connected with the increase, but it was clearly very extraordinary.

Mr. GROOM: They could get no market here and they sent on to Melbourne, and next year they did not grow it at all.

Mr. NORTON: In respect of maize the same thing is seen, the imports increasing from 1880, and since the drought they have gradually decreased. It is true that a very large quantity of maize is still being introduced, but I am disposed to think that that introduction is owing to some causes other than those to which such importations are ordinarily attributed. In the matter of oats the same thing is to be seen. In 1880 the quantity of oats introduced was 27,700 bushels, and in 1884 it went up to 340,600 bushels—a most extraordinary increase. In the following year the amount was reduced to 242,900 bushels, and in 1887 there was again an increase in the amount imported to over 330,000 bushels. We find exactly the same thing taking place with regard to potatoes. The potato crop failed like the other crops during the dry season, and the importations of potatoes during that time were consequently larger than they were either before or since that dry season. The quantity imported rose according to the lower rate of production here, and since the drought has been over it has begun again to fall. Those are all articles of production with which the agricultural industry has to do. There are two causes which may contribute to these importations taking place, whether they be large or small. In the opportunities I have had of observing what is going on in the different farming localities, I have always noticed that the men who cultivated their farms well and thoroughly manage to do well and pull through in good or bad seasons. After seeing these men for a number of years, one generally finds that their position is gradually being improved, and from being poor men they gradually get to be well-to-do. There is some secret connected with that, and I will explain how I think it arises. In the first place, through thoroughly understanding agriculture and cultivating their land well they get good crops. Many men take up land with every desire

to cultivate it well, and they try to do so, but they really do not understand the principles of agriculture, and consequently the result of their experiments—for they are not above experiments—is not so satisfactory. Their farms produce less per acre than the well-cultivated farms, and that tends to decrease the general average all through, and they feel the pinch created by their own want of knowledge, which gives them a much lower income. There is another cause with regard to which I will not speak so positively. We often hear it said that the reason the farmers do not do so well is that the produce merchants will not take the trouble to buy their products—when they can simply send an order for so many tons of hay, chaff, or other produce from Sydney they will not go to the trouble of dodging about the country to see whether they can get it for a little less from the farmers here or there. They simply send their orders down and make their customers pay accordingly. They save themselves all the trouble they can, and the farmers through the organisation amongst the produce dealers are obliged to sacrifice their produce. The goods are put up to auction, the sales are attended by a limited number of people, and consequently the stuff is sold for what it will fetch, and the farmers are mulcted in a loss. I believe there is a great deal of truth in the statement that if the farmers would combine and start co-operative companies such as have been formed in the South they would be able to hold back their produce and sell it at a remunerative rate. I believe that is the secret which will eventually make farming pay much better than it has done hitherto—that is to say, to all farmers in the colony. I may mention that on one or two occasions I have spoken to the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, on this subject, and he has told me of what he had seen in Sydney. I think I have heard him relate his experiences in this House, but I am quite sure he will give that information to others as he did readily to me. Through that hon. member and other sources I have seen the advantages that must accrue to the farmers if they form co-operative societies, and if they are established, then I think the farmers will be a great deal more benefited than any amount of protection that can be imposed will benefit them. Now, I will refer to another article I think the farmers are more or less interested in, and that is butter. There are large quantities of butter introduced here from the Southern colonies. The duty on that at present is 2d. a pound, and the new tariff makes it 3d., but I would point out that the mere putting of 1d. a pound on butter will not have the effect of producing the butter required here, for the simple reason that people here like good butter; and very few people know how to make good butter. The butter-makers are really more uninformed than the farmers who do not know their own business, and a large proportion of the butter placed in the market is not first-class by any means. Now, I can point to the fact that it is not protection that is wanted to secure the manufacture of large quantities of good butter in this colony. It is the knowledge that is wanted, and a good system by which it might be made cheaply and delivered at the least possible expense. To show that the manufacture of butter in this colony is not considered an unremunerative thing, notwithstanding the fact that last year it was selling at 4d. to 6d. a pound, I would point to the fact that not very far from Toowoomba a dairy has been established some little time with one of the new patent cream separators. The butter produced there is sold in the Brisbane market at, I think, 6d. a pound more than the ordinary butter. I know that when I have bought it I have paid from 4d. to 6d. a pound more than for

what they call the best butter made by the other process. Now if that is the result of introducing a proper system of butter-making, then I think we have evidence that protection is not required to lead to the manufacture of good butter here. I go further than that; since the establishment of that dairy, another one has been started not far from Helidon. That has only been working for the last few months. The proprietors have secured some thousands of acres of land where there is running water, and have everything that is required for the establishment of a good dairy. They also have introduced a cream separator, and in addition have introduced first-class cattle for butter-making purposes. If they can do that deliberately under the old tariff of 2d. a pound, surely it may be supposed that they, knowing what they would have to go through, would not have gone into an undertaking of that kind unless they saw their way to a good profit.

Mr. GROOM: They are asking for the extra duty.

Mr. NORTON: Of course they are asking for it. Why should they not? If they can get 1s. a pound instead of 6d. it pays better, but it does not follow that they require protecting.

Mr. GROOM: They will not make a profit without the duty.

Mr. NORTON: Then why did they start? They started, knowing full well what they were doing. They did not know at that time that the duty was to be increased. It was a mere matter of surmise, and I know from one gentleman, who, in fact, is a relative of my own, the circumstances under which that dairy was started. We find, as a consequence of the farmers really not understanding the art of butter-making, that the importation of butter into Queensland has been very great, whilst in New South Wales these cream separators have been largely introduced, and co-operative societies have been started. The fact of having introduced a proper system has raised the old price from 4d. to 6d. a pound, and the consequence is that the companies are able to carry on the business to very great advantage to themselves. That is where our butter comes from. They have no protection for butter in New South Wales, but they are able to make what they want and to export a great quantity to us that is made under this new system. In the face of these facts surely there is evidence that protection is not wanted for the butter-making industry. I may turn now to another subject—the fixed duty that is proposed to be placed on boots and shoes. Now, I was under the impression that the bootmaking business was a pretty paying one. I do not know anything of the details of the business, and have not had an opportunity of talking the matter over with those who are engaged in it, but this I have seen with my own eyes. A gentleman has come to this town within the last few years who must have done pretty well in the bootmaking business, because he has leased a valuable piece of land and erected a splendid establishment on it in which he carries on his business. I do not think that shows that it is unremunerative. If it is, how could that gentleman afford to build such an establishment, which must pass out of his hands and go to others in a few years, when he will have to pay a high rent for another establishment in which to carry on business. The fact that he has established himself, and is able to carry on his business to such a large extent, is of itself an evidence that this industry can be carried on at a profit under existing conditions. It is true that the importation of boots and shoes has increased since 1880. I have taken out the value of the importations made during the period that has elapsed since that period, and I find that in 1880 the value represented

was £102,000, and in 1887 it was £193,000. There is certainly a very large increase in the value of the importations of those articles in 1887, but that was quite an exceptional year. Each year since 1880, there has been an increase, but the largest increase was in 1887, when it rose from £152,000 to £193,000. If we take the increase in the population of the colony during the time these importations have been going on, we shall find that the importations have increased very largely since 1880. By omitting 1887, which was an exceptional year, we find that the increase in the population was greater than the increase in the value of the importation of boots and shoes; so that there is evidence that the boot manufacturing industry has done more than keep pace with the increase of population, which is the very best proof that it is a remunerative industry. I think these facts speak so plainly that it is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon them. I simply state them, therefore, and leave hon. members to judge for themselves whether it is absolutely necessary that the whole population of the colony should be made to bear extra taxation for the benefit of a few individuals? Of course I know that if we are to adopt a protective system, one industry has to be protected as well as another; and that undoubtedly would offer a reason for protecting this particular industry, but it is the only reason. I am aware that it may be argued that if you put a tax on other goods and make people pay an additional duty for the goods which they use they should have their industry protected. That is a perfectly sound argument; but then there is a very large number of people in the colony who do not derive any special advantage, as far as I can discern, from the increase of these duties, and yet have to pay an additional price for the articles they use. These people will naturally object to the increase of duties. I may say that I protest against the manner in which the debate has been conducted, so far as regards the manner in which the interests of the North and South have been referred to. I would remind hon. members that there is a Central Queensland as well as a Northern and Southern Queensland. My district being in Central Queensland, I feel bound to speak in the interests of the people residing there. I confess I cannot see what advantage is to be derived by my constituents from a tariff like this, because the production likely to take place there is not of a nature likely to be stimulated by this protective tariff or any other tariff. There is at present congregated in the district a considerable number of miners. During the last twelve months the number of miners there has increased very largely, and it is still increasing. What benefit miners will derive from this tariff I do not know. Almost everything they use will be subject to an additional tax; the machinery they use on the field to extract the gold from the quartz will be taxed to three times the extent it was taxed under the old tariff, and they will naturally object to the imposition of such a burden. It is in their interest particularly that I speak. I am aware that it will be said that we should not look at a matter like this from a merely local point of view, but from the point of view of the whole colony. Well, be it so. But so long as I have one district to represent I must speak up for that district. I would point out that when I have urged agriculturists in my district to put more land under cultivation, they have said that they could get as much produce from the land then under tillage as they could consume in the district. When I have asked them why they could not send their produce up North as other people did, some of them, not all, have agreed that it was much easier for people to grow produce in the Bundaberg district and send it to the Northern ports

than it was for them to do, and that they were not able to compete because of the shipping facilities enjoyed by those in the Bundaberg district. The competition they have to contend against is that of neighbours alongside them, and not of persons outside the colony. I must say that my constituents have not been treated well by previous Governments. They are as it were between two stools. On one side they have the Central Railway extending westward, which drains all the Dawson River traffic that ought to go into Port Curtis; and on the other side they have the Bundaberg and Mount Perry Railway, which takes from them all the traffic which should come in from the Baffle Creek country. So that they have on two sides railways which prove very detrimental to their interest. Then again, to the North they have large works constructed in their ports and harbours, and to the South the same thing occurs, so that they are between two stools, and between these two stools they suffer. I do hope that this condition of things is not going to last. I think the time has come when I may ask for that proper share of expenditure to which the district is entitled. So far as the proposed amendments, of which notice has been given, are concerned, they can be considered when they are proposed. I, at any rate, do not intend to enter into a general discussion on the tariff question, or of these amendments. I have spoken as I have done this afternoon because I wish it to be known that not only have the interests of my own district been overlooked for many years, but that I am prepared to advocate the cause of my constituents in the only manner in which it can be done; and I hope that their case will now be fully recognised, and that they will get that attention which they are justly entitled to. I do not intend to take any very strong part in the discussion that is going on; I shall, however, hold myself free to vote when any question which may be brought up comes to a division. I may point out, however, that, so far as I am concerned, if we are to have a protective tariff, I prefer a low one to a high one, and I am not at all disposed to assist those hon. members who desire to promote the interests of the particular localities they represent by increasing the duties upon articles consumed by the people of the colony generally. I have looked carefully through the tariff, and I clearly recognise the fact that the intention is protection. As I said before, I recognise that fact, and I do not like it. There are a good many people who, when they take a sugared pill, think it is not so bad after all, but I cannot get over the fact that although it is sugared the pill is still inside. It is protection we are introducing. That protection is not going to be disposed of after a few years. It is not going to be merely a measure for the production of revenue until we are able to tide over present difficulties. It is a thing that is being grafted on our Constitution, and once there, we may be quite sure that not only will it retain its place, but that instead of being moderate it will increase as it has done in all countries and colonies where it has been established. I can only express my regret that it has been thought desirable to introduce a system of that kind here, and having expressed that regret, I do not think I need continue the discussion further, but will make room for other hon. members who wish to enter more into details of the subject.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Jessop,—It is now twenty years since I tabled a resolution in this Assembly asking the House to give effect to a policy of protection. I was met on that occasion by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Archer, with a very able speech, in which he gave utterance to his freetrade opinions, and stated that if I tabled a motion to establish

bonuses he would offer no objection to it. I took the hon. gentleman at his word, and the result was that we had bonuses. The Manufacturing Industries Act, now on the Statute-book of Queensland, was the outcome of the motion I had tabled in favour of protection. I have continued to advocate my views with regard to protection from that time to this, and it is no small satisfaction to me to find the Colonial Treasurer coming down to the House and submitting a protective tariff at last. It is also a satisfaction to me to find that out of 132 candidates who presented themselves at the last general election no less than 98 declared themselves in favour of giving encouragement to local industries. Out of that 98, 50 of those gentlemen are now sitting in this Chamber, and it will be interesting to the electors of the colony to see how those hon. members will carry out the pledges they gave to their constituents upon that subject. "Encouragement of local industries" is a very wide and indefinite expression, so much so that it may mean anything or nothing, and I am very much afraid that when we come to divisions on the tariff by-and-by, "encouragement to local industries" will be put on one side. I hope it will not be so. However, we must accept one of two alternatives. The Colonial Treasurer distinctly says he must have additional revenue. The late Treasurer asked for additional revenue last year, and proposed a land-tax. Others proposed an income-tax, others a property-tax, and looking at the question as a whole, I am in favour of a property-tax. Nor do I think the colony is too young for the imposition of such a tax. In New Zealand they have their property-tax, and are now realising a revenue of about £300,000 a year from it. Victoria has also a property-tax, and Queensland will have to establish it yet. I should not be surprised to find the Treasurer coming down to the House, before he retires from office, and proposing a property-tax.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: How long do you think I am going to remain in office?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Victoria has no property tax.

Mr. GROOM: They have a land tax, and why should Victoria not have a land tax?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: A land tax is quite distinct from a property tax.

Mr. GROOM: The *Australasian* of last Saturday contains a most interesting historical document—the record of the first land sale held in Melbourne, in June 1837. The proprietors of the *Argus* had this printed and circulated in the Exhibition building last week, to show the hundreds of visitors now in Melbourne from all parts of the world what land there realised in 1837, and what is now the municipal valuation of it. It is really an interesting document.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: That land is not taxed now.

Mr. GROOM: Isn't it? If it is not, it ought to be. In June, 1837, the price of lot 1 was £32; the present value, according to municipal valuation, is £493,500. The original price of lot 10 was £28, and is now worth £203,000. Then, coming down Flinders street, lot 8, opposite the Anglican Cathedral—the price of that was £46, and it is now valued at £428,000. Now, if a similar document to that were prepared showing the prices land in Brisbane realised at the first Crown land sale, and the present municipal valuation, it would show a result proportionately as great as this. Then take Mount Morgan, why should not that mine, now valued at £16,000,000, contribute something to the revenue of the country? We have to supply those places with means of communication, post and telegraph

offices, railways, and many other requirements, and why should they not contribute something to the revenue of the country?

The HON. P. PERKINS: They pay for the escort.

Mr. GROOM: Of course, I only mention that incidentally, but if our present Treasurer will come down with a scheme to impose a tax upon valuable properties of this sort—properties which have increased in value almost entirely by the expenditure of public money, to which all classes in the community have to contribute—he shall have my hearty support in doing so. On the other alternative, I am going to assist him now in passing this protective tariff. I congratulate him upon having brought it in, but think he has not gone far enough. The colony at the last general election undoubtedly declared itself in favour of protection. There is no concealing that fact. Even the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, who holds strong freetrade opinions, owes his return more to personal considerations than to his political views on that question. Although they may have to pay more for certain articles, still the people demanded that there should be a protective tariff; and I say it is the duty of all protectionists here—and especially those who have advocated that principle for so many years—to try and give practical effect to those principles now. We have had no opportunity of doing so since 1870, when Mr. Ramsay brought in his tariff. The cry then was that it was not protection, but that it was required for revenue purposes. Those of us who held protective principles—the late Mr. Travers Atkin, the late Sir Joshua Peter Bell, and others—tried to make it as protective as we possibly could. The duties now upon agricultural produce were imposed by the protectionists in opposition to the Government, who divided upon every item, and were beaten by small majorities. So far as these small duties are concerned, they have not produced, in my opinion, the effect that we anticipated, for the simple reason that while we put on the duties imposed under the Customs Duties Act of 1870, we never reduced our railway freights. The railway freights upon agricultural produce up to a very late period were most excessive and exorbitant. On the other hand, the steamer freights between Sydney and Melbourne and Brisbane have been as low as competition could make them. The protective duty was, therefore, of no value whatever to the farmer, because it was more than equalised by the difference between the railway freight to Brisbane and the real freight. In Victoria, while they have imposed a strictly protective tariff on agricultural produce, the commissioners very wisely reduced the railway freights on agricultural produce to almost a minimum; and they have not sustained any loss by it, owing to the enormous increase of that produce sent down to Melbourne for exportation to other places. With regard to the tariff as a whole, I commend the Colonial Treasurer for introducing it; but he has not gone nearly far enough in the direction of protection to agricultural produce. I have had opportunities of seeing—and other hon. members who represent farming constituencies, especially the hon. member for Cambooya, Mr. Perkins, can bear me out—that there is no class in the community that works so hard, that undergoes such enormous privations, and who have so many difficulties to contend with, as those engaged in the cultivation of the soil. I am not at all surprised that farmers' sons do not follow the occupation of their fathers on seeing the hardships their fathers have to undergo to make both ends meet in connection with farming. Then, again, the climate of Queensland, during the last ten years, has under-

gone a most marvellous change, and one which might well engage the attention of meteorologists. I can remember the time when we could always depend on rains in January for the supply of water and grass in winter, when we could always depend upon our July rains to provide grass for the lambing in September and for the spring crops, and when we could look forward with certainty to rain-storms during the summer months. But during the last ten years the weather has undergone a complete change. Rain falls neither in January nor in July, and there are some portions of the Darling Downs just now where not a drop of rain has fallen for the last eight months. Hon. members can very well understand in what condition those farmers and selectors must be who have taken up land in those arid localities. We have a right to sympathise with those men, and to extend every help to them we can, and I hold that this tariff is a recognition that the men who have undergone those hardships for so many years shall receive the consideration of the Legislature in this direction. I am prepared to go with the hon. member for Port Curtis in his contention that protection is not going to do everything for the farmers; a great deal depends upon themselves. I will take one article of agricultural produce—butter—to which I have given a great amount of attention. The dairy produce in Victoria—according to the statement of Mr. Whitely, who waited, as one of a deputation, on the Premier a few days ago to ask him to place £5,000 on the Estimates to provide three travelling dairies to go all through the agricultural districts of Victoria and instruct farmers in the art of butter-making—represents a sum of £2,000,000 annually. In Queensland it represents a very small amount. But there are difficulties in the way; our climate is entirely different from that of Victoria or New South Wales. Butter, which leaves the Darling Downs in the morning beautifully cool, and as hard as possible, after travelling down to Brisbane by railway, becomes in a few hours converted into oil, and I daresay the hon. member for Fortitude Valley will tell us that he has bought butter in that state at 3d. a pound.

Mr. McMASTER: No; my customers would not buy such stuff.

Mr. GROOM: That is one of the difficulties which the industry has to contend with at the present time. On the other hand, the butter referred to by the hon. member for Port Curtis, made near Highfields, at a beautiful romantic spot on the eastern slope of the Main Range, with a splendid supply of water constantly running, is brought to Brisbane in two or three hours, as cool and hard as it was when despatched from the factory in the morning, and necessarily realises a higher price than butter manufactured under ordinary circumstances, and sent down in a closely confined van. I have seen butter and green hides occasionally packed together in the same van. The butter from the factory realises down here at the present time as much as 2s. 6d. a pound, and I daresay that even at that price it is better worth buying than the ordinary butter sent down in closely confined vans is worth buying at 1s. 6d. a pound. Now, you cannot settle people on the lands of the colony unless you find them with facilities for the disposal of their produce after they have grown it. A motion was proposed in New South Wales the session before last for a sum of £30,000, to erect at the railway station at Redfern large receiving sheds and refrigerating rooms, so as to render the farmers perfectly independent of the middlemen. Sir Henry Parkes accepted that motion on behalf of the Government, and said he recognised it as part of their railway system to erect sheds and refrigerating rooms for

agricultural produce. That is exactly what is wanted at the railway station at Brisbane. The Municipal Council of Brisbane have erected a cooling chamber in the market in Roma street, but they have not provided it with a refrigerating machine.

Mr. McMASTER: They have nothing to put in it.

Mr. GROOM: The same thing was said in Sydney when the South Coast and West Camden Co-operative Company was started, but the company was not discouraged by such statements. They purchased a sister machine to the one on board the "Austral," at a cost of £2,000. The company started with a capital of £3,000, which was afterwards increased to £10,000, and at a meeting of shareholders the other day it was resolved to still further increase it to £50,000, and enlarge their operations. And the cry "there is nothing to put in it" would soon be heard no more if once a shed and refrigerating room of this kind were erected in Brisbane, thus supplying the farmers with a place to put their produce into. In addition to that, in summer time particularly, there ought to be refrigerating railway cars to take produce from the interior to Brisbane. At present, in the fruit season, hundreds of thousands of dozens of the most beautiful peaches, apples, and pears are utterly wasted because they cannot be sent to market on account of there being no cool vans to transport them in. When you talk about protection as a whole, I am quite prepared to go with the hon. member for Port Curtis in saying that protection is not going to do everything for the farmer. He will have to do something on his own part and help himself, and the State will have to do something on its part independent of protection, so far as refrigerating machinery at the railway station is concerned, and enlarge the stores in which the farmers can store their produce, so that they will not be in the hands of the middlemen. They are the men who are making fortunes out of our farmers. The hon. member for Port Curtis was right in what he said upon the subject. I have had account sales sent to me from a farmer not very long ago. He sent down to Brisbane forty bales of chaff, better chaff than which could not possibly be sent here, and what did he receive for it? The return was simply at the rate of £1 per ton after expenses had been deducted for freight, advertising, and agents' charges, and when he complained of the low price he received, he was told that the market was glutted from the South, and no more could be obtained for it.

Mr. McMASTER: That might have been a fair price for the article.

Mr. GROOM: It is no use the hon. member trying to run down the Darling Downs article. That is one of the absurd cries of Brisbane. Nothing good can come from the colony, but everything that comes from New South Wales or Victoria is necessarily good. The Treasurer should put that cry down. If he wants the people to use the colonial article he should put such a protective duty upon the imported article as would make them use it. That is the principle of protection. The same stupid cry was made about colonial tweeds. Look at the difficulties the Ipswich woollen manufactory had to contend with! What was that difficulty? I am sure it was not on account of the inferiority of the tweeds, for they could not have been better; it was simply the cry that nothing good can be made in the colony, and yet at the same time I know men who actually sold colonial tweeds as the best South Devon tweeds in order to ensure a trade. So far as the cry against anything colonial is concerned, it is our duty to

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encourage those who are in our colony, who have given us the best years of their lives in trying to lay the foundations of the colony, and to give them every possible protection we can. I say that now we have an opportunity of doing so it is our duty to those colonists to give them every protection we can, and try to eradicate the prejudice that nothing good can be made in the colony. I will tell the hon. member for Fortitude Valley that if proper facilities are afforded for bringing agricultural produce down to Brisbane, and if parties here will cease importing produce from Victoria and New South Wales, and help the farmers in this colony, the produce sent here will be in as good a condition as that which comes from the Southern colonies. The hon. member must remember this also, that if the article has come down to Brisbane sometimes in an unmarketable condition, it has not been from any want of diligence on the part of the farmer. It must be borne in mind that both in Victoria and New South Wales the colonies are older, and the farmers have had farms in their possession for many years, and have all the appliances for carrying on farming at a cheap rate. They have cheap agricultural machinery, whilst the farmer here has been struggling against enormous difficulties that only those who live amongst them can understand. They have not been able to provide the requisite machinery as they have in the Southern colonies, and the result is, sometimes through want of knowledge also, that they have not been able to supply their oats and lucerne in as good a condition as they can in the other colonies. They now recognise the fact that if they wish to get good prices for their produce they must send it in a marketable condition. Hay and chaff have been sent down here in as good condition and as marketable as anything that comes from the Southern colonies. It is nothing but this absurd prejudice, that nothing good can come from the colony, that causes the low price. The hon. member for Port Curtis referred—I speak of this matter because he introduced the subject so as to prejudice the Committee against any increase of duty against that proposed by the Colonial Treasurer in regard to the farmers—to the establishment at Helidon. I know the promoters of it, and I know that up to the present time it has not paid them. They are not able to obtain nearly sufficient milk to enable them to manufacture as much butter as they otherwise could, and they are trusting to the increased duties which we are proposing now to give them considerable impetus, so far as that manufacture is concerned. Those men have invested a large amount of money in the concern, and I am very much pleased that they have done so, because if the scheme succeeds I know other companies will start upon the same basis, and a larger business will be done in the production of butter than at present. Then, in regard to the matter of boots and shoes, of course I would prefer to have seen the tariff *ad valorem* duty in respect to them. If the hon. member for Port Curtis will analyse the returns of the numbers of boots and shoes brought into the colony he will find that a very large proportion of them came from Paris and from London, and are high-class boots, although they can be manufactured in Melbourne quite as well as in either of the two places I have mentioned. In fact I have seen a Paris boot and a Melbourne boot side by side, and would almost give the preference to the colonial-manufactured article.

Mr. UNMACK: Nonsense!

Mr. GROOM: The hon. member says "nonsense." I have seen the Victorian boot side by side with the Paris boot, and the colonial might be preferred to the Paris boot, and for this

reason: that you know what the colonial article is made of, and you do not know what the Paris article is made of until the first shower of rain comes, and then you find it out. So that, so far as the difference between high price and low price boots is concerned, it would be equalised if the Colonial Treasurer put an *ad valorem* duty of 25 per cent. upon them. Of course, I believe he has good reasons for taking the course he has. I find that in the year we had the largest increase in the importations of boots and shoes we sent away 100,919 hides, so that we actually sent out of our own colony the raw material which we ought to utilise here, and then we received it back as an imported article, and a very inferior imported article it is. The Canadian Government, when framing their tariff, took the opinion of all the leather manufacturers throughout Canada, and the consensus of opinion was that an *ad valorem* duty was the best, and that *ad valorem* duty was fixed at 25 per cent. Here is the Canadian tariff, which is just the tariff that will suit this colony. This is taken from the Canadian Treasurer's own speech:—

"Next in the list are leather manufactures: On sole leather, tanned, or rough, and undressed, and on morocco, 10 per cent. *ad valorem*; on sole and belting leather, tanned and on all upper leather, not otherwise specified, 15 per cent. *ad valorem*; on the same, dressed and harness, 20 per cent. *ad valorem*; on patent and enamelled leather, 20 per cent.; on all other leather and skins, tanned, not otherwise herein provided for, and on leather, belting, boots, and shoes, and on other manufactures not otherwise provided for, now 17½ per cent., will be 25 per cent.

He also puts in gloves of leather 25 per cent., and leather board 3 cents per pound. There seems to be some difference of opinion, and indeed some dissatisfaction in regard to the duty of 1s. 10d. upon a pair of bluchers which can be imported into the colony from New South Wales or Victoria at 4s. 6d. a pair, while the Parisian high-class boot, costing 26s., pays no more. The way to meet the difficulty is to treat all alike and put on an *ad valorem* duty of 25 per cent. I am ready to assist the Colonial Treasurer if he proposes to do that. There is one matter not mentioned at all in this tariff which should certainly have been included in it, and that is this: Every year merchants in Yokohama send down to this colony shipments of from 20 to 25 cases of what is called "Japanese ware," the greatest rubbish manufactured anywhere. It is glued together for sale, and the first hot day we get dissolves the glue and the Japanese ware disappears. More than that, I may say I have seen invoices of this Japanese ware which is sent here for sale by auction, and the hon. member for Toombul, if he were here, could tell us something about it. I have seen invoices of this ware, and I can assure hon. members that not a single sale of it takes place in any town in the colony which does not realise four or five times the invoice price of those goods, and the invoice itself is salted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: How do you know that?

Mr. GROOM: There is a contingency condition attached to the invoice which, if it cannot be sold here, the goods have to be sent to somewhere in Sydney, where they will be sold, but, leaving that aside, there is the fact that shipments of this Japanese ware are sent here every six, eight, or ten weeks in from twenty to twenty-five cases at a time, and it is bought by our own people, who are continually denouncing the Chinese at the same time, and who yet rush to these sales and buy this rubbish. I say, put a duty of 25 per cent. —

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: On the salted invoice?

Mr. GROOM: On the Japanese ware and on the salted invoice, too, if the hon. member likes. If the hon. Colonial Treasurer will do that, he will accomplish some good. So far as furniture is concerned, a duty of 25 per cent. might be put upon that with the greatest ease. On looking over the returns for last year, I see a very large amount of furniture was imported, while men engaged in the cabinet industry here have had difficulty in getting work. I am perfectly convinced that as good furniture can be made in this colony as can be imported. Of course I admit there may be certain fancy articles which may not be as well made here. If you send the size of your room to large manufacturing firms like Oetzman and Co. or Maple and Co., of London, you can get the choicest furniture sent out, but at a very high price, and I very much question, after all, whether, if a similar order were given to firms in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Warwick, Rockhampton, or Townsville, the local manufacturers would not be able to turn out as good furniture, and give equal satisfaction. I say, then, it would be very easy to put a duty of 25 per cent. on furniture. I speak of course as a protectionist. I believe in protection, and although there may be those who think that policy will do the colony harm, I have no such fears. I believe, on the contrary, that a protective policy will do the country an immense amount of good, and give it a boom it has never had yet. At all events we have seen what freetrade has done for us, and now that the people have demanded a protective policy, we will have an opportunity of seeing what it is capable of producing. Let us try, at all events, and we can hardly be worse off than we have been under a freetrade tariff. A freetrade tariff has undoubtedly depressed the agricultural industry to an extent that makes it hardly worth living for. Most of our other industries in this colony at the present time are also in a depressed condition. If that be the case under a freetrade tariff, and we believe that a protective tariff ought to be imposed, and that it would have the effect of increasing the number of hands employed in all our industries, let us give it a trial by all means. We have this fact before us: that in Canada it has had a trial with the tariff I have cited. It must be remembered that all preceding Governments in Canada had been compelled to come down with a large deficiency, just as we have here; and the whole people of the Dominion at last decided—with the exception, of course, of the free-traders, who advocated reciprocity with the United States—all the rest of the people demanded a protective policy; and what has been the result? Three years after its existence the Finance Minister there was able to come down to the Dominion House of Commons and say, not only that he was able to balance his receipts and expenditure, but, for the first time in the history of the Dominion, he had a surplus revenue of 2,000,000 dollars. That is a fact which should be known inside and outside this House. It should also be known that the protective tariff of Canada has stood the test of three general elections; and to-day Sir John Macdonald stands at the head of the protection party as elected in 1879—a fact unprecedented in the history of any of our colonial dependencies. The Premier was returned on the protective policy formulated in 1879. There has been no demand that it should be repealed, and what have we seen within the last three or four months. Mr. Cartwright, the leader of the Opposition, tabled a resolution in favour of reciprocity with the United States; and an amendment reaffirming the desirability of adhering to the protective policy was put and carried by a majority of something like 60 in the Dominion House of Commons of 210 members. With

these facts before us, I do not see why we should not give protection a trial in this colony, and on even broader lines than the hon. gentleman has indicated. I have seen the tariff foreshadowed by the Northern members, and I am not altogether displeased with it. I think there is a great deal in it, and if we are desirous of improving our position so far as our industries are concerned, and of complying with the demands for money which are being made more and more every year in the public expenditure, then by all means let us carry out a protective tariff. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Government says he will not propose a land-tax, and yet he must have revenue to carry on the Government. The hon. member for Port Curtis, when sitting on this side of the House, inveighed against the extravagance of the then Government, and we heard him say the Estimates-in-Chief could be largely reduced, and when challenged to say where the reduction could be made, he said, "That is not my business; that is for you to do." Now, we have had a change of Government, and the hon. gentleman is obliged to admit that so far from there being a reduction in the Estimates there is an increase in all the departments of expenditure.

Mr. NORTON: I think they ought to make a reduction.

Mr. GROOM: I do not think they can. I am quite prepared to say that. I do not think they can make a reduction without destroying the efficiency of the public service. I say that in our public service some of the salaries are really miserable pittance, and it is of no use saying that expenditure can be reduced in that direction. I will be no party to cutting down salaries in order to prevent increased taxation. I say increase the sources of revenue rather than destroy the efficiency of the public service. I was surprised to hear it stated by an hon. gentleman that a saving of £40,000 or £50,000 a year could be effected in the Education Department alone.

Mr. UNMACK: Hear, hear!

Mr. GROOM: I should like to know in what direction. Certainly not in the reduction of salaries.

Mr. UNMACK: No.

Mr. GROOM: If there is one class of Civil servants who are badly paid in consideration of the important duties they perform, it is the gentlemen who are acting as teachers in our public schools. I know that some of them have a great difficulty in making both ends meet owing to the miserable pittance that they are in receipt of, and yet to them is entrusted the moral and educational welfare of the greater portion of the children of the colony. They are entrusted with the most important functions of any public servants, and the amount of remuneration they receive for their educational services is miserably small.

Mr. UNMACK: The teachers do not complain. They are quite satisfied.

Mr. GROOM: Not all of them are satisfied—I am perfectly sure of that. I say again that, so far as the present Estimates are concerned, it is impossible to reduce them. I am not at all surprised that the Colonial Treasurer has been compelled to admit that, even though the revenue is increasing at the rate of £300,000 on previous years, he is not able to make both ends meet. We should endeavour, therefore, to exact more revenue. It is proposed to put 14s. a gallon on brandy. Why should it not pay that amount?

Mr. MACFARLANE: A tax on newspapers would do something.

Mr. GROOM: I am coming to that directly. Rum, 14s. Why should it not pay that amount? Why should there not be an excise duty on rum as well as on beer? Then whisky, 14s. There is a perfect run on whisky. Why should it not pay additional duty; and the same with respect to Old Tom? Those are some of the amendments that will be proposed by the Northern members. Now, with regard to a matter that has been incidentally referred to. I say at once, as a protectionist, that I do not approve of the remission of the duty on paper. I did not ask the hon. gentleman to remit it, and I do not know who did. I daresay it was those who are receiving the largest profits, the monopolies—of whom I am sorry to say we have two. One of those monopolies it will be found before very long is opposed to the best interests of the country, and this remission will give facilities for its becoming a still greater monopoly by relieving it of the duty on paper. As far as the provincial Press is concerned, the advantages we will receive from the remission of duty on paper will not be worth a farthing rush light candle. As a protectionist I do not care about the remission of this paper duty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why don't you derive any benefit?

Mr. GROOM: We will not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why not?

The PREMIER: The monopoly you mention is no reason.

Mr. GROOM: We shall pay the same price for paper as formerly. It will make no difference to us. It will be a very small matter indeed; and as far as the taxing of newspapers is concerned, why that is a matter for the House to decide. If we must have additional revenue to carry on the Government of the country—and it is clear that we must—then, as far as newspapers are concerned, they must share the burden and contribute their quota of taxation equally with everything else. We shall not grumble in that direction. If there is to be a tax on knowledge this will not have been the first House that has imposed that tax. In Victoria there is a tax of 3d. on every newspaper sent out of the colony after seven days.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: They are liable to a postage of 3d. within the colony.

Mr. GROOM: However, that is a matter entirely in the hands of the House. If we are to have a protective policy, with all industries protected, and the general public are to be asked to contribute extra taxation to support those industries, then the newspaper proprietors have no right to ask for exemption. But there is this point to be considered: There is, for instance, an article imported called "A Literary Supplement," which is printed in Sydney and Melbourne, and sold to newspapers at a very low price. They come to this colony also, and every one of those literary supplements deprives the compositors in the colony probably of several pounds in the course of the week, which they might earn; consequently, if the Treasurer likes to put on a duty of 25 per cent. on literary supplements printed out of the colony let him do so, and it would be an encouragement to our own printers. The same thing applies to other printed matter, where he could also render assistance to the printing trade—I mean the working printing trade. The men who really deserve consideration are the compositors, who have long hours, and who earn every shilling they receive. There are companies in this city at the present time, doing large business of something like £100,000 a year, who invariably get their printing done out of the colony. Some

get it done in England, and some in America, and I say put an *ad valorem* duty of 25 per cent. upon that printing, and give encouragement to the printers in the colony, who spend their money here and rear their families here—give them every encouragement you can. I have thrown out these suggestions for the consideration of the Treasurer. I will give him every assistance I can to make this tariff as protective as possible. It is the only chance we shall have for some time to do real good to the bone and sinew of the country, and I hope we shall not lose the opportunity which we have of placing the tariff on such a footing that it will not only increase the revenue, but will give a great stimulus to the manufacturing industries of the colony.

Mr. MURRAY said: Mr. Jessop,—I had no intention of speaking upon the tariff proposals of the Government, but as I contested my election as a freetrade candidate it becomes my duty to say a few words on the proposals now before the Committee. I have always looked upon protection from a producer's point of view, and I hold that no protective tariff can possibly benefit the producing interests, from the simple fact that our staple products are articles of export. Of course the producing interest is far and away the most important interest in the country, and any taxation tending to retard the progress of this interest must be detrimental to the whole community. In the district I have the honour to represent there is a very large number of farmers. A great proportion of them, I may say, are protectionists; and, although I was opposed to their views on this question, I promised that if the protective policy of the Government did increase their cost of living I would do my very best to see that their interest was duly attended to—that is, that whatever protection could do for them I would make it my business to do if possible. I think hon. members will agree with me that it is a difficult matter to protect the interests of farmers, as competition is so keen among themselves that produce is generally selling at a very low price. For that very reason hardly any protection could affect their interest, seeing that the local markets are supplied in a great measure from that source. The Victorian farmers have found out that protection does not benefit them in the least degree, and recently they have been agitating about it very much, and it is now proposed to put on a very heavy tax of 25 per cent. on all stock travelling over the border. This shows the difficulty there is in protecting farmers. As I just pointed out, the competition among themselves is so keen that it is absolutely impossible to protect them. I think the whole question of protection, boiled down, resolves itself simply into a question of protection for labour. As a proof of this I need only remind hon. members that if the price of labour was low enough we could defy competition. Do away with the eight-hours' system trade and labour unions, and labour would at once fall, and it would be found that protection would not be needed—that we could supply all our own requirements, and at the same time compete with the outside world. But in order to maintain the present price of labour, protection becomes a necessity. To illustrate this, it is only necessary to draw attention to the fact that in towns and centres of population, labour is very largely protected at the present time, they have well-organised unions, the hours of labour are fixed, and the pay is remunerative. None of these things exist in the country. There they have no trade unions, and the hours of labour are from daylight to dark. I may say that the labour employed in the agricultural districts is scarcely paid for at all. The operations are generally carried on by the farmers themselves and their families; hence they get

very little remuneration for it. If it were possible for farmers to benefit by protection, they would combine and form themselves into labour unions, and restrict the hours of labour amongst themselves. This would necessarily raise the price of produce, and protection would become a necessity to maintain those prices. I think it has been admitted that the farmers are the benefactors of the country—that the man who makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, is a benefactor to his country. I think myself that the man who makes a ton of flour or of any of the other necessities of life grow where nothing but grass grew before is a still greater benefactor to his country. I think the Government need not hesitate in extending to the farmers, as a class, a fair amount of protection, for this, as one reason. At the present time, as I have said, in moderately good seasons farm produce is so low that it requires no protection. The markets are glutted with produce. I noticed last year that the ruling price of some articles of farm produce in Ipswich ranged from 4d. to 6d. per lb. for butter, from £1 to 30s. per ton for hay, and so on. You cannot protect with such prices as these. They should shut out importations. If the farm produce were taxed the tax would not fall heavily upon the country, because it would only be during severe droughts that it would be operative at all. In that way protection would encourage an improved style of farming—more scientific farming, which would enable them to supply the markets during excessive droughts, so that it would be only occasionally that a protective tariff would be operative, and that the general community would suffer from it. I think the tax upon agricultural machinery of every description should be abolished—that all such machinery should be admitted free, seeing that agriculturists, as a rule, do so much for the country. Seeds of all kinds, too, should be admitted free. I am also prepared to support the proposals of the hon. member for Toowoomba to put 20s. a ton on hay, 1s. a bushel on maize, and 6d. per lb. on butter, cheese, and produce of that description. I am not prepared to support a duty on flour at all. I think it should be admitted free, for this reason: that it will be a long time before Queensland will be able to supply herself with flour—if ever she can do so. At present there is only one small portion of the colony devoted to the growing of wheat, and, even there, it is found that the flour produced is very inferior in quality.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. MURRAY: At all events, it is not equal to South Australian.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes!

Mr. MURRAY: I believe that, if we depend upon Queensland for flour, we shall never know what it is to have good flour. It is only in one small corner of the colony that it is produced, and there it is not produced at anything like a profit. In fact, I do not believe this season there are 100 acres of wheat in the whole district. I was there the other day and did not see a bit. It would be foolish to put a tax upon flour in the meantime. I am sure the coastal districts will never produce flour. It may be grown about Warwick, and possibly in the Western districts of the colony. If the residents out there engaged in the industry they would be sufficiently protected by the carriage of some hundreds of miles. That would be an inducement for them to grow flour without imposing any protection at all. I am not disposed to put a duty on timber, because it is a natural product; it costs nothing to produce. The saw-millers have nothing to do but to go into our magnificent forests and hew it down without any cost whatever. If it cost as much as the

cultivation of wheat costs the farmer it would be deserving of some protection; but it costs nothing, and I see no reason why the saw-millers of the colony should not be able to compete with the saw-millers of any other country. Another reason why I think it would not be judicious to increase the tax upon timber is that it would necessarily be a check upon building and the carrying out of necessary improvements. Understand, I do not believe in protection in any shape or form. I believe it is a fallacy, a silly attempt at trying to make something out of nothing. One of the great arguments in favour of protection is that it is necessary for a new country in order to foster native industries. I hold the very opposite opinion. I think it is only in densely populated countries that protection becomes necessary. Impose a protective tariff here, and you will require to import labour to keep the industries established going. I am sure that at the present time there is no suitable labour in the colony to carry on any manufacturing industries. It is only when your streets become crowded with idle boys and girls that any attempt should be made to impose a protective tariff. In a young country like ours, with sparse population and enormous territory, teeming with untold resources of every description, I say our true business is to extract the raw material from this country, export it to the best markets in the world, buy our necessities in return, and by that means get the best value for our money. And I contend that, in order to get the best value for your money in purchasing any of the necessities of life, it is of more importance to circulate the money's worth than the money. For instance, take a miner starting. Without protection he can buy a plant for, say, £1,000; with protection, he has to pay £1,500 for it. That plant is of far more value to him and to the country at £1,000 than the £1,000 would be circulating in the country. We should endeavour to get the best value for our money, and that is best done in the way I suggest. I was pleased to hear the Minister for Works say that it was the intention of the Government to grant to the Northern districts the full and absolute control over their own revenue. That is a very good thing; but I would remind the hon. gentleman that there is such a place as the Central district. The members for the Central district do not make the same noise and cry about their requirements as the members for the North, but I can assure you that they are just as fully alive to the interests of their district as the Northern members are to theirs; and when any privilege of this sort is to be granted, they necessarily expect that it will be granted to them in the same proportion. In fact, I think they are in much greater need of it. One Northern member objected to the imposition of a tax on maize, on which it is proposed to put a duty of 1s. a bushel. In my opinion, it is about the very best thing that could happen to the North, for it would induce them to go in for the cultivation of maize, and supply themselves. The North is better adapted for the production of all kinds of agricultural produce, with the exception of flour, than the Central district is, and the imposition of this tax of 1s. a bushel on maize will induce the settlers there to go in for the production of maize and other kinds of agricultural produce, and supply themselves. In that respect it will be a benefit to them. I am glad to find that it is the intention of the Government to continue the endowment to divisional boards at the rate of £2 to £1, and the news will be hailed with satisfaction in all the country districts. Without it they would have great difficulty in meeting their requirements, and the works necessary for improving means of communication would have to be stopped. I

do not intend to say much on the Land Act at the present time. The tenor of all the arguments I have heard since I have been here is that, because a few acres of land on the Darling Downs have been sold, and the purchasers have a chance of making a little profit out of it, therefore all previous land laws were necessarily bad; but the Darling Downs does not constitute Queensland. In the Central district there are no such profits attached to the purchase of land. Land there is of no more value to the purchaser now than it was fifteen years ago. I do not know of a single case of dummyming that ever occurred in the Central district, nor do I know of an owner of country land there who could sell his land at a profit to-day over and above the price he paid to the Government for it. A great deal has been said about the liberal provisions of the Land Act of 1884 as contrasted with previous Land Acts. In the neighbourhood of Rockhampton you can buy freehold land at 8s. an acre, with considerable improvements on it. The Government price for land, under the agricultural clauses of the Act, is £1 an acre. Before you are entitled to purchase that land at £1 per acre you are bound down by penal clauses to ten years' personal residence upon it; and when you have submitted to all the conditions, you are allowed to buy for £1 what you may afterwards with great difficulty sell for 8s. or 10s. I have taken particular notice of the operation of the Land Act in the Central district, and I can say that it is not adapted to that district in any shape or form. In the Government land office at Rockhampton during the whole of the year 1887 there was only £187 taken under the operation of that Act—hardly enough to pay the wages of the boy who looks after the place. At St. Lawrence, another centre of population within my electorate, only one selection was taken up during that year—simply because the conditions are so stringent, and the price asked so high, that men refrain altogether from taking up land. I shall have more to say on this matter when the proper time comes. Several Northern members have claimed great credit for the miners, saying that upon them has depended the salvation of the country during periods of depression and drought. But they mistake the question when they talk in that way. We have not the miners to thank for it, but the natural, inherent wealth of the country. If the country had not been auriferous, all the miners in the country could not have produced an ounce of gold from it. It is that which has tided us over those periods of depression, and not the miners. They have also complained bitterly of the tax on mining machinery. I believe a better tax could be imposed, which would get over that difficulty, and the suggestion I have to offer will probably meet with the approval of Northern members. It is that mining companies paying dividends of over 7 or 8 per cent. should be called upon to pay a tax of some description. That tax would fall upon properties which were paying, and not upon the poor men; and by the imposition of such a tax we might avoid the necessity of taxing mining machinery; it would also encourage the prospecting and developing of properties, because the tax would only fall upon those who could afford to pay it. I think, also, that all water-boring machinery for searching for artesian water should be admitted free. I will not detain the Committee longer. I was returned here as a freetrade member, and I hold those opinions still. No doubt the imposition of this tariff at the present time is proposed to tide us over difficulties, and to put the finances of the colony on a better footing; but as soon as that is done I hope to see the whole of it swept away. I do not believe in protection in any

shape or form. In a new country like this our true business is to extract the raw material, of which we have such an immense abundance, and sufficient to find ample employment for all the labour we have in the colony now or are likely to have for the next hundred years. If these taxes are imposed they will, at all events, tend to depreciate the producing interests of the country.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not think the proposition of the hon. member who has just sat down, in connection with mining machinery, will meet with the favourable consideration of the mining members. However, I have not risen to go into a general discussion upon this question, because if every member did that it would take a fortnight before they reached the subject itself. I have risen chiefly to refer to some remarks made in my absence, regarding the Northern members on this side of the Committee, by the hon. member for Burke, Mr. Hodgkinson, this afternoon. He stated, I am informed, there were no members really representing mining constituencies on this side, and that those claiming to represent them, were devoid of intelligence.

Mr. HODGKINSON: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. HAMILTON: Perhaps the hon. member did not know what he was saying, which is very likely. I do not attribute what he did say to deliberate misstatements; but I assume he erred merely on account of his ignorance. I shall mention some members on this side who do represent mining constituencies. There are Mr. Adams, the member for Bundaberg; Mr. R. R. Jones, representing Cawarral; Mr. Lissner, representing Kennedy; Mr. Little, representing Woothakata; Mr. Powers, representing the Burrum, and I think I represent a mining district myself. I believe the hon. member went out of his way to attack me, and since he has done so I shall reply. He stated, I believe, that I was not elected by the miners. The hon. gentleman went and interviewed a number of my constituents in the Cook district, and asked for their support.

Mr. HODGKINSON: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. HAMILTON: That is the case; and why did not the hon. member stand for the Cook? The hon. member had not the pluck of the tailor he spoke about—of a ninth part of a man. He went to my constituents and asked for their support—

Mr. HODGKINSON: That is a distinct misstatement.

Mr. HAMILTON: I can mention several names: Mr. Patrick Callaghan, Mr. Robinson, and many others, who told me—men in whose word I have absolute confidence—that he asked them for their support.

Mr. HODGKINSON: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has made a certain statement, and I have pledged my word as politely as I can, that what he says is untrue. I never asked any voter in any portion of the colony of Queensland for support, either at the last election or at the election fourteen years ago.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: What is the point of order?

Mr. HODGKINSON: The point of order is this, that if the hon. member states that I called upon any person in his electorate with a view to contest that electorate, there are gentlemen in this Committee who know that that statement is incorrect, and when I state that it is incorrect and the hon. member replies that the information came to him from people in whom he has every confidence, he is accusing me of telling an untruth; and if that is not a point of order I do not know what is. The facts remain the same.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Cook has made a statement, and the hon. member for Burke has made a statement also; there is no point of order there.

Mr. HAMILTON: Mr. Jessop,—It is very easy to ask a man's support without directly saying "Will you vote for me?" It is very easy to say, "I am here now, and if you support me, and I can depend upon your influence, it is likely that I will honour you by becoming your representative." Nobody asks for a vote; but at the same time we do all we can to obtain votes. Not only did the hon. member do that, but there was a telegram sent up by Mr. Hill, to Maytown, requesting that Mr. Hodgkinson should be requisitioned to contest the election. It was sent to Mr. Clifford, one of Mr. Hill's strongest supporters, and he put it up outside his public-house, and the diggers passed by and laughed at it. All his supporters knew he had no show. I would dearly have liked to have gone for him. It is a subject of regret to me that that gentleman had not the pluck of that ninth part of a man, and come forward and fight me for that electorate. Instead of doing so he went to one of the furthest removed electorates in Queensland, a place where he had never been before, and where they did not know him. He went to Croydon, and we know he has a very fluent tongue, and Croydon was simply peopled by diggers from New South Wales and Victoria, and various other places. This gentleman, whom they had never seen before, promised them everything and told them that no matter which side he was on he would be a Minister. But Sir Thomas McLlwraith preferred to have him on the Opposition side. In regard to those gold-mining regulations, if those miners had seen them they would have gone into hysterics. But they never saw them. It would only have been necessary to show any miner those regulations, and they would not have voted for the hon. member—a man who can write a splendid report on a field even if he has never seen it. I have often envied him the splendid reports he can write. I recollect one of those regulations was to the effect that no man under the age of twenty-one years should possess a miner's right—he should have no legal standing on the field. No married woman could have a miner's right; but any girl six years old could hold one. That is one of the regulations that it took the hon. member eight months to concoct, and they were then premature. It was not even a premature birth, but an abortion. The hon. gentleman is a good man but very vain. Previous to the election—I have been told this by more than one reporter—when anyone asked the hon. member for news he would say, "Got another requisition;" in fact he had more requisitions to stand for mining constituencies than there actually were mining constituencies in the colony.

Mr. COWLEY said: Mr. Jessop,—I will not reply to any observations made by the hon. member for Burke, because I think the hon. gentleman himself did not believe more than one-half of them, and he did not expect us to believe them either. I will confine myself strictly to the tariff. I may say, in the first instance, that I was very much disappointed when I read these proposals, because I was thoroughly convinced that the Treasurer had sufficient ability to carry on the business of the country and meet all expenditure by quite a different means from this. I believe he is quite capable of doing so, and therefore I conclude that this tariff is not for revenue purposes; but is simply and purely for protection purposes. If the Colonial Treasurer had desired to make revenue meet expenditure he could have done it without increasing taxation in any shape or form. If we revert to Table II. of the Treasurer's tables, we find that over £375,000 is lost to the country

annually on account of our railways not paying. That is a weak point in our system, and it is to that spot the hon. gentleman should have directed his attention. If he had enforced rigid economy in the management of those railways, and raised the rates and fares where necessary to make them productive, it would have been more satisfactory to the country, and especially to Northern members. I will tell you why. It is well known that the North is very destitute of railway communication, and the people there suffer in consequence, but, more than that, we have to support the railways used by the people of the South. Further, we cannot compete with the people who use these railways in the matter of agricultural produce. We could grow that produce and supply our own markets if we had railway communication, but, not having that, produce can be landed from the South and from the other colonies at a cheaper rate than we can afford to bring it to market either by drays or by boats upon the rivers. We find that railways in the South, running through land that is only used for grazing purposes, are each year returning less than in the previous year, and if those railways were stopped and a system of coastal railways were initiated, running from Brisbane to Cooktown, where the people are actually settled upon the land, our railway systems might be made reproductive. Another matter to which the hon. gentleman should have turned his attention is the reduction in the number of the Civil servants. I do not think there should be any reduction in the salaries of those men, but I believe in weeding some of them out. One continually sees and hears of men in the public offices who do very little work indeed. They have, many of them, been politically appointed, and it is high time they were removed. Let the good men do the work, and if there is a large saving, a certain amount of it should be divided amongst those who remain, and we should have a better class of men, and the work would be carried out with greater economy than at present. There is another thing in which a considerable saving could be effected to the country, and it was, I think, mentioned by the hon. member for Toowoong; and that is a reduction in the Government endowment granted to local authorities in districts where there is a large population, and where most of the land is ratable. The £2 for £1 subsidy could still be given to those districts where the population is sparse, and the bulk of the land unalienated. The money spent there, it must be remembered, improves Government property. While, therefore, the subsidy should be continued to country local authorities, a considerable saving might be effected by reducing the endowment to boards and municipalities in large centres of population, and where almost the whole of the land is ratable. The hon. member for Toowoong also showed that a saving could be effected in the Savings Bank Department. No man who has money deposited in the Savings Bank will like to see the interest allowed on it reduced, but while the country's affairs are in such a state as they are at present, it is only fair and just to effect that saving. I also agree with the members who have urged the undesirability of spending additional money upon improvements to the Parliamentary Buildings. That may well be left till a more prosperous time. The number of members is not likely soon to be increased, and I consider these buildings are sufficient for our present requirements. We do not want luxurious refreshment, dining, and billiard rooms, and we can, I think, be contented with what we have. On all these things a very considerable amount could have been saved, and would have gone a long way towards meeting the

deficiency between revenue and expenditure. But if it is necessary to have any taxation at all, I quite agree with those hon. members who have suggested an income-tax, because I believe that to be the fairest tax which could be imposed in this or in any other country. The very name explains itself, a tax upon the income of individuals. It is generally allowed that it should be started at £300, and all incomes above that amount might fairly and justly be taxed. If we require additional taxation after that, let us tax those things which are not necessities of life. I cannot agree with the hon. member for Townsville in saying that beer is a necessary of life. Alcohol is not found in the human system, and it builds up neither blood, bones, nor muscle. I consider that by taxing these things, we are taxing not luxuries, but articles very injurious to the human system, and which only bring ruin, death, misery, strife, and woe unutterable upon those communities in which they are indulged in. I think, then, that there should be an increased tax upon spirits and beer. The hon. member for Toowoomba, I think, said he did not wish to reduce the Civil servants' wages, but what is he proposing to do but that? The imposition of such protective duties as he proposes will certainly have that effect in the case of Civil servants, bank clerks, and all who are not producers and who will not benefit by them; and you may as well strike £20 or £30 off a man's salary in one way as reduce it in another by protecting the different articles he consumes to that extent. Speaking of these tariff proposals from a Northerner's point of view, I consider them most iniquitous and unjust. I think, in this matter, the Northern members should sink all petty local jealousies and unite as one man to resist them, and if they are passed, demand separation. I consider the whole of these tariff proposals, without a single exception, will bear heavily and unduly upon all Northerners; but they will bear especially heavily on the sugar-planting community, and I will show how. Agricultural implements, sugar bags, bran, pollard, chaff, hay, firebricks, machinery, and other articles used in connection with the planting industry, and all articles of clothing and food are directly used, and to a large extent, on all plantations. Those who know anything about the industry know that sugar-planters ration every man they employ, and they also clothe all their South Sea Islanders and provide them with tobacco. It is evident, then, that the increased tax upon all these articles will bear directly upon the Southern and Northern planters. And what have we by way of compensation? The only thing we have is a passing regret from the Premier that the sugar industry is declining. I always understood that the real meaning of sympathy was to suffer with the sufferer, but as there has been no proposal laid before the Committee to give redress to the sugar-planters, I consider that some of these duties should be remitted in their favour. Of course we know that the very tempting bait tantalisingly held out by the leader of the Opposition, of free ports for the North, is all very well, coming from the Opposition.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I said partly free.

Mr. COWLEY: I thought the hon. member said "free ports."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I said the admission of goods at a lower rate.

Mr. COWLEY: That is a very tempting bait to hold out now, but why did the hon. gentleman not do something in this line when he was in power? The hon. gentleman has repeatedly said that the North had no grievances

to redress, but after a time when he found it had he proposed a measure which was rejected alike by North and South as being insufficient to redress them, so that we cannot be led astray by any suggestions coming from an irresponsible person. Had he been in power I doubt whether he would have made any such suggestion, and I doubt whether the hon. gentleman who sits behind him, the hon. member for Maryborough, would agree to any such proposal. If that proposal had come from the Premier it would have been heartily welcomed and accepted by the Northern members, and I trust that before we finish with the tariff he will make a move in that direction, because it is admitted, even by the leader of the Opposition, that the North has a great grievance, and that that would be a proper remedy to give them. Now, we have heard a great deal in this Committee about the glorious results of protection in Victoria, both from the hon. member for Maryborough, and the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom. These reports will get abroad in *Hansard*.

Mr. GROOM: I never alluded to Victoria. I referred to Canada.

Mr. COWLEY: The hon. member spoke about the Victorian exports.

Mr. GROOM: I only referred to two things in connection with Victoria—the *ad valorem* and the property tax.

Mr. COWLEY: I took the words down at the time, and understood the hon. member to refer to the exports. The hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, will not deny that he referred to them. Well, those assertions made by the hon. member for Maryborough about the wonderful amount of exports, and the wonderful results accruing from protection in Victoria, will be recorded in *Hansard*. I daresay they will be read by a great many men who will not take the trouble to find out whether they are correct or not. If they knew the hon. gentleman as well as he is known in this House they would not take his word for gospel, but as the statement comes from a member of Parliament they think it perfectly true.

Mr. ANNEAR: I rise to a point of order. I can claim that I have never intentionally made a misstatement since I have been inside this House. I know the hon. member, and respect him very much.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: What is the point of order?

Mr. ANNEAR: The point of order is this: that the hon. member has stated that persons who know me as well as he does would not take my statement.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: What is the point of order?

Mr. ANNEAR: Neither inside or outside this House have I ever intentionally made a misstatement.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member state his point of order?

Mr. ANNEAR: I say that that language is unparliamentary.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: I think the hon. member is putting too much weight on the remarks made by the hon. member for Herbert. He did not impugn the truthfulness of the hon. member. He said that any hon. member who knew him as well outside the House as he was known inside would not take his statements for granted. I make such statements about hon. members over and over again. I have done it a dozen times this session with regard to the leader of the Opposition, but that is not telling him he is telling an untruth. Hon. members often make statements

to serve their own purposes. We all do it. We all use facts in different ways to bear out our arguments, but we do not impute personal untruthfulness to hon. members, and I do not think that the hon. member for Herbert intended to do so towards the member for Maryborough.

Mr. ANNEAR said: I always look upon gospel truths as true. The hon. gentleman said my words would not be taken as gospel. But I could occupy this House for a week by talking about the misstatements that were made at the last general election, and the *Courier* would not hold them all to-morrow morning.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: I think the difficulty might be met if the hon. member for Herbert said that he did not intend to impugn the truthfulness of the statements made by the hon. member for Maryborough.

Mr. COWLEY said: I have not the slightest intention of saying anything derogatory to the dignity of the hon. member for Maryborough. What I meant to say, if I did not say it, was that anyone knowing the hon. member as well as he is known inside the House would not accept his assertions without referring to authorities to see if they were true. I allude to the statement he made regarding the wonderful results which had accrued through a policy of protection being adopted in Victoria. What I wish to say is this, that when any hon. member of this Committee makes such a statement as that, I, for one, should like to see it substantiated by figures before I believe it.

Mr. ANNEAR: That is easily done.

Mr. COWLEY: I do not know that it is so easily done. I know that assertions do not carry very much weight in this Committee, because we are a deliberative body; and when those assertions are made we naturally want to know how they are to be substantiated. But there are many hundreds of men outside this Chamber who take such statements as being quite correct, when it is seen that they are made by members of Parliament, and especially so if they are not challenged. Therefore I wish to put the country right in this respect, not so much for the sake of hon. members present, but for the sake of the country and those who read *Hansard*, and I wish to say that I think the statement of the hon. member for Maryborough, regarding the wonderful benefits derived from a protective tariff in Victoria, are not altogether exactly as he thinks they are. I have a pamphlet in my hand, which was handed to me by an hon. gentleman just as I was about to hunt up certain authorities, and therefore I have been saved the labour of compiling a statement, and although it will be trespassing upon the time of hon. members somewhat, I feel bound, in the interests of my constituents and the country generally, to read it to hon. members. I look upon this thin end of the wedge of protection being driven in at the present time as something which will be lasting; as a thing that will not only be felt by us for a few years, but will be felt by our children down to the next generation. It is a principle that we have to contend against which can only be fraught with ruin and destruction to the best interests of the country. Political economists of the present day clearly demonstrate that protection is false, and that free trade is the grand principle that should govern a nation's prosperity. I maintain that any measure passed by this Chamber, which will tend to fetter and trammel trade, and divert it from its natural course, must be fraught with serious consequences to the country at large, and, therefore, as a statement has been made that is generally believed, that in Victoria the principles of protection have been fraught with

benefit to that country, it is high time, in my estimation, that that statement should be contradicted. I will read this small pamphlet I have in my hand, not for the information of hon. members, but so that it shall be put in *Hansard*.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Who is the author?

Mr. COWLEY: I care not who is the author. I have taken the trouble to check these figures in a great many instances, and I find that they are correct. The pamphlet is as follows:—

"THE VICTORIAN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY.

"HOW DOES PROTECTION WORK?"

"The 'Victorian Year Book' for the year ending March 31, 1887, has been issued this month. It is natural that political economists should scrutinise the figures relating to those industries in which is concentrated the full strength of the Victorian policy of restricting imports. There need be no hesitation in saying that the statistics made public in this latest issue of Hayter's valuable book are of a character that must carry dismay into the ranks of the protectionists, for they are utterly antagonistic to the expectations and the assertions of that party. According to protectionists, all that is necessary to secure increased and constant employment is a high tariff. And that just in proportion to the efforts we make to restrict importations would be our success in enlarging the sphere of labour. To pass from the theories about which we are told so much, to the facts which we are left to find for ourselves, it may be noted that Hayter's previous book, 1886, showed that while the population of Victoria had increased by at least 25,000 during the year, there was only an increase of 231 in the number of hands employed in the 'manufactories, works, &c.,' of Victoria; that is, the population increased by about 3 per cent. and employment, protected employment, by less than half of 1 per cent. Turning now to this latest book, we find a further increase of population of 32,000, but a positive decrease in the number of hands employed in the 'manufactories, works, &c.,' not a nominal decrease, but a very heavy one. The falling off is no less than 3,524, or something more than 7 per cent. An examination of Hayter's tables shows that figures are given for 92 industries, and that between 50 and 60 of these were employing a reduced number of hands. In view of the positive assurances that protection is a great success in Victoria, it is worth while going through the list of the industries in which this falling-off has taken place."

Then a table is given showing the number of hands employed in various works in Victoria in the years ending March 31, 1886, and March 31, 1887. The total number employed in all industries in 1885-6 was 49,297, in 1886-7 45,773, showing a decrease of 3,524. The pamphlet goes on to say:—

"It is to be observed that the reductions here noted in several industries follow reductions occurring the previous year. Thus, in agricultural implement manufactories there had been a falling off of 129 hands in the previous year; in saddle and harness manufactories of 75 hands; in cabinet works of 236 hands; in woollen mills of 34 hands; in boot factories of 65 hands; in clothing factories of 335 hands; in rope and bag manufactories of 156 hands. These industries all enjoy heavy protective duties and yet show falling employment in two consecutive years, in spite of a rapidly-growing population. It will be seen that the heaviest reduction of all, one of 1326, took place in the clothing factories. It is probably reasonable to conclude that this enormous falling off is the result of the discoveries made two years ago of the drawbacks (by which the customs was grossly defrauded) that had been taking place in Victoria—especially in connection with clothing. Since then there has been a marked falling off in the Victorian exports of such goods. The number of 'manufactories, works, &c.,' during the three last were 2,811, 2,813, and 2,770, showing a marked decrease and a tendency to that monopoly which naturally exists under a trade-restriction policy. Here are some remarkable facts:—'The exports of Victorian manufactures for 1883 was £729,436; for 1885, £594,784; for 1886, £409,977; from which it will be seen that as an exporter of goods of her own manufacture Victoria does not occupy that eminent position that has been claimed for her. The year 1885 shows a falling off of £134,702, or more than 18 per cent. compared with 1883, whilst 1886 shows a falling off of no less than £184,807 from even the reduced figures of 1885. This is a total difference of 44 per cent. compared with 1883.

The arrangements made compulsory by the *ad valorem* system of Victoria have made sad havoc of the statistics of the colony. All imported goods subject to *ad valorem* duties have been valued at the invoice cost, with 10 per cent. added. This 10 per cent. is in lieu of freight, yet freight may vary from 2 per cent. to as much, probably, as 100; consequently, even when declarations are made according to law, they may be too high or too low. On the other hand, in exporting goods that have paid duty, the Victorian law permits, nay expects, a great exaggeration in declaration of value. Take pianos—The import duty is 25 per cent.; but the rate of drawback is only 12½ per cent. The average value of the piano imported into Victoria last year was £23; but the average value of pianos (12½) shipped under drawback was £51. The exporter claims drawbacks not only on the value on which he paid duty, but on that value with the 25 per cent. added, and with the addition of profit on both cost and duty. In this way the figures representing the Victorian re-export trade in manufactured goods are grossly exaggerated, and this exaggeration also takes place in Victorian-made wearing apparel, which is made from imported material, so that Victorian exports of manufactured goods, both colonial-made and foreign-made, are always largely overstated, and even with all the inflation the total is not a very large one. Heavy duties invariably lead to—nay, engender fraud and other forms of dishonesty—and the consumers—the masses—have to pay for it, while the manufacturers and the monopolists alone receive the benefit.

"It is natural to ask how the progress of manufactories in New South Wales compares with that in Victoria. The following table will show this at a glance:—

HANDS EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTORIES, WORKS, ETC.

Year.	Victoria.	N. S. Wales.
1877	32,688	24,932
1886	45,773	45,783
Increase ...	13,085	20,851
1883	46,857	35,242
1886	45,773	45,783
Increase	10,541
Decrease ...	1,084	

"The year 1877 is taken because it is the first year from which any return is available for New South Wales; the actual increase in that colony is not quite so large as shown, because several industries are now being included which before were excluded. They, however, have always been included in the Victorian returns.

"These figures are very interesting. They show that Victoria has exhausted the stimulus of protection, and that to-day she is behind New South Wales as a manufacturing colony. Her sacrifices, her taxation of the masses, has ended in failure, except that it has enriched the manufacturer, and led to the establishment of vested interests and monopolies, as in America, at the expense of the masses.

"No one of any class of fiscal or political opinions whatever will be disposed to deny the great importance of the exports of a country in relation to its financial position in the world. It is by its exports that it mainly pays its imports. The salient fact which Mr. Hayter's tables exhibit is that the value of exports per head in 1880 was, to quote his own words, 'absolutely lower than in any other year since the separation of Victoria from New South Wales.' In 1880 it stood at £18 15s. 3d. per head; in 1886 it had fallen to £11 19s. per head. Mr. Hayter, who is the Victorian Government Statist, also says that 'the Victorian returns of imports and exports are largely swelled by the value of wool brought to Melbourne from the neighbouring colonies for convenience of shipment.' So that a good deal of even this diminished yield of exports is made up by products from New South Wales and Queensland, which is counted as Victorian exports. To ascertain, therefore, the real product of the colony that appears in the exports, we have to turn to another table which gives the 'exports of articles produced or manufactured in Victoria' for the last twenty years. This is a very instructive table indeed. It shows what Victoria

produced and manufactured for export in 1867, before the protectionist policy of the country had made itself felt, and also what it does now, after twenty years of the fostering and stimulating assistance of protection; at the earlier date (1867), Victoria exported of its own production to the amount of £9,972,333, or at the rate of £15 9s. 7d. per head. In 1886 the amount was £9,054,687, or only £9 3s. 5d. per head, a sum lower per head than in any year included in the twenty years' table. These are the authoritative official figures published by the Government Statist of Victoria. The decline seems, with the exception of gold, to have fallen most heavily on just the articles which enjoy the blessings of protection; it is the same in America. If we compare the exports for seven years—1880 to 1886 inclusive—we find declines on the exports of the following protected articles: stationery, machinery, saddlery and harness, furniture and upholstery, woollens and woollen piece goods, apparel and slops, boots and shoes, cordage, hams, bacon, beef, pork, preserved meats, confectionery (flour shows an increase, but taken together with grain, the total is a large decline), sugar, leather, hardware, hand manufactures. These are all products of the colony; they are among the chief products; they are aided by heavy protective duties; and the value exported in 1886 was, in all these important branches of production, less than in 1880—the totals for the two years being for 1880, £11,220,467; for 1886, £9,054,687, a falling off of £2,165,780. Other tables are supplied by Mr. Hayter on the subject, but the great fact to be noted, which they all present in various lights, is the great falling off in the exports of Victoria. Thus, there is a table showing the 'order of the colonies in reference to value per head of home produce in 1885,' and in this Victoria stands fifth on the list, being beaten by Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales, and Western Australia, and only standing before New Zealand and Tasmania. And this table refers to 1885, when the exports of the colony had only declined to £12,452,245, from which sum, in 1886, they dropped down to £9,054,687. So far as the trade between Victoria and the other colonies is concerned, its exports to them were in 1886 lower than in any year since 1876, and Victoria received from the other colonies as imports no less than £2,145,636 of goods in excess of the amount of her own which she exported to them. This is, of course, flatly opposed to all of the doctrines of the protectionists.

"Will not protectionists think it strange that in 1867, before the days when protection was in operation in Victoria, that colony exported of its own products and manufactured goods to the amount of £9,972,333, or £15 9s. 7d. per head; and in 1886, after twenty years of protection, the amount was only £9,054,687, produced by a very much larger population, while the value per head had fallen to £9 3s. 5d.; while, in New South Wales, the produce exported amounted to £13 3s. 1d. per head. Taking the last ten years together New South Wales has exported an average of £16 13s. 3d. per head of its own products, while those of Victoria have only amounted to £12 2s. 5d. per head. New South Wales has, within the last ten years, increased her works by 45 per cent., and has nearly doubled the number of her people getting their living by manufactures, and all by the natural growth of these industries, and without any legislation empowering the manufacturer to dip his hands into the pockets of the consumer for the support of bogus industries, but merely by allowing the productive energies of the people fair play."

I feel sure that the reading of this pamphlet has been tedious to hon. members, and the only apology I can offer is that it contains statements showing that instead of Victoria deriving benefit from a protective policy it is entirely the reverse. When the people of this colony see this, and think about it, they will see that a protective policy cannot but be disastrous to the country. When I was going up the street last night, I heard two or three men who were walking before me conversing. I heard one say, "Well, Bill, where is this big loaf we were going to get?" Another said, "Shut up! The workmen put him in, and the workmen will have to put him out." That is quite true. So sure as a protective tariff is initiated, so sure will the workman in retaliation turn out those men who propose that tariff. The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, spoke strongly in favour of protection, and cited as an argument that the Queensland climate is so changeable, being subject to droughts and floods, that protection is necessary to the farmer. I think that is a

strong argument in favour of freetrade. Produce is naturally dear owing to droughts, but the hon. gentleman would make it dearer. The hon. member also wants a great deal in addition to protection; he wants the railway freights lowered, though it is an acknowledged fact that the railways do not pay anything like interest on their cost. He also wants storehouses and a great many other things. But where is the money to come from? Is it expected that the North is to pay—that the men who derive no benefit from the railways are to pay? I say, "Let the men who have the railways pay." If the railways were so managed as to pay interest on their cost, there would be no need for increased taxation, and we should be able to construct other railways, build storehouses, and lower the freights; but, until the railways pay, it is folly to talk of lowering the freights for the sake of people living along the lines and deriving all the benefit from them. The hon. gentleman also spoke about boots. A great deal has been said about boots lately. I am in a position to know that at the present time in Queensland very good boots are made, and the man who manufactures them is perfectly satisfied with the price, and does not want protection. As long as he can get the raw material in the cheapest markets he is perfectly content to supply boots at the prices he has received for the last twelve months. He does not want protection for his boots any more than the agriculturist wants protection for his produce. The hon. member also spoke about cheap Parisian boots, which the first shower of rain will wash away. That is easily remedied; because after a man has bought one pair he will not buy another, but will go back to the colonial boot which will do good service. He also referred to a 25 per cent. duty on Japanese ware, which people sell at a large profit; but he says it is rubbish—that a hot day will melt the glue, and it will fall to pieces. That will remedy itself, without protection. If the stuff is so valueless people will not buy it, therefore, I cannot possibly see the use of putting 25 per cent. duty upon it. So long as people are allowed to buy in the best and cheapest market they will take good care that they will get good value for their money. Why should we interfere and prevent them from buying in the cheapest market? We Northerners do not stand up for an increased duty upon sugar. All we ask is: Let us have our agricultural implements and machinery free; let us have our articles of food free; let us buy our corn and chaff in the cheapest market, and we will supply you with our sugar the same as we are doing now. We do not ask for an increased duty on that. We want to meet you on fair and even terms—to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest. I consider that that is the true province of good government. Directly it interferes with the course of trade a Government goes beyond its functions. So long as a Government gives protection to the subject—not to the marketable commodities of any country—and allows him to carry on any trade that is legitimate and lawful, that I consider is all a Government has to do, and that it should not interfere with trade in any way whatever, but allow it to seek its own natural channel.

Mr. HUNTER said: Mr. Jessop,—Before passing on to the tariff, I must congratulate the hon. gentleman who has just sat down upon dealing with this subject from a general point of view. I am not a freetrader exactly. I am a protectionist; but a Northern protectionist is one thing, and a Southern protectionist is another. When I say I am a protectionist I mean that I would protect our own industries, but to protect the South is the exact opposite. No doubt that appears very funny to hon. members,

but it is true nevertheless. We have heard a great many speeches from gentlemen well acquainted with Brisbane, and who tell us that a protective policy—a heavy tariff—will greatly benefit the country; but they forget that Brisbane is not the colony. I must say that I was very much surprised that the Premier did not bring forward some better reasons in support of this protective policy. It is well known that at the present time it costs a married man with a family about £4 a week to live in Northern Queensland. If we are going to put 10 or 15 per cent. on that, and the profit which the store-keeper will charge for his money, the result will be that we shall have to raise wages to about £4 10s. a week, and we shall have to find some more payable reefs in Queensland. We heard something the other day about payable reefs, but if we are to have such a tariff as this, the probability is that some of those reefs will not be payable. We have heard of a great many kinds of taxes, amongst others a tax upon public companies. That may seem a good plan or it may not. If you tax public companies according to their capital it certainly would not be fair, because a great many companies are formed for the purpose of working certain reefs. The reason this course is adopted is because one or two or three private persons could not undertake to try and develop the mines, therefore the burden is undertaken by a number of persons who form themselves into a company. There is no reason why they should be taxed for trying to develop those reefs. I would also point out that public companies are very heavily taxed already, and would be taxed far more heavily were there any way of putting the law in force—that is the Stamp Act. Under that Act we have to pay 2s. 6d. for every £50 transfer, but all who have had many transactions in mining companies know that it is not paid, because it is an exorbitant rate. What is done? Certificates of membership are passed from one person to another, and the tax is avoided in that way. It may be illegal, but we get no revenue from the actual transfer of the property. If the duty were reduced it would produce more revenue, because then the transfers would be registered. In the case of Mount Morgan alone there are hundreds and thousands of certificates held in the names of friends simply on account of the stamp duty. These come to very large amounts. If we could only see the total amount of stamp duty of which the Government are defrauded in that way it would astonish most hon. members, if not every one of them. Dividend-paying companies might be taxed to a certain extent. I do not see any objection to that, but to put a tax on the whole would be very unfair. Next we hear about a land-tax. I remember an hon. gentleman, who holds a very high position, telling us up North that he had bought a lot of land from the Government, and he would not like to have to pay a tax upon it. He said the Government could have the land back that day if they would pay him what he had paid for it. But what did that gentleman admit? That he had bought large quantities of land at a certain place, because a certain class of labour was to be got. There was certain labour in the market at that time, which would enable him to work this land to his satisfaction and profit, but when that labour was taken from him he said he would be willing to sell the land back to the Government, showing that he had taken it up for purely speculative purposes, thinking that his neighbours would employ black labour, and that his land would advance in value. However, he was mistaken. This is put forward as one reason why land should not be taxed. Another reason is that the greater part of the land belongs to the State. But when speaking of a land-tax, we

generally refer to alienated land; and if a land-tax were brought about I do not see why it should be paid by persons who reside on their own land. I do not think it would be right, because a man buys a small allotment and puts up a house to live in and occupies it *bonâ fide*, that he should be taxed for doing so. It is the man who buys large quantities of land and cuts it up and gets fabulous prices for it—makes a splendid income out of it—who should be called upon to pay some tax. And the absentee landlord should be taxed. That would be quite fair. To go back to the dividend-tax, I may point out that if it were imposed a great deal more money might be paid as rewards for finding new gold-fields. We were told a little while ago that the miners had done nothing to add to the wealth of the colony—that it was there naturally. That certainly surprised me and a good many other members. I think it must be admitted that although the wealth was there, the same trouble would have to be undertaken to get it that has been gone through by miners. How many hundreds of them have lost their lives seeking for this wealth? Every day we hear of them being murdered by the blacks, or starving, or being killed in some other way. I say these men should be looked to a little.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Bad whisky!

Mr. HUNTER: An hon. member opposite says "bad whisky," at the same time he does not propose to tax the whisky. That would be frightful! The publicans—the licensed victuallers—would not agree to that. I spoke some time ago in this House about the action taken by the licensed victuallers, how they all clubbed together and swore to be good and true to the blue flag. In one district that I know of, all of them, with the exception of one man, supported the McIlwraith candidates, whatever their views were, because they understood that the duty was going to be taken off whisky and beer. I told them it was ridiculous nonsense, and when I read their own private pamphlet to the public they tried to drag me from the platform, but they did not succeed. Taking the tariff as a whole, it looks like a very strong step towards trying to provoke the people of the North to support the cry for separation.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: You said the other night there was no cry for separation in the North.

Mr. HUNTER: I heard to-night an hon. member speaking in favour of separation, and, therefore, if the tariff supports his cry, it will be quite sufficient for my argument. I said the cry for separation did not exist in the North, and I say so still; and some of the great champions of separation who have spoken here since I did do not now get up and say so positively that the demand for separation exists. They treated it very mildly, and the further north they came the more mildly they treated it. There is no doubt that a protective tariff will be opposed by the people in the North. One of the separationists said the other day that they had a very good representation in the Ministry, and were not going to grumble. They seem to be using their influence to get such measures brought forward as will compel the North to demand separation. All we ask for is fair play. We are told we shall have the spending of our own revenue. If we have, what does it matter to the South what that revenue is? Let us have our goods imported at certain Northern ports at differential rates. Dynamite, I notice, is to pay a duty of 16 per cent. Dynamite is entirely used in the development of one industry; it is very little used outside of mining. Of course it is used

here and there in making a few holes to put bricks in; otherwise it is exclusively used in mining. And yet it has to pay a duty of 16 per cent. The next item is machinery. During the last elections this cry was raised against the supporters of the present Opposition, then the Government—"How can you support a man who puts 5 per cent. on machinery?" This was thrown at us from every side, and we had to take it the best way we could. We come here supporting that man, and in front of us sits another man who has put on 15 per cent. If 5 per cent. on machinery was a crime, what is 15 per cent.? Is that encouraging local industry? It may suit Maryborough, where they have a couple of large foundries, but Maryborough is not Queensland, and the colony should be treated as a whole. If we are going to encourage machinery so much we want to keep the price of labour down as much as possible, and to do this we must give the workmen the necessities of life as cheaply as possible. If machinery is to be made in the colony, what wages must be paid to those men to enable them to work in the foundries? If their wages are raised the price of machinery will have to be raised also. You are putting both locally-made and imported machinery out of our way. Railway iron, also used in mining, is taxed heavily; indeed I do not think I could mention one article used in mining that is not heavily taxed. Drapery is taxed as a whole; it should be classified. There is no reason why the common necessities of life should be paid for the same as luxuries. Silks and satins should be heavily taxed. People who wear silks and satins, feathers and furs, can well afford to pay a little extra duty. It is the same with carriages and spring carts. Why should they be taxed alike. If a gentleman can afford to drive his carriage, he should pay more for it than the man who drives a spring cart to carry round his produce. Timber, which has to be imported into the North, is also to have a heavier tax put upon it, and some hon. members have notified their intention to move a still further tax on imported timber. This will be very unjust to the North. Even now the Northern people have to build almost the whole of their residences of iron, because timber is so scarce. Then it is proposed to put 8d. a bushel on oats. Up in the Gulf country, oats at the present time are 20s. a bushel, and when we have to pay that price to feed the horses used in carting quartz, we shall be very heavily handicapped if we have to pay another 8d. in the shape of duty. We have rain in that district only once a year, so that we have not abundance of grass with which to feed our cattle and horses. An industry labouring under such difficulties should be encouraged, not hampered. If the merchants of Brisbane had to pay 20s. a bushel for maize for their horses we should not see a Ministry levying a tax of this kind upon it. But they do not know, nor do they wish to know, what troubles exist in the North. If a protection tariff is put on butter to prevent its being imported into Queensland, the far North would never see any butter at all. The only butter they get there is American butter, put up in tins, which, when it arrives there, is simply a tin of oil, and has to be put into a bag of water to make it solid before it can be used. There is no grass for nine months of the year, and butter cannot possibly be made there; and yet they are to have their only supply of butter cut off. It may suit Brisbane right enough, but why should the North be left out of consideration? It would not be a very hard thing if the North were allowed a different tariff, and I am certain it can be worked. We have heard complaints about sugar. The cry is against the employment of black labour on sugar plantations,

and the planters say they cannot afford to pay white men; but if they were to give those white men the necessities of life they could reduce their wages without hurting them. But if we put another 10 per cent. upon those necessities of life, the planters will have to pay another 10s. a week upon the wages, and as they cannot afford to do that the industry will die out. One of the late Governors of Queensland said that the North was only fit for Chinamen and blacks, and I think if this is the opinion of the present Government they should be a little more lenient with the people who do go there and who try to develop its resources. If that is such a terrible country, the Government should help the people there as much as possible and give them the necessities of life free, that is so far as the tariff is concerned. Of course there are a great number of items which will be altered. Surely it cannot be the intention of the Government to tax a man according to the size of his feet. That must be a mistake. A man having a family with small feet would have to pay less than a man whose family had large feet. When some Northern members opposite were asked to-night what had made them change their opinions, it might easily be replied that some of them were simply blindfold followers of their leader and some were not. That state of things should not exist. If they were all to work together, I believe the Government would grant them some little recompense for their trouble. There are a number of reefs being worked in the North at the present day that barely pay expenses, and if this extra tariff upon the necessities of life is enforced, these will have to be thrown up. That alone is a very good reason why some consideration should be shown. If the Premier had told us any reason why he could not extend a differential tariff to the North, we would have known something; but the North is not considered at all. The whole thing is for Brisbane, and one member of the Committee made a very sensible remark when he said that the two leaders in the House should not represent North Brisbane. It is a great pity that such a state of affairs exists. Queensland should be considered a little more, and Brisbane not so much.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not intend to discuss the administration of the past Government of the colony, or the circumstances which have resulted in a deficit. I take the privilege of a young member, and simply accept the position that there is a deficit of £600,000, and address myself to the statement that the Colonial Treasurer has made in regard to the means by which he proposes to restore the equilibrium between the revenue and expenditure, and wipe off the deficit. I may mention first of all that I do not agree with some hon. members who criticise very closely the estimates of expenditure. I quite admit that it is necessary that the expenditure should be carefully watched, and no doubt, at the proper time, there will be an opportunity for members to discuss every item in detail, and if any one appears excessive that will be the proper time to point it out. I am inclined to think that, in a young colony like this, which is teeming with wealth, it is not desirable that the Government should be cramped by any petty, cheese-paring economy. The reason why the expenditure of the Government is always so closely criticised, is not that the people so much object to the expenditure as to the way in which the revenue is raised. That is to say, it is not so much that the expenditure is excessive as that the incidence of taxation is unfair and unjust. I think that the proposal made by the late Government last year, to meet a portion of this deficit by means of a land-tax, was one that should have commended itself to Parliament,

That proposition was met, not by any criticism as to whether that tax was in exactly the right form, but by the proposition that no taxation at all was necessary, and the representatives of property in this House almost unanimously followed the present Colonial Secretary in his proposition that no taxation at all was necessary. Now, when the general feeling in the country has made it certain that there must be some change in the tariff in a protective direction, giving the Treasurer an opportunity of bringing down a tariff by means of which he could considerably increase the tariff, these same gentlemen are prepared to alter their opinions altogether as to the necessity for taxation. They have come to the conclusion that taxation is necessary, and not only that, but it is desirable, as quickly as possible, to wipe out the whole deficit by means of Customs taxation. This is not strange; it is what we have always found whenever there is a proposition to tax property. It is always inopportune. No taxation is necessary at that particular time; but if an opportunity comes to place the burden upon the shoulders of the people, then the same gentlemen are willing to take it. I do not intend to go into details. There is not time to do so; but I wish to give the Committee some idea of my views on the subject of protection, in order that when the tariff is being discussed in detail hon. members may understand the principles which actuate me in anything I may say, and any vote I may give. It seems to me that this question of protection was argued out at the last general election. All of us who had to fight contested elections—I will not say anything about those who were returned unopposed—declared ourselves either one way or the other upon this subject, and there is no doubt, as the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, said, and I believe it is simply unchallengeable, that of the members who were returned a large proportion—50 out of 72—were pledged to the policy of protection or the encouragement of native industries. I shall call it protection, because it is shorter. The opinions I have always expressed upon that subject are these: I have always been in favour of a revision of the tariff in such a way that the Customs taxation may incidentally be made to encourage native industries and native productions, and I have opposed any increase to the burdens on the people through the Custom-house. I think it is quite feasible, because we find that in countries having a protective tariff the revenue from Customs is, as a rule, a falling revenue, and in those countries where they have a protective tariff, the revenue from the Custom-house is less per head than in countries where there is no protection. For instance, in Victoria the taxation per head from the Customs is about a guinea per head less than it is in Queensland at the present time. The Government have made up their minds at all events that the tariff, in addition to being protective, shall be made a means of raising sufficient revenue to wipe out the deficit, and to make revenue meet expenditure; and I have no doubt, from the tone of the Committee, that they will be successful in doing so. Now, with regard to the hon. member for Herbert, who spoke a short time ago. He is laying himself out to get a character for inconsistency, because, when he was speaking—and he had some little tiff with the hon. member for Maryborough,—he said that in a deliberative Assembly like this, assertions should not be taken—that we should not be satisfied with assertions, but should have the facts upon which those assertions were based. Immediately after he had said that, he took up the time of the Committee by reading a wretched anonymous pamphlet published from *Joy Bells* office. Well, whoever may

have been the writer of that pamphlet I do not care, but if we are a deliberative Assembly, and if we are qualified to discuss these questions, I think we do not want to have our views laid down for us by anonymous pamphleteers—especially from *Joy Bells*. If the writer of that pamphlet had put his name to it, I expect it would have done the cause of the hon. gentleman who read it a little more harm than it has done. I received two copies of the pamphlet. I propose to quote now from the Victorian Year Book—a book that is published by authority in Melbourne by the Government Printer, and compiled by Mr. Hayter, and I shall give the Committee a statement of the amount of agricultural produce raised in Victoria during the year 1886-7.

Mr. GROOM: Under a protective tariff.

Mr. DRAKE: Yes; and I think that if hon. members will take this in conjunction with the statements contained in that pamphlet, they will consider the statements in the pamphlet are very worthless. Of wheat they grew 12,100,036 bushels at 3s. 9d., worth £2,268,757; oats, 4,256,079 bushels at 2s. 9d., £585,211; barley, 827,852 bushels at 3s. 3d., £134,526; other cereals, 826,002 bushels at 3s. 3d., £134,225; potatoes, 170,661 tons at £4, £682,644; other root crops, 37,945 tons at £3, £113,835; hay, 483,049 tons at £3 13s., £1,763,129; green forage, 284,186 acres at £2 10s., £710,465; tobacco, 12,000 cwt. at £2 16s., £33,622; grapes, not made into wine, 33,344 gallons at £1, £33,344; wine, 986,041 gallons at 4s., £197,208; brandy, 3,233 gallons at 10s., £1,617; hops, 5,023 cwt. at £4 4s., £21,097; other crops, 5,841 acres at £5, £29,205; garden and orchard produce, 27,593 acres at £20, £551,860; making a total of £7,260,735, which is a great deal more than the total yearly exports from Queensland.

Mr. GROOM: And that is for agricultural produce alone.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: How long was it for?

Mr. DRAKE: That was for the year ending the 1st of March, 1887. The report says, "The value of the agricultural produce raised in Victoria during the year ended 1st March, 1887, may be estimated at over 7½ millions sterling;" so that it is as I said. I do not propose at this stage to deal with any of the items in particular; but as the Colonial Treasurer said that he would like suggestions with regard to the various items, I would just mention one to which I wish to call attention—I refer to the removal of the excise duty on beer. The hon. member for Burrum, Mr. Powers, was in some fear last night that he would have to stand alone in his opposition to the removal of that excise duty; but I do not think he will stand alone by any means. He will certainly have my most hearty support. I do not think it has been asserted on the other side, and therefore I do not suppose I shall hurt anyone's feelings, when I say that I believe this proposed removal of the excise duty on beer is not made in the interests of the working man. I do not think the working man cares much about it; and I think it certainly is not made in his interest. My opinion is simply this—and it may interest some hon. gentlemen opposite to know it—that I think the Australian national beverage will not be beer. It may be wine, or it may be tea; but I do not think it will be beer. There is another objection to the proposed removal of this excise duty and the substitution of fixed duties on some other articles that are supposed to be ingredients in beer. I think there will be a tendency on the part of the brewers to avoid the use of these taxed ingredients and substitute other ingredients in

order to produce a cheaper article. We shall get some compounds, such as are known down South as "stringybark," and "tanglefoot," and some other names that I must not mention here. It will certainly lead to the manufacture of articles which are a great deal more deleterious than beer. There is one item on the proposed tariff that I cannot quite understand, and that is sewing machines. I want to see a protective tariff, and any particular item that occurs on the tariff interests me in this way. I want to know whether that duty, if imposed, will have the effect of starting the manufacture of the article in the colony. If it will, it is a protective tariff, and to that extent I approve of it; but if it will not, then it is simply a tax upon a certain class in the community. Does anyone suppose, for instance, that a duty of 10s. on sewing machines will cause their manufacture to take place in the colony? If not, it is a tax upon a class and upon a class of persons who can ill afford to pay it. It will fall, we know, in many cases upon poor women who are fighting the battle of life alone, and it is very hard that the instrument they must have to assist them in making a living should be taxed to an extra amount, and especially at this time, when the taxation to be imposed must have the effect of generally raising the cost of living. The hon. member for Toowoomba suggested that we should impose a duty of 25 per cent. upon furniture, and I quite agree with him that furniture, if not quite so elaborate, at all events, quite as useful as any imported furniture, can be made in the colony. If people wish to have such luxuries as imported furniture, they can afford to pay for it as a luxury. We should, however, be very chary about putting a high duty upon imported furniture, when we know that a great deal of the furniture made here is made by the Chinese. Unless we take some precaution to prevent the Chinese monopolising the manufacture of furniture, as they are almost doing now, if we put a duty of 25 per cent. upon imported furniture we shall be simply putting the money into the pockets of the Chinese and the Chinese employers. I do approve of a high import duty upon furniture, but I think we should also put a excise duty upon Chinese-made furniture.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: How are you to collect it?

Mr. DRAKE: You may collect it by means of an impressed stamp, just as the beer duty is collected. With regard to boots, which is another question that has been mooted, I am not quite in agreement with the hon. member for Toowoomba. He says that he thinks an *ad valorem* would be better than a fixed duty upon boots. What I think we have to guard against in framing a tariff is the disposition on the part of the English manufacturer to undersell the colonial article by running in the cheapest possible shoddy. Hon. members will excuse my quoting again, to show what has been done and what can be done in the production of shoddy. In the *Pall Mall Budget* of 17th May there is this statement:—

"Boys' and girls' boots at sixpence a pair! Such is the statement made, not before a Sweating Committee, but at a meeting of the City Board of Guardians. The chairman admitted it was true that boys' and girls' boots were supplied by contract to the central district schools at Hanwell at 6d. a pair, that they cost 1s. 6d. to repair, and that new boots had now been ordered instead of repairing old ones."

They say there is a mystery in the way that is done, and no doubt there is. But if manufacturers in England, by the aid of the sweating system, can produce shoddy goods at such fabulously low prices, they can run them into the colony in spite of any protective tariff. What is the use of a tariff of 7½ or 15 per cent. to

keep out goods of that kind, especially when there is such a practice going on as the salting of invoices referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba. I could tell this Committee about cases in which goods have been sent out here with not two, but three invoices—one for the Customs, one for yourself, and one to show to the purchaser. While that sort of thing is going on, and while the manufacturers at home can turn out goods at the prices I have referred to, there is not much good in trying to keep out shoddy by *ad valorem* duties. Generally, I approve of the fixed duties proposed to be imposed, though in some cases I do not think they go far enough to have a protective effect. But with regard to the general increase of *ad valorem* duties from 7½ to 15 per cent., it appears to me as if, in a great many cases, that increase is made solely for revenue purposes. I do hope that when this tariff has been discussed in detail, hon. members, and especially those who have pledged themselves to their constituents as protectionists, will do everything they can to increase the duties upon articles which can be produced here, to increase those items of the tariff which can be made to have a protective effect; and with regard to all other items which only increase the cost of living, I hope they will not only oppose the proposed increase, but will do what they can to have even the present duties reduced, because that will make some compensation to those who have to bear the cost of introducing the protective system into this colony. I believe the tariff can be altered in that way, and, at the same time, be made to largely produce revenue. I admit the Colonial Treasurer, in introducing a tariff like this for the first time, has had a great many difficulties to contend with. I think myself that a tariff should be the outcome of the deliberations of a tariff commission. That, I believe, is the practice in the other colonies, and I think it would be a very good thing to do the same here. We should constitute a tariff commission, and let them take evidence from all classes of persons interested, and bring up a report as the outcome of their deliberations on the subject. We should then probably have a tariff which would have the effect of encouraging native industries, and stimulating the local production without increasing the already too heavy burdens upon the working classes.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Jessop,—I am not going to enter at length into this discussion to-night. I believe the hon. member for Toowoomba complimented me upon some freetrade speech I made about twenty years ago. I forget now whether I ever made such a speech, but, at all events, I can promise hon. members that I will not repeat it to-night. I do so for two reasons: in the first place, I am satisfied that it would be useless, because I never yet had the pleasure of meeting a protectionist open to reason, and I feel that I should, perhaps, be casting pearls before a certain kind of animal if I attempted to-night to go through the numerous arguments used by the greatest political economists in favour of freetrade. I could not do it as well as it stands in print; it would gain nothing by my advocacy, and it would fall upon ears deaf to the voice of any tongue wagging in the world. I have, by observing what has been going on in the world, come to the conclusion that every country in the world reaches a dangerous stage when it goes in for protection. I look upon protection now as I do upon the diseases that are incident to children—the measles first, scarlatina next, and sometimes smallpox. We in Queensland are in the young stage of the disease, and have got an attack of measles. By-and-by we shall intensify it. We shall then get an attack of the deadly disease, in the shape of scarlatina, and at last

it will result in something like what they have got in Victoria now, and we shall get into a state of virulent smallpox. There they are perfectly mad on protection. When we find manufacturers, established for many years, going to the Minister in Melbourne and asking for an increased taxation of about 50 per cent., so as to enable them to compete with England, I believe that is protection run mad. We shall come to that stage, but not in my time, fortunately. I shall not live to see that unhappy time, but the time will come, and the people will be disgusted. They will wonder that they have been such fools, and will at last throw protection to the winds. That is a belief I have come to by looking around me in the world. Believing that, as I do now, I say it is absurd for me to bring forward anything opposed to protection, feeling perfectly sure that the majority of the country is in favour of protection. In that respect I differ entirely from my hon. friend, the member for the Herbert, Mr. Cowley. He stated that this tariff would raise the indignation of the working men, and that they would rise up and throw out the people they have put in. I think he is utterly mistaken. There is not a tailor in town who does not want protection. He will get 5s. more for his suit of clothes, and will pay 2s. to the bootmaker, and something more to the hatter, and something more for his grub, and he will have the pleasure of spending his 5s. He will get the 5s. but will not be a bit richer; but still he insists on protection. He will believe he is richer because he gets more money, but he cannot swallow the money. He will continue to believe that he is richer because he gets more money and will pass it from one pocket to another, although he will not be able to purchase one article more than under a freetrade tariff. Although I see as clearly as daylight that the step we are taking is false, I will not offer any opposition. What is the use. Perhaps I will get a dozen or perhaps eighteen people in this Committee to support me.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: More than that.

Mr. ARCHER: At all events, we are in for protection. I have said that it is impossible to bring protectionists to reason, and I will give an instance that has occurred since the hon. member for Herbert spoke. I do not mean to say anything offensive, and am certain that the hon. member for Enoggera will not think I am saying anything offensive, but I will just refer to his argument in answer to the hon. member for Herbert. The hon. member for Herbert took the trouble to show that under protection manufactures had decreased in Victoria instead of increasing. I do not know what the authority was to which he referred, but he confined himself entirely to manufactures — protected manufactures — and what is the answer that a protectionist gives him? That there is a large quantity of produce grown in Victoria.

Mr. DRAKE: That was not my answer.

Mr. ARCHER: I may remind the hon. member that he specially referred to the pamphlet read by the member for Herbert.

Mr. DRAKE: I said at the same time that I had not read it.

Mr. ARCHER: I had not read it, but I listened to it. I knew very well when it was read that it would not have the slightest effect on the opinion of the Committee. The hon. member who read it did so with the best intentions, but when his hair becomes grey he will find that it is of no use talking freetrade to protectionists. They all answer exactly in the way in which the hon. member for Enoggera answered him. After referring to that pamphlet, which deals with manufactures only, the hon. mem-

ber for Enoggera brings forward a list to show that Victoria is rather a fruitful country; that the people there supply themselves with all the necessities of life; that they are not unfortunately cursed with a bad climate; and that the colony is in a position to export produce. That is all he proved. I wish we were in the same position. Some time I can show him why we are not in the same position; but I think it would be utterly absurd to pretend to discuss the whole question from a freetrader's point of view now. I would rather refer to the reasons why I must, in a great measure, support the Treasurer in the list of things he is going to tax, and not only that, but show where I should like to see the incidence of taxation fall heavier on some articles and lighter on others. Last night, in a very able speech by the hon. member for Toowong, Mr. Unmack, he stated that he thought there was no necessity at all for increasing taxation, believing that the natural increase in the revenue through Customs alone would have produced a sufficient sum to carry us through all our difficulties. I cannot agree with him. He likewise told us that there were a great many things which might be cut out of the Estimates. No doubt every Government has in its original Estimates introduced matters which really would not be carried out for a year or so—I refer to public works—but as was said by the Minister for Works, there are many things that must be done, and which really have been acknowledged to be necessary for years, and he believes it to be his duty to try and carry those things out as soon as possible. I think it is necessary for us to give the Government as much Supply as will be not only sufficient to cover all expenses of the country, but to enable them to show such a surplus at the end as will absorb at least some of the deficit which we are now labouring under. For these reasons I intend to give my support, as far as I can, to the Treasurer in carrying through these duties, but I will state shortly where I could have wished that the proposed duties had differed somewhat. In one thing I agree very strongly with the hon. gentleman, the member for Herbert, when he expressed his desire to increase the duty on spirits. Not for the same reasons as he has given, because I have not found that a glass of grog does much harm occasionally. I think that if a person has control of himself he can take his glass of grog without at all being the worse for it; but I consider that it is an undoubted luxury. I do not believe that anyone will suffer from the want of it, except as a medical matter, and we can always supply enough for that purpose. The only limit, in my opinion, that ought to be put to the duty on spirits is that it should not be so high as to offer too great a temptation to illicit distillation. That is where the danger comes in; if too high a duty is imposed on spirits it offers such an enormous temptation to those who can manufacture it on the sly that people will run great risks to do it, and a very extensive staff must be maintained to keep illicit distilleries under. Therefore I am not one of those who would jump up the duties on alcoholic drinks to an excessive height, but I think they might very well bear a couple of shillings more per gallon than is now paid on them. Spirits is one of the most legitimate things that can be taxed, and I believe that an extra 2s. a gallon would not hold out any very strong inducement to illicit distillation, knowing as I do that under the 12s. a gallon there is illicit distillation carried on in various parts of the country. We might very well raise an additional revenue of from £30,000 to £40,000 a year by an extra duty on spirits, and that would enable us to effect what would be an exceedingly great improvement in this taxation scheme now

before the Committee. I have not yet stated where I think taxation should be removed. I hold that it should be removed from those articles of consumption that go to feed the population. I would place no tax on oatmeal, for instance, and in general I would oppose all kinds of duties on those articles that feed the population, as tending to limit the quantity or quality of food that children receive. If you force them to leave wholesome for unwholesome food, as by compelling them to have cheap beef instead of good oatmeal, you are really injuring the rising generation. I would not, of course, have a protective duty in the colony if I could have my way in the matter, but these duties on what is actually the food of the people, I think, ought never to have been mentioned. I should like, on the contrary, to see a great many of these things taken off the list of taxable commodities and added to the free list. Why should we pay 4d. a pound more for our bacon than we can buy it for out of the country? There is only one excuse for that, and if I tell the Committee what that excuse is people will rise up and say that I am traducing the country. But the reason is simply that this is a poor, miserable agricultural country. What, after all, is the test of a rich agricultural country? Are not facts with regard to what it produces the proper test? What is the use of saying, "Look at the grand, rich agricultural country?" What is the use of telling people at home that it is the grandest agricultural country in the world, when we cannot supply ourselves with the ordinary articles of produce that we consume? There are other countries that can export large quantities of produce after supplying their own wants, and, fortunately for us, there are some which export wheat. California, when wages were as high as they are in Queensland, and many men were engaged in gold-mining, exported millions of bushels of wheat to England. That is the test by which I judge a good agricultural country. We have to look at the facts. We have not got such a condition of things here. We have farmers striving year after year—as good men, I believe, as there ever were in California—to supply this country with the necessities that agriculture supplies, and they have utterly failed. With the exception of meat, we have to import the great bulk of everything we consume in the country, and yet I suppose I shall be denounced in some paper as unpatriotic for saying what is merely the truth, and proclaiming it to the world. But I will proclaim it, as I believe it to be true. I am perfectly certain that, if this were a good agricultural country—as good, say, as Victoria—before this time we would have been supplying our own population with all the produce they require, and not have been bringing in protective duties to prevent them buying produce from the other colonies, which can supply the articles we want. That is the way I judge an agricultural country, and not from any statements that it is such a country. I remember that many years ago I heard the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, say in this House, in his large way—I do not say this because I do not respect the hon. gentleman, for I believe he is always perfectly sincere—I heard him remark, with a sweep of the hand, that Providence never intended the vast interior of Australia to be a sheepwalk. I did not reply to him in the House, but outside I said to him that the only way I could judge of the intentions of Providence was by the facts of the case, not by pumping them up from my own inner consciousness, and I reminded the hon. member of the fact that there was such a place as the Great Sahara desert in the middle of Africa. There are some places in the world that will not support a sheep. We must, therefore, accept the

facts as they are, and as long as we go on insisting that this is a rich agricultural country in spite of facts to the contrary, we are blinding ourselves and simply reasoning against facts. That is the reason why I shall do all I can to prevent any extra duties being put on agricultural produce. I know how the thing works. I am a pretty extensive farmer myself, and cultivate a good large piece of land. I remember that during the late drought I made every provision I possibly could to meet such exigencies as might arise, and yet in order to keep my stud herd alive I had to import hundreds of tons of hay from the Southern colonies. There was none to be bought here, and I had to pay a pretty high price for the hay, nearly ruining the whole concern. Yet this country wants protection to prevent us getting produce from the Southern colonies. If you are going to starve the industries of the country, simply to try to encourage an industry which the climate has proclaimed that it will not assist, you are fighting against Nature. These are some of the duties which I must object to in this tariff. Of course I should object to a great many other items did I not believe that the money they will produce is necessary, and did I not, at the same time, believe that it is utterly useless to fight against them. I can hardly illustrate the truth of what I have said as to the producing capabilities of a country better than by pointing to what has happened in another part of the colony. It has been proved that in some places about Brisbane, or Bundaberg, Mackay, and farther North, there are parts of the country which, under proper conditions, could not only produce sufficient sugar for our own use, but also compete in the markets of Melbourne and Sydney with other sugar-producing countries. That is a fact. I say that Queensland is not a country that can produce most of the things principally used in daily life, but we have an exceedingly rich territory in the North that will at some time become a large agricultural country, and that is the part to which we must turn our attention. I do not believe, even with the rich lands and the help of central sugar-mills, they can compete even for the supply of Queensland with the world at large in the produce of sugar; but with proper precautions, if we had been men fit to have managed the labour we once employed—had there not been faults on both sides—had we not ruined the labour traffic by allowing wretches in human shape to conduct it; and had not both sides disgraced the thing by appointing agents who ought never to have been trusted with the lives of cattle, let alone the lives of men—I do not speak against them as a body, but against a large number of them—had that not been done we might have had an agricultural industry which would have employed more mechanics, and given more work to white men than all the farmers now existing in Queensland. I am not afraid of my opinion. I dare say this is horrible; I daresay it is blasphemous in the ears of most people; but I believe that under proper regulations, that industry might have been one of the greatest things we could have possessed. Of course, even if it were now proposed to return to the old state of things, I would vote against it, knowing how absurd it is to try to force on the country what it does not want; but the time will arrive when people will come to their senses, and find that they have stopped an industry which would have absorbed thousands of mechanics—skilled mechanics, carpenters, blacksmiths, engineers, and skilled ploughmen—and would have added to the wealth of Queensland such as no agriculture in the South ever will add. There is another item with respect to which I hope we shall be able to prevail upon the Treasurer to withdraw the duty

namely, green fruit. He may put as much as he likes on bottled fruit, pickled fruit, and all that kind of rubbish; but are we in a tropical country not to get a few oranges or apples to eat without paying a high duty? It appears to be one of the culminating absurdities proposed by a protectionist Treasurer. Here is the most perishable article we have. Oranges transport moderately well, but all the other fruits—apples, cherries, plums—are perishable articles, and yet most necessary in a hot climate, especially for children; yet we are asked to put a duty on them to prevent people from getting the very things they want, in order to encourage native industry. Why should we encourage an industry which has been proved to be incapable of supplying our wants? For the last twenty years we have been trying to grow fruit in Queensland, but, owing to the seasons being so uncertain, we have not only been prevented from producing the fruit we require for our own use, but have actually lost money. I am a great loser by attempting to grow fruit, and I have warned people again and again to look at my orchard before planting orchards themselves, and see how I have lost money. They all went in for them, however, and have all lost money. There are a few kinds of fruit for which Queensland is excellently suited, but I can mention them on the fingers of one hand—grapes, pineapples, and bananas.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Mangoes.

Mr. ARCHER: Mangoes are not easily transported when they are ripe, and are certainly not to be found if you leave the seacoast. They cannot be grown on the Darling Downs, rich as the soil is; and anyone who has eaten good mangoes ripened on the trees won't touch those that have been plucked green. I have seen excellent bananas and pineapples, and have eaten as fine grapes in Queensland as in any other part of the world. I am not trying to traduce the country, but am stating facts that have come under my own knowledge. To put a duty on a thing like fruit shows, as the Scotch would say, that the Treasurer was "sair left to himself."

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Put it on oatmeal!

Mr. ARCHER: I have avoided entering into a lengthy freetrade debate, and have simply stated broadly my views, giving my reasons for differing from the tariff proposals in certain instances. I have also stated why I intend to support the Treasurer to the extent of the taxation required for the government of the country, and why I should like to see some slight alteration in the tariff.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said: Mr. Jessop,—I have not the slightest intention of entering into the extremely complex question of freetrade *versus* protection, but it is pretty evident to me that the feeling of the Committee is strongly in favour of protection, and I believe that relatively there is a larger number of protectionists on the other side than on this. I have noticed that many hon. gentlemen who profess that they are protectionists, and desire to encourage native industries, certainly desire to discourage all other industries but their own. Many hon. members have said they were protectionists, but as far as I could judge there was not one single thing upon which they would allow protection to be placed, and they might just as well admit that they were freetraders. At the present state of the existence of this colony there is an apparent desire for protection. It has been said by the hon. the leader of the Opposition that twenty years ago protection would have been absurd, and it is only introduced now because it is believed by all parties that until lately it was not advisable. Probably fifteen years ago all hon. members would have said as the hon. the leader of

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the Opposition has said, that the idea of protection would have been absurd, and I want to call your attention, sir, to this fact. I represent a Northern constituency, and the position of the North at the present time with regard to population, possibly with regard to wealth, is somewhat the same as that which existed in the southern portion of the colony some fifteen years ago, when hon. members agreed that protection was absurd. Therefore you will not be surprised when I say, as a Northern representative, that, speaking from our point of view, protection is absurd. I told my constituents, as I tell you, sir, that with regard to freetrade and protection the advantages of the one or the other depend very much upon circumstances—that in a certain stage of the existence of one country or nation one policy may be advisable, but not in another. Therefore, if it is considered desirable that protection should be established in the South, I can quite understand that those persons who have interests there may be in favour of it. I, however, have to look upon this without any regard to the abstract advantage to either one or the other. Just as people in the South say—We want protection because we want to encourage our manufacturers; so I, as the representative of a Northern constituency, say, I must consult the interests of my constituents. And what I have said before I say now, that if my constituents should be in favour of protection on its merits, then it must be in consideration of getting some of the advantages of protection for ourselves. In fact, we must get an equivalent. However, we have got to consider this matter now, as the Premier has, from a revenue point of view. We find that the Committee generally is in favour of protection; and we find that the Ministry must obtain revenue from some source. Now, it is a matter of fact that a land-tax was introduced by the late Ministry, and it is an undoubted fact that the country pronounced against a land-tax. That possibly accounts to some extent for the changed position of parties. Therefore I say a land-tax cannot possibly be introduced by the present Government. Then there is the alternative of an income-tax; but that, again, as was stated by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, who, I have no doubt, had good grounds for what he said, is a tax that it is exceedingly difficult to introduce. Theoretically it is a fair tax, but there are so many drawbacks and difficulties standing in the way that it cannot be resorted to. And if we do not raise revenue by a land-tax, or a property tax, or an income-tax, I fail to see any other source to which it is possible for the Premier to look for the necessary revenue; there is apparently nothing left but the tariff. I want now to say a word or two, in reply to what was uttered by some hon. members on the other side of the Committee with regard to our conduct, that is to say, that whereas our constituents are in favour of freetrade, we shall probably support the hon. the Premier in his tariff proposals. But it is not a question whether we are to support the present Premier and protection, or put out the present Ministry and get freetrade; because, whether we support the hon. the Premier or we do not, we must believe that the country will have protection whether we like it or not. Therefore the only thing we on this side of the Committee have to decide is, whether we will support the hon. the Premier and protection, or the hon. the leader of the Opposition and protection, and, sitting as I do on this side of the House, I prefer the former alternative. It is evidently my duty, as a Northern representative, to do the best I can for my constituents, and I say that, if protection be as necessary as it is professed to be by a majority of this Committee, then it is my duty to endeavour to protect

certain productions which are grown in the North. Our principal agricultural industry is that of sugar-growing. As the hon. member for Rockhampton has pointed out, we in the North are able to raise agricultural produce of very great value, and if it be necessary to protect the productions of the South, and if it be necessary to have a tariff partly for revenue purposes and partly to create industries, I think it stands to reason that it is worth while endeavouring to protect, or rather to foster, an industry which is already established, which it has cost the country nothing to establish, in which millions of money are invested, and upon which some 50,000 people depend; and as the House and the country generally appear to have pronounced against a description of labour which the sugar-growers consider it imperative to have—I refer to Polynesians—in order that they may continue to compete with other countries, I say that, as this necessary is denied them, we have to consider in what way it will be advisable to enable that industry to be carried on. I say, sir, that if it is necessary to create new industries in the colony, nothing could be more outrageous than to allow an industry of the magnitude and importance of the sugar industry to be destroyed, and, further, that if it is destroyed a great many people who have never properly estimated its value will be the first to discover the great loss it will be to the country. I have seen lately in a newspaper published in this district a favourable notice of reciprocity. This is a matter that has been talked about a good deal in our part of the country for a considerable time, and in regard to its bearing upon the proposed tariff I trust that the amendment to be brought in by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, will receive some consideration and support from the Committee, and from the Premier, for reasons I am about to give—that is, the imposition of a tax of £1 per ton upon flour. I hope a duty upon flour will be instituted, and also that there will be a duty upon wine, or rather that the duty be increased. I do so because I do not see that we can possibly offer any advantage to other colonies unless it be by making a rebate of certain duties in consideration of their taking certain produce from us. If we do not put a duty, for instance, on flour, we shall not be in a position to reduce that duty in favour of Victoria, or any other colony which is prepared to enter into a compact with us to exchange certain products duty free on consideration that the other party does the same. In connection with protection, the United States of America have been frequently cited as an instance of a country which has prospered exceedingly under that policy. I wish to point out that although protection as against outside nations may have had something to do with it, yet it is equally true that the freedom of exchange which has existed in that great country between people growing produce which is peculiar to different latitudes and climates, has most undoubtedly had a great deal to do with that prosperity. And I think that, if Australia is to be as prosperous as we all hope it will be, there must be some provision by which the produce of tropical regions, such as North Queensland, may be exchanged for those products which can only be grown in cooler regions. Such a policy will be attended with very great and beneficial results both to the other colonies and to our own colony. With regard to wine, this colony imported last year from the other colonies some 34,526 gallons, and from the United Kingdom 42,573 gallons. The wine made in the colony in 1883 was 119,000 gallons, and the wine made in 1887 was 118,000 gallons. That is to say, there was absolutely less wine made in 1887 than in 1883, showing that

such protection as we have does not appear to have fostered the wine industry to any very great extent. The amount of sugar grown in the colony in 1883 was 36,000 tons, and in 1887, 88,000 tons. That shows, at any rate, that the sugar industry, under ordinary circumstances, is not only a large but a progressive industry. The fact that it is not progressive at present is partly owing to the bad season, and still more to the fact that the supply of Polynesian labour will stop in a very short period. That fact has very materially frightened those people engaged in the industry, and it has also frightened those financial institutions to whom they have to look for assistance. Finally, I think that, however I may feel compelled to vote for the tariff as it stands, or with such modifications as the Premier adopts, still I hope the hon. gentleman will consider the position of that industry, and will say that if the North is to be saddled with a protective tariff from which it derives no actual benefit, for the encouragement of new and existing industries in the South, he will grant the same consideration to us. I hope the Premier and the House will not decide that the sugar industry is, to be utterly ruined because it cannot get a certain description of labour; that they will not say, "Perish the sugar industry!" but that they will make provision by some means or another, by which that industry, as well as those new industries we hope to see created, may be preserved to the colony.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Jessop, — In listening to the speeches from both sides of the Committee, we cannot help noticing that the last election has brought together strange bedfellows, and has also placed both parties, and particularly the Conservative party now in power, in a very peculiar and strange position—so strange that very few members can understand how it is so. It is necessary to look back to the time when the present Government were last in power, when they brought forward their schemes involving the handing over of large areas of land under the land-grant railway system, and the introduction of coolies on a large scale. But the people of Queensland refused to have anything to do with those propositions, and in 1881 a very small number of men in Brisbane met and formulated what should be the policy of the country. I am glad to say that the policy then shadowed forth has been carried out up to this very day; and the tariff now brought forward by the present Government is in fulfilment of that programme—that is, encouragement to our industries by a judicious protective tariff. I congratulate the Premier that he has had the courage to bring it forward, notwithstanding that the greater part of his supporters are free-traders at heart. The Land Act of 1884, about which we have heard so much, was a natural consequence of the stand then taken against the land-grant railway system. That Act has been described as the tombstone of Mr. Dutton and the Liberal party, but instead of that it is rather the tombstone of land-grabbing—of the alienation of large areas in the hands of a few persons, which, I hope, this House will never allow to be resurrected again by the repeal of the Land Act of 1884. But for the existence of that Act the party at present in power would have been led to replenish the Treasury by the sale of land in large areas. It will be in the recollection of many hon. members that it was said that the Liberal party would bring about a deficit, and discontent, and bad times, because they would not face a revision of the tariff with a view of encouraging our industries. It is not necessary, in revising the tariff to encourage our industries to increase taxation, and if taxation is not increased I do not see where the cry of the poor man comes in. We have to raise the

necessary taxation, and it matters very little in what form it is raised, so long as it has the effect encouraging our industries. In those days also of we heard a good deal about a land-tax, and it was suggested that that should be done through the medium of the divisional boards. In this, also, we have succeeded. Divisional board rates are now levied on area and value of land, and this being the case a land-tax is not so necessary now as it was a few years ago. The land-tax being proscribed by the present Government, there is no other way to replenish the Treasury than by a revision of the tariff to encourage our industries. Even if the tariff did not produce a large amount of revenue, the increase of prosperity would cause an increase in all our sources of revenue. So that, figuratively speaking, if the Treasurer, instead of paying too great attention to balancing the revenue, would leave the Treasury and take his chair to the Custom-house, and watch the imports and exports, and apply his skill thereto until we had the balance of trade on the proper side, and then go back, he would find the Treasury overflowing. I greatly object to one argument that has been raised upon this side of the Committee, and that is in regard to the advisableness of having differential tariffs in favour of the North. If any part of Queensland requires protection and the encouragement of its native industries, I think it is North Queensland. The fewer industries, the more enslaved are the people living there; and the more employment there is for the people, the freer the people are; and the North requires the encouragement of its industries, so that the people living there will have different methods of making their livings. It is nonsense to say that manufactures cannot be carried out in the North. The North will prove itself equally as adapted for the carrying on of the various manufactures as the South. I hope the Premier will succeed in carrying his tariff, and will not allow such tampering with it as will interfere with the protective tendency, and if he succeeds in this it will certainly prove the tombstone for the freetraders. The hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Archer, said he never found any reason in a protectionist. I return the compliment, and say I have not found any reason in a freetrader. The protectionists, at any rate, have facts to support them. Wherever that policy has been introduced it has proved a blessing to the country. Victoria has proved it, and Canada has proved it. But no one can point out a single place where freetrade has been a blessing. They may say Great Britain is a great example; but has it not killed industry in Ireland? Has freetrade not crushed industries in every place where it has been tried. In the West Indies the policy of freetrade has been carried out, and those countries have been impoverished. The sugar industry there is in a state of collapse, and the population, through the cheap labour, is an unproductive population, which has neither taxation nor consuming powers. In the East Indies 5s. per head is a pressing taxation, whilst here we can stand £3 per head through the Custom-house. I am sorry that the excise duty upon beer is to be taken away, and I see more reasons than one why a strict supervision should be kept over breweries, so as to prevent brewers using injurious ingredients in the manufacture of beer, particularly when we have increased the duty upon malt, which will cause glucose to be used instead. Glucose we all know—or at least in the trade it is known—produces a large amount of fusil oil, and is therefore injurious to health. I think glucose should be taxed as heavily as 10s. per cwt. Hops should be admitted free until we can grow them ourselves. I would give brewers no inducement to use injurious substi-

tutes for hops. Instead of doing away with the excise duty upon beer the money should be employed in establishing inebriate asylums. We see a large amount of misery caused through drink, and the least we can do is to establish inebriate asylums, so that we can treat drunkenness not as a crime, but as a mental disease, which it is. I must congratulate the Premier upon the tariff which he has proposed, although there are many items in which I think there are mistakes arising from a want of technical knowledge. When the items come before the Committee I shall try and give reasons why some articles should be placed on the free list, while the duties on others are increased, and why in some there should be fixed duties. For instance, aerated waters and ginger ale should be taxed heavier. All linen and cotton goods should be admitted free until we can manufacture them. The duties that are put upon articles that can be manufactured here should be taken off the articles that cannot be, so that there will be no cry about the duties falling only upon the poor man. Gloves are articles of luxury, and any lady who wants to wear kid gloves can just as well afford to pay 6d. per pair more or less. All kinds of fans should pay at the very least 25 per cent., and a single fan should be taxed 6d. All fancy articles should pay 25 per cent. Toys should also pay 25 per cent. They are articles of no real value, and their manufacture could be undertaken by women, and by men who are not fit for hard labour. Parasols should also be taxed 25 per cent. Boots and shoes should pay a specific duty, and furniture should be in the same category. Chinese furniture should be placed in the list of excise duties, and the furniture dealers and cabinet-makers who sell it ought to pay a license fee for plying their trade; so that if any European dealer or cabinet-maker selling Chinese work as his own could have his license taken away. Chinese fancy goods should pay a duty of 25 per cent, and so should jewellery. That is not too high in one respect, although it may lead to smuggling. All jewellers should also have to pay a license fee, and anyone smuggling jewellery should be deprived of his license. That would make all dealers Custom-house officers, and they would act far better than detectives. Tobaccoists should also pay a license fee. All dealers in explosives ought to be licensed; but ammunition, powder, and all explosive articles should be allowed to enter free, so long as we have this protective tariff. It is sufficient that this colony should at once enter on a protective era; and as soon as we can manufacture ammunition we ought to adopt the protective policy in that line also. Therefore, I think all explosives should be free, but, in order to have proper control, the dealers should have to pay a license. Fireworks ought to pay 100 per cent. Chinese crackers, which are imported at a cost of 1d. per packet, are sold at 6d. per packet—that is 600 per cent. they make on them—and they can well afford to pay a duty of 100 per cent., but it ought to be transferred to the list of fixed duties. Pottery should be made to pay an increased duty. Eggs should be placed under a specific duty of 2d. a dozen. Honey should pay 4d. a lb., because it is largely adulterated with glucose. Lard should pay 2d. a lb., because we can manufacture it ourselves. Flour should pay a duty of 20s. a ton.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. ISAMBERT: Hon. members may say "no! no!—the poor man!" but let me assure them that a duty of 20s. a ton will lower the price of the loaf to the working man. If necessary we can put a duty of 6d. a bushel on the wheat, but we should also put a duty of 20s. on flour.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : What would become of the farmers ?

Mr. ISAMBERT : It would have the effect of placing mills in Brisbane, Maryborough, Rockhampton, and Townsville ; and instead of the flour trade being in the hands of a few importers, it would bring about the competition of the millers. The result would be that bread would be cheaper. Caustic soda cannot be manufactured here and ought to be free, because it is used in various manufactures. Copra should also be on the free list, because it is not made here, but is transhipped from the South Seas. Chemicals used in manufactures ought to be admitted free. Opium pays 20s. a lb., and so should all preparations of opium, whether liquid or solid. Patent medicines with a formula should pay 25s., and without a formula 50 per cent. Saltpetre ought to be free. Methylated spirits manufactured in the colony should pay no duty. Coal-tar, which we can manufacture ourselves, ought to pay 6d. per gallon. Starch could also be manufactured from arrowroot, and should pay 2d. per lb. Cod liver oil ought to be free, and so should canes, osiers, and rattans, as they are used in the manufacture of baskets. I hope members of the Committee, when they come to the various items, will remain true to the promises made on the polling day, to revise the tariff with a view of encouraging our industries. Reference has been often made to the poor man, but what is the good of cheap things to the poor man if he has not the money to buy those cheap things ?

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the House resumed, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said : Mr. Speaker,—In moving the adjournment of the House, to-morrow evening I intend to move that we adjourn until Tuesday. I find it is generally the wish of hon. members not to sit on Friday next, and it suits me also. I have got a very large amount of correspondence, not only from members but from persons outside, and it will take me pretty well Friday, Saturday, and Monday to look through it carefully, and that is necessary if it is to be of value to the House. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed, and the House adjourned at 21 minutes past 10 o'clock.