

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 1888

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 25 September, 1888.

The case of Mr. Surveyor Steele.—Question without Notice.—Elections Tribunal Act of 1886—Wide Bay Election.—Petition—Queensland Permanent Trustee, Executor, and Finance Agency Company, Limited.—Formal Motion.—Ways and Means—resumption of committee.—Message from the Legislative Council—Prisons Bill—first reading.—Adjournment.

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

THE CASE OF MR. SURVEYOR STEELE.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. H. Black) laid upon the table of the House the papers in connection with the case of Mr. Surveyor Steele.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I notice that the hon. the Minister for Lands has laid upon the table of the House the papers relating to the case of Surveyor Steele, but he has not moved that they be printed. I would like to ask him, without notice, if he intends to have them printed?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Speaker,—I have not the least objection to some of the papers being printed if the hon. gentleman, after their perusal, thinks they are of sufficient general importance. The matter is not of any particular importance to the House; it is merely a dispute between Surveyor Steele and his articulated pupils. The hon. gentleman can look through the papers, and on a future occasion can move that certain of them be printed.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL ACT OF 1886.

WIDE BAY ELECTION.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that I have received the following report from the Hon. the Chief Justice:—

“IN THE SUPREME COURT OF QUEENSLAND.

“ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL ACT OF 1886.

“Court of the Elections Tribunal for the trial of an Election Petition for the Electoral District of Wide Bay, between John Flood, petitioner, and Horace Tozer, respondent.

“I, the Hon. Sir Charles Lilley, Knight, the Chief Justice of Queensland, and Elections Judge for the current year, do hereby certify to the Hon. the Speaker

of the Legislative Assembly that the said Tribunal sat on the seventeenth and twenty-first days of September now instant, and tried the above-mentioned petition.

“The assessors chosen by the parties and present throughout the trial were—George Agnew, William Stephens, Rees R. Jones, Arthur Morgan, Edward Palmer, and Robert Harrison Smith, Esquires, members of the Legislative Assembly.

“I append hereto a copy of the evidence taken upon the trial.

“The assessors decided that the said petition should be dismissed with costs.

“The petition was accordingly dismissed with costs, and Mr. Tozer was declared to have been duly elected member for the Electoral District of Wide Bay.

“Dated this 25th September, A.D. 1888.

“CHARLES LILLEY, C.J.”

The PREMIER (the Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) said: Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move that the report of the Chief Justice, and the evidence connected with it, be printed and made part of the proceedings of this House.

Question put and passed.

PETITION.

QUEENSLAND PERMANENT TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND FINANCE AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED.

Mr. POWERS presented a petition asking the House to confer certain powers upon the Queensland Permanent Trustee, Executor, and Finance Agency Company, Limited, and stated that in connection therewith a receipt from the Colonial Treasurer for the sum of £25, and also the necessary copies of the *Government Gazette* and newspapers containing notices of intention to introduce a Bill, had been deposited with the Clerk of the House. He moved that the petition be received.

Question put and passed.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to:—

By Mr. REES R. JONES—

(1.) That the Australasian Natives' Trustees, Executors, and Agency Company, Limited, Bill be referred for the consideration and report of a select committee.

(2.) That such committee have power to send for persons and papers, and leave to sit during any adjournment of the House; and that it consist of Messrs. Robert Aland, W. H. Corfield, Arthur Morgan, W. S. Paul, and the mover.

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.

After a pause—

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Jessop,—The adjournment of the debate was moved from the other side of the Committee with the object of carrying it on to-day, and while I am quite prepared to close the debate, I do not desire to speak before all members who wish to do so have dealt with the Financial Statement and the tariff connected with it. If any hon. member, therefore, desires to speak to the main question he should speak now.

Mr. BUCKLAND said: Mr. Jessop,—The adjournment of the debate was moved on Thursday evening by the hon. member for Oxley, and I expected to see him in his place this afternoon to lead off. As he is not present, I will say what I have to say on the subject. While agreeing that the country at the last election was largely in favour of a protective tariff, I think the tariff

nroduced by the Colonial Treasurer does not come up to the expectations of the country generally. The abolition of the excise duty upon locally manufactured beer is a mistake. I believe that the result will be the manufacture of an inferior article, and that it will be no cheaper to the working man. I understand the amount of the excise duty upon locally manufactured beer amounted to £30,000 last year; and I believe that the amount which will be lost by the abolition of that duty will not be made up by the proposed increased duty upon malt and hops. Then, again, there is the impost on imported boots. I find that working men will have to pay an increase of about 1s. 10d. per pair. Now, I was shown the other day, in a boot shop in Queen street, an imported French shoe which was retailed at 8s. 6d., and another inferior sort which was retailed at 3s. 6d. These were ladies' shoes, and the duty of 1s. 1d. will fall on both alike, so that the inferior article will pay quite as much duty as the superior article. There is also another proposed duty which is objectionable—the 15 per cent. on green fruit. It must be admitted that that is a very heavy tax indeed, and will bear heavily on a large proportion of the population who consume fruit in the summer months. At present it is quite certain that we cannot grow many of the fruits we import from Tasmania and cooler climates, so that I hope that tax will be rejected by the Committee. I quite agree with the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philip, in his reference to the increased duty on spirits. I hope we shall increase the duty to 14s. In New Zealand the duty is 16s., in Western Australia 15s., and in Victoria 14s. In New South Wales they impose 12s., but I am convinced that spirits can well bear an increase of duty. Now, the Treasurer in his opening remarks mentioned that he did not consider the time had arrived when we could impose an income or property tax. I think we certainly should attempt to raise some part of our revenue to cover the deficit from the absentee gentlemen who live at home at ease and draw their wealth from this colony. I refer more particularly to gentlemen who have acquired large areas of land on the Darling Downs. Most of those gentlemen are living in the old country, and are paying nothing whatever towards the expenses of government beyond divisional board rates, and I am sorry there is an entire absence in the proposals of the Treasurer of any scheme for taxing those gentlemen. The hon. member for Charters Towers referred the other evening to a tax on brokers, and I think that was a very good suggestion. They are men who, as a rule, have no stock-in-trade. A pocket-book and pencil, an office, and a few chairs are all they require.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Tax auctioneers.

Mr. BUCKLAND: I am coming to that. I think it would be a wise thing to increase the auctioneers' licenses. I am quite willing to pay double the present license, and I do not believe there is a respectable auctioneer in this city or in the colony who would not be willing to pay quite double the present license. I am not speaking against the profession to which I belong.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I think you are.

Mr. BUCKLAND: I am speaking in their favour. Someone must be taxed, and I am quite willing to bear my share of the burden; and I speak for several other gentlemen who are in the business, who are quite willing to pay an increased license fee. As far as brokers are concerned, I am sure that a tax of £5 5s. or £10 10s. a year would not be felt by them. During the late elections the question frequently came before me as to the advisability of increasing the duty on imported timber, and I distinctly

said I was in favour of that. I think the duty proposed by the Treasurer is scarcely sufficient, and I am quite willing that a further increase should be made. Another matter has occurred to me—an increased stamp duty on transfers of shares. I think that where so much valuable property is being transferred in mining and other companies, they could well afford to pay an increased stamp duty. A great many transfers have taken place in Mount Morgan and other valuable mining shares, and those gentlemen who get immense wealth out of the mining interest of the colony should certainly contribute a larger amount to the revenue. Now, it has been said that this is an inconvenient time to impose an income-tax. I believe it is inconvenient at any time to impose it; but I know that in Great Britain the income-tax is the most easily worked of any form of taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer when he wants extra revenue puts 3d. or 1d. in the £ on the income-tax, and all he has to do is to get the House of Commons to consent to the increase, for the machinery is all ready there to work it. I am quite certain that, sooner or later, the Treasurer of this colony will have to resort to that method of raising revenue. There are objections to it, I admit, but there is no form of taxation that people will not try and evade; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer frequently receives conscience money from persons who have evaded that tax for years. The time is, however, not far distant when we shall have to bear that tax in this colony. Now, as regards the other proposals of the Treasurer, I consider that the working men of the colony will have to bear the greater share of the burden, and I can assure him that a very large amount of discontent is being shown, and is developing itself throughout the colony in respect to it. I am of opinion that the proposals of the hon. gentleman will have to be considerably modified; and I will give my support to anything which will equalise the burden of taxation in all parts of the colony. I shall not keep the Committee any longer, as there are other hon. members who are anxious to make some remarks on the subject, but will merely repeat that I shall give what assistance I can in making this a good revenue measure for the colony.

Mr. WATSON said: Mr. Jessop,—There is probably no point of importance bearing on the tariff question that has not been brought before the Committee during the debate in some form or other. Yet it being a matter of great importance, directly or indirectly, to every individual in this country, I feel disposed to say a few words on the subject. No one but the wildest anarchist doubts the necessity of some form of government. No intelligent person doubts that a very large amount of money is necessary to defray the expenses of a good Government, nor can anybody doubt that some form of taxation must exist in order to raise this large amount of money. Direct taxation is arbitrary; tariff taxation is largely voluntary or optional; that is, the amount that an individual pays is owing entirely to his choice of articles and the quantity of them consumed. If I wish I can buy a good substantial coat on which the tariff taxation would amount to 5s., or one on which it would amount to 20s.; or if I were a farmer, and wished to do so, I could raise my own sheep, shear them, and have the wool carded, spun, and woven at home, and pay no tariff at all. But the farmer knows how to value his time too well to spend it in such a way; he knows that it is cheaper for him to buy his coat with manufacturers', jobbers', wholesale and retail dealers' profits, and with protective tariff all added than to go through the different processes of producing that coat. Remove the tariff and I shall probably

have to pay an arbitrary tax, whether I exercise my taste or pleasure in selecting a coat or not. The present tariff, I can assure the Committee, will not be beneficial to the working man of this colony. We require a tariff that will come upon those who are able to bear the burden. Everyone knows perfectly well that the working men in this country are not in the same position at the present time as they were in the period from 1880 to 1883. In those days they had plenty of work and could bear a little taxation. I have been looking over my account books for that period, and I find that I spent a good deal of money, not only in advertising for men, but also for material. Since 1883 I have carried out many works, and have never been compelled to spend a single shilling in advertising for labourers. I have had too many labourers applying for work wherever I have gone, and have seen too many hard up, in very bad circumstances. How is it possible, then, that these poor working men can bear such heavy taxation as will be put upon them by this tariff? From 1876 to 1883 I did a considerable amount of work in the North, and during that time we were in very flourishing circumstances. I paid very high wages at that period, sometimes as high as 17s. a day for working men. The sawmills of Brisbane could not keep me going with timber then. But if you went to Maryborough you found the people there dissatisfied, and complaining that the people of Brisbane got everything; at Bundaberg they made the same complaint about Maryborough; at Rockhampton the people were jealous of those at Maryborough and at Bundaberg. The same feeling of local jealousy existed at Mackay and other towns of the North. I think it would be a great advantage, were it possible, if they could have local government in the North. The people would then know where the money came from, and see whether it was all spent in Brisbane or not. Now, I am a protectionist. In 1854 I went from home to San Francisco. At that time Chili, in South America, supplied San Francisco with flour. In 1858, four years later, San Francisco sent wheat back to Chili to be ground, and the vessels returned loaded with guano obtained at Chili. Last year—1887—San Francisco exported 1,500,000 tons of wheat. That is one thing that has been brought about by protection in California. There the farmers have now plenty of implements and plenty of manure, and are a wealthy class of people. Why do men rush off to new countries? Simply because prices are better in those places. Why do men complain of the tariff? Simply because they wish prices reduced. Why does a larger proportion of men in new countries get richer? Because prices are better. Why does a larger proportion of men in old countries get poorer? Because prices are lower. In the one case good prices produce a more even distribution of wealth, in the other, poor prices help the few and ruin the many, finally crippling the enterprise of the whole community. I think that every member of a family should enjoy privileges in the colony not accorded to strangers. I think also that every village, town, and city should give to its citizens privileges paid for by local taxation, not accorded to outsiders. I think that every Government should give to its burden-bearers privileges and protection that need not be extended to foreigners who are indifferent to its interests, if not interested in its downfall. If we get protection in this colony we shall be able to turn the tables so far at any rate that we need not be continually draining the country of its money to send it home to England and make the poor there poorer and the rich richer. We have no guarantee from monopolists in England that their poor will be bettered by our trade.

No; on the contrary, we know that the working men of this country will have to compete against the poor people of Great Britain. I do not wish to say much more, but I will just refer to one other matter—namely, our railways. If the railways were worked in an efficient manner, so that the farming population could benefit by them, I am confident that it would be a great advantage to all Queensland. I have heard some hon. members ask what about the Valley Railway? I can assure them that that line will be one of the finest railways in Queensland.

Mr. ALAND: The greatest swindle.

Mr. WATSON: The hon. member says the greatest swindle. I would ask the hon. member to go down that line to Constance street as soon as it is finished, and I feel confident that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, will, with myself, be only too happy to take him over the district of Fortitude Valley and show him that there are industries in that locality languishing for want of protection. We have beer manufactories, and I feel certain that when the hon. gentleman comes down we can give him a good glass of beer. We have two breweries, and I am sure the hon. gentleman will not feel a bad taste in his mouth after drinking their beer. We have timber industries, Mr. Jessop—piles of timber. In 1882, sir, up North, I used to get men to work day and night for me to keep things going, but at present they have plenty of timber—millions of feet going to destruction. We have more than that, sir, in Fortitude Valley. We can make boots; and the Valley produces gas. And still more than that, sir, and lastly, we can make the beginning and the end of men—that is, cradles and coffins. In conclusion, I trust, Mr. Jessop, that hon. members of this Committee will do their best, as the tariff goes through, to make it for the general benefit of the country. I am and have always been a protectionist. In all my travels—and I have travelled in most parts of the world—I have always found that in protectionist countries I never had to hump my tools looking for a day's work. I had only to go to the works, ask for employment, and get it. But, sir, in freetrade countries I have been for months at a stretch and never got a day's work. In San Francisco I got high wages—£1 a day—when I first landed. At the present time they are paying 14s. a day for shipwrights, the profession I belong to, through the assistance of protection. Take freetrade countries on the other hand. Go to Sydney, and what do you find? There, no later than March last, they had 1,760 men employed on relief works at 5s. a day; and it was demoralising and lowering the men, who were ever on the watch for the gangers. We have never been in that position in Brisbane, and what is the cause of it? Because we have 7½ per cent. *ad valorem* duty. That is what has kept us above New South Wales. Then take Victoria and compare it with New South Wales. In New South Wales you will find beggars at every corner, but in Melbourne you will not find a beggar in any shape or form. I can assure hon. members that at the time of the strike of the tramway employes, in March last, the company sent to Sydney for men, and they treated those men handsomely. When it was found that they did not require them they paid their passages back again. Even in Brisbane, go to the Victoria bridge and you will find 100 or 200 men at both ends begging and praying for work. Is that the position that a new country like Queensland should occupy? It was never so before during the twenty-five years I have been in the colony—except in 1866. That is the only time ever we had such a condition of affairs, and I

trust that in this revision of the tariff we shall all do our best to modify it as far as possible, so as to alleviate the burden upon the working man.

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Jessop,—I am very glad that the discussion on the financial statement has been so full, and that a fair opportunity has been given to all hon. members to express their views. I do not think that much time has been lost; on the contrary, I think it will be found ultimately that a good deal of time has been saved by giving full liberty of debate on the general question, because when we get to the items we shall be able to deal with them as they arise. Especially do I think there is no reason for the Government to complain of the fullness of the debate when we remember that the last full discussion of the tariff took place eighteen years ago.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. SALKELD: Yes; there have been only amendments since then; and when we remember also that this is the greatest change ever proposed in a tariff in Queensland, and that it may be the greatest change for the next eighteen years—there is no saying how many of us will be here in eighteen years' time, if any—I think, under these circumstances, there is no reason for the Government to complain that extra time has been taken up in discussing the question. I think it is most necessary that members should have the fullest opportunity of putting their views before the Committee and the country, because, no doubt, on an occasion of this kind members do speak to the country—to their constituents, in order to explain the action they may take. I shall not go into details, but shall confine my remarks to the main question. During the course of the debate exception was taken to the remark of the hon. the leader of the Opposition, to the effect that he was an Opportunist. I think, however, that before the hon. gentleman finished his speech those who laughed found that they had laughed rather prematurely, because I think they saw as soon as I did that he was very reasonable in the position he took up. It is one that every member in this House, more or less, takes up—we are all Opportunists, in so far as it suits the interests of the country. When I returned from a visit to England, over two years ago, a few days after my arrival in the colony, on the 19th August, I spoke upon a question that incidentally brought up the subject of protection, and then expressed my altered views respecting it. I had always been a freetrader previously. I do not say that before I came to Queensland I had gone into the matter very much, but I was inclined to believe in the principle of freetrade, and until three or four years ago I still held those views. But I did not hold with freetrade previously so rigidly as to close my eyes to the facts I saw going on around me. I believe, sir, that this question can be settled, not so much by arguments as by the broad fact whether protection succeeds in different places or not. I believe the results of a protective tariff in the United States, in Canada, and in Victoria have done more to bring men round to look with favour upon protection than all the arguments that have been used on the question. I know that was the effect on my mind. I believe that protection is the right policy to pursue in Queensland. If I were a resident in Great Britain I should say that freetrade was the proper policy for Great Britain, because protective tariffs always have the tendency to restrict interchange and induce communities to become their own producers and manufacturers. That is the tendency all the world over. In countries like Great Britain, where they manufacture far more than they use, free-

trade is most essential, and I believe that if freetrade was universal it would lead to Great Britain and a few other European countries, and a portion of the United States of America becoming the workshops of the world. Of the manufactures, at least 90 per cent. would concentrate in those countries. But young countries, which desire to encourage production and manufactures within their borders, are obliged to resort to protection in order to get them started and place them on a proper footing. That is why I support protection as a policy for Queensland. I have no objection to the use of the word "protection." It is well understood what it means; it means the encouragement of local production and manufactures. As far as this proposed tariff is protective in its character I am with it, and shall heartily support it. But there is another aspect of the question I wish to allude to, and that is that under our proposed system of taxation certain classes of the people are to be asked to pay far more than their proper share. There is one remark in the speech of the leader of the Opposition to which I take exception; I do not know whether the hon. gentleman meant exactly what he said, probably he did not; although most people would understand pretty well what he meant. He said, "It was not more expedient to tax land than any other form of accumulated property." And, further, that "the true basis of taxation is the ability of the person taxed to pay; every man should contribute to the expense of the State in proportion to his ability." That, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would lead right up to out-and-out communism; and I do not think the hon. gentleman intended that.

The HON. P. PERKINS: That is just what he did intend.

Mr. SALKELD: I do not think he intended anything of the kind; he simply meant that there should be some proportion between a man's ability and the tax he ought to pay. "Mill's" theory is more correct, although it is not strictly correct, that people should pay to the expense of the State in proportion to the benefit they derive from State expenditure and protection. The weak spot in that theory is that some persons derive benefit from State expenditure and protection who are utterly unable to pay anything to the expense of the State. That, however, is the true principle, and it is by departing from it that so many anomalies have occurred in the taxation of the old country and of the colonies as well. It seems a strange thing that the great mass of the people do not see that property receives protection from the State and does not pay in proportion to it in any degree. Our taxation is of the nature of a poll-tax. That wants to be reiterated over and over again, until the great mass of people become conversant with the question; and the more it is agitated and debated, the more the idea will spread in the colony that our system of taxation is very much in the nature of a poll-tax. I lay this rule down, that I am opposed to all increase of Customs duties except on articles that we have a reasonable prospect of either producing or manufacturing in the colony, with the exception of a few articles of luxury on which increased taxation might be imposed. If the Committee would look at the question in that light they could soon arrive at a very acceptable conclusion. The tax on luxuries would be an indirect way of imposing a tax upon persons who are well able to pay, and who do not pay in other ways, for the benefits they derive from the State. But, as the adoption of that principle would still leave us short of revenue, that opens up another question. Both the Premier and the leader of the Opposition have stated that it would be impossible to

curtail expenditure further than they have done. But last year the present Colonial Secretary said that taxation was not necessary, and the hon. member for Townsville distinctly stated—both in the House and outside it—that we wanted more economy in our expenditure; he was very emphatic on that point. However, we have the statement of both the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, that it is not practicable or desirable to reduce the expenditure any further, and seeing that the leaders of both parties take up that position it may seem rather presumptuous in me to differ from them. But I have great doubts on the question, and I believe there are ways whereby we could economise to a considerable extent. There is one item, for instance, that I should be glad to see knocked off the proposed expenditure, and that is the vote for £13,000 for an addition to the parliamentary buildings, in addition to the £2,500 for repairs. While we are putting additional imposts on the great mass of the people, and particularly when we see the wants of the outside districts in the way of water supply and other urgent matters uncared for, to incur this expenditure is really too bad, and I shall do what I can to eliminate this item from the Estimates. However, as I said, revenue must be found somehow. No doubt the proposal by the late Government, last session, of a land-tax was not by any means complete; yet I think it was a step in the right direction. There is another remark in the speech of the leader of the Opposition to which I take exception. He said, "It was not more necessary to tax land than any other form of accumulated property." I understand by that that he meant to put landed property and money on the same level. If we apply the rule of taxation in proportion to the benefits received, then that rule will not hold good. There is a difference between the benefits derived by the owners of land, and those derived by the owners of other accumulated property. There is this fact staring us plainly in the face, that the increased value of the fee-simple of land has been largely brought about by Government expenditure in this colony. We cannot define the exact amount, but we can see numerous instances of it. We can see plainly enough that whole districts have been doubled and trebled in value by Government expenditure. I maintain that there is a special reason to tax such land. There may be some argument in the reply that the whole colony has not benefited by the Government expenditure, and that, therefore, the lands of the colony would require to be scheduled. In dealing with this question I wish to allude to a remark made by the Treasurer during the election campaign, and repeated by him in delivering the budget speech. He said that it was absurd to talk about putting on a land-tax, because only 2 per cent. of the land had been alienated. The previous Treasurer, Mr. Dickson, alluded to an acreage tax. That idea wants only to be calmly stated and looked in the face for a minute or two to show people the absurdity of it. Take an allotment in Queen street, or in any large town of the colony, and compare it with a thousand-acre block of land. I do not think there is anything in the Treasurer's objection to a land-tax. It is one of those things people cannot grasp; but they think there must be something in it, because such a great authority as the Treasurer has taken the trouble to state it more than once. I do not think it should guide us at all whether the State holds 98 per cent. of the land, or only 10 per cent. The hon. member for Townsville, I believe, thinks a land-tax is premature; it is not opportune; he is an Opportunist also. By deferring the land-tax we play into the hands of people who do not deserve much consideration—the speculators pure and simple. They

will buy land and sell it before the land-tax comes about. And then there is a spice of unfairness about it to those who may be buyers in future. They will have to buy at inflated prices and then have to pay the land-tax. In common honesty, if a land-tax is necessary, it ought to be imposed as soon as possible in all fairness to everybody concerned. We ought not to encourage, or in any way facilitate, the making of large sums of money by speculating in land. The man who speculates in land benefits no one but himself. If he buys land at a nominal price and sells at a very much increased price, simply as a land speculation, he handicaps those who may buy it. We missed our opportunity when, twenty years ago, instead of putting £1 per acre upon the land, with deferred payments, we should have sold it upon strictly occupation conditions, at a mere nominal figure, and put a land tax upon it. That would have saved a tremendous amount of mischief; we cannot tell how much, because we are not face to face yet with all the trouble the old system of dealing with the lands will cause. Anyone who studies social problems at home will see that politicians there do not know what way to turn. They may see that some reform is necessary, but they do not know how to carry it out without doing something which appears very much in the nature of confiscation. If we had imposed a land-tax twenty years ago there would have been nothing to find fault with, but if the tax is put on in the future it will be very sore upon persons who bought land at inflated prices twelve or fifteen years ago. If there will be an injustice done by putting on a land-tax now, that injustice will increase the longer it is delayed, and I think the proper time to impose it is before the difficulty assumes any greater magnitude. In regard to the argument that 98 per cent. of the land is in the hands of the Crown, I wish the hon. Treasurer would tell us what he thinks about it. If he would make a clean breast of it, we could very soon take up the thread of his argument. I wonder the hon. gentleman does not say it would be better to wait till the Crown holds no land at all. Of course, even in England the Crown holds land, and yet they have a land-tax, and have had it for hundreds of years. I presume the hon. gentleman would say that in the old country the Crown has no land for sale, but only for occupation. If we wait until all our land is sold before a land-tax is imposed—until the Crown has become dispossessed of all land—it is simply relegating the land-tax for ever and ever. It is not likely all Crown land here will be sold for a very long period. I do not see anything in the argument of the hon. gentleman. The tax will only fall upon the alienated land and not upon the other. The hon. gentleman will say it will reduce the value of the land now held by the Crown; but we know it will prevent speculators taking it up before it is wanted, and will leave it in the hands of the Crown, and if it does only that it will be a very beneficial tax indeed, and the tendency must be that way if it is any way at all. In regard to the tariff, I am not going to particularise the items that I think ought to have been left as they were. I think it would have been better if the Treasurer had put a 20 per cent. tax upon all articles which we are likely to produce or manufacture, and left the *ad valorem* duties on other articles of general consumption as they were. He should have increased the duties upon certain articles of luxury, and then tried to economise in the public service. If he had done that we should have had as good a tariff as could have been proposed. I would be quite willing to make the duties protective to the extent of 20 per cent. where it can

be shown they will have a protective effect; and if, as we go on, we find there are certain other articles which we can produce, I would be willing to put duties also upon them. There is another aspect of the budget which is a serious one, and that is its probable effect upon the northern part of the colony. A gentleman suggested to me that the two Northern members in the Government consented to this tariff for the purpose of furthering the interests of separation. I do not believe that suggestion, as I think they would hardly go so far as that; but there is no doubt whatever that it will have that tendency. If we are to have a Financial Separation Bill, which I understand the Government intend to go on with, that may tend to remove many of the differences existing between the two parts of the colony. I do not think we should do anything that would emphasise those differences, but should, on the contrary, endeavour to modify anything that would have that tendency. I shall vote against the proposed remission of the beer duty, and I think the Government would be well advised in consenting to abandon that proposal at once. It will not find favour in the country any more than in this Committee, where many of the members on both sides are opposed to the remission of the excise duty upon beer. A number of members have expressed themselves as being in favour of increasing the proposed duty upon spirits from 12s. to 14s. They certainly are not necessary, and are in my opinion a curse to any working man who takes more than a certain quantity of them, and a curse to anyone else who indulges in them whether in this House or elsewhere. I am, then, prepared to vote for the retention of the excise duty upon beer, and for the increase of the duty upon spirits. There is another matter to which I must refer, and it is connected not with the tariff proposals, but with some amendments which I understand are to be moved by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom—the remission of the duty upon wheat and the imposition of a tax of £1 a ton on flour. We know that flour is the staff of life, and is indeed the staple food of the whole community, and I cannot see my way to vote for the proposed tax of £1 a ton on that article; though I may be willing to vote for the remission of the duty upon wheat, if it can be shown that the tendency of the remission of that taxation will be to bring in wheat to be ground in this colony. After all, even if this tariff should be passed, I hope it may not be long before we have a thorough readjustment of the principles of our taxation, as I shall not be at all satisfied with our system as long as land and property are practically exempt. Whether that is a good electioneering cry or not I do not care very much, but I shall at any time be prepared to stand or fall by the principle that land and property ought to bear a very different share of the burdens of the State than they do at present. I will not further detain the Committee, and I hope that the Colonial Treasurer will have no reason to regret the allowance of full scope in the debate upon this matter, and that we shall get through the items of the tariff without loss of time.

Mr. O'CONNELL said: Mr. Jessop,—I am sorry to have to prolong the discussion, as I know the leader of the Government is anxious to get through with it; still he must be aware that we have, to a certain extent, to advocate the claims of our constituents. The hon. member who has just sat down made a remark as to the proposed means of taxation being a tax *per capita*. I differ from that opinion to a certain extent, because where everything is taxed a man must contribute to the revenue in proportion to the amount he spends; and a man who

has but £2 a week cannot pay as much as a man who gets £10 a week. The man who spends £1,000 a year contributes a much larger amount to the revenue than the man who spends only £100 a year. A point has also been raised about the increased value of landed property by the expenditure of Government money. What is Government money? Is it not actually public money, contributed in the first place by the people? If the money was expended by private companies on the railways and public works instead of by the Government, the landed property would be increased in value just the same. It would not matter to the people by whom the money was spent, and so long as the companies made their profit by the expenditure they would be satisfied on their side. The question of freetrade *versus* protection has to a certain extent come into the discussion, but the effect of the proposed tariff upon the different constituencies has been allowed by most hon. members who have spoken to have most weight. I have been amused, to some extent, by the views of freetraders, and they have, I suppose, been amused by the views of protectionists. One thing which has been stated is, that it is not necessary to protect the woollen and boot manufacturing industries of the colony, because the companies already engaged in them can afford to pay dividends; but that to me, as a protectionist, is one of the strongest arguments for protecting them, because we have already proved we can produce these articles, and if by protection we can prevent the introduction of similar products from outside, we may monopolise these industries for the employment of people in our own colony. The hon. member for Rockhampton hit the key-note the other night when he said it was absolutely useless to argue the question of freetrade and protection at this stage, and I do not intend to enter upon such an argument. My principal reason for speaking this afternoon is to call the attention of the Colonial Treasurer to the fact that the main industry in my district—the sugar industry—instead of being fostered is being more heavily taxed under the proposed tariff. Machinery, steel rails, bags and chemicals are all to be taxed under the new tariff. Now, we have never attempted to make bags or steel rails. Those articles will have to be introduced, and I doubt whether they will be produced here for a very long time to come. Meanwhile this will be a very heavy tax on the sugar industry. During the debate we have heard a great deal about the injustice done to the North by the incidence of taxation, and I would ask hon. members what they would say supposing some humanitarian crank proposed to do away with the use of explosives for sinking shafts. Suppose he came before the public and said: "Gentlemen, you must not allow those men to use explosives, they are dangerous to human life;" and suppose he was able to persuade the public that it was wrong and dangerous to use explosives. Supposing the Northern members came down to this House and said: "Surely you are not going to allow this crank to induce you to ruin a great industry; inquire into the matter and you will see that the use of explosives is absolutely necessary to carry on our business," and they were replied to by saying, "We are quite aware that explosives are necessary, and that you absolutely require them, but you must remember that our constituents, owing to a popular agitation, have declared against the use of explosives." What would be the result? Would the Northern men have their greatest industry crippled simply because somebody happened to take up a sentiment absolutely false, and which can be proved to be false, but which the popular voice clamours for? That is the position of the sugar

industry. We have a large industry. An immense amount of capital has been invested in it, and we produced last year £1,100,000 worth of sugar; and yet we are told that, because the labour used in that industry is supposed to clash with white labour, we are not to be allowed to carry on the industry. I am not wedded to black labour at all, but I do say that you have no business to take away anything which is necessary to an industry unless you are prepared to substitute something in its place. The moment you can produce the machinery which will do away with the necessity of employing black labour, then do away with the labour; but why do away with the labour which produces so much wealth to the country? In my district we produced £250,000 worth of sugar last year, and into whose pockets did that go? With the exception of £20,000, the whole of that went into the pockets of white people, and even the £20,000 that went into the pockets of kanakas came back into the pockets of white men, because the kanakas seldom take money away with them. So that, as a matter of fact, instead of doing the white labourers good you are doing them harm by killing this industry. And, supposing the industry is killed on these grounds, what would be the result? Would the population of Queensland eat sugar produced by white labour? It would do nothing of the kind. We should get our sugar from the Mauritius or the Chinese factories of Hongkong, and it would be grown by black labour. I think members of this House should do what the hon. member for Aubigny, Mr. Campbell, did. Having seen what was absolutely necessary for carrying on the sugar industry, he went before his constituents. He told them what he had seen and what he considered necessary, and they said to him, "If you think black labour is necessary we are satisfied to let the planters carry on their industry until such time as there is some means discovered by which they can carry it on without black labour." That is what I am contending for, and I draw the Premier's attention to the suggestion made by an hon. member, that we should have an inquiry into the agricultural interests of the country, so that some suggestions might be made which would lead to the sugar interest being preserved to the country.

Mr. CROMBIE said: Mr. Jessop,—It is not my intention to detain the Committee long, but it seems that every new member is going to speak during this debate, and I do not see why I should remain out in the cold. I have listened with a great deal of attention to the debate, and I must say that it has not altered my views in one single particular. I think that the Premier has produced a tariff that will suit the whole colony better than any other tariff that can be produced. He has combined a revenue-producing tariff with a protective tariff, and, although I do not altogether agree with every item in it, at the same time I think it is a good tariff, and if he will consent to some slight alterations perhaps it may be improved upon. I may as well state that I am a protectionist; although in the district I represent everything that is consumed will have to pay increased duty. I believe that protection is what we require, and my reason for thinking so is, that protection is the medium through which the population of the colony will increase. I look forward to the time when the increase of the population of Queensland will be so great that, instead of having to send our surplus fat stock to Victoria and New South Wales, we shall have a market for it within our own borders. That is my reason for being a protectionist. I have been long enough in the colony to remember what took place twenty-five years ago. The colony was very young then, and I know that at that

time the pastoralists were invited by the Government to purchase the land, because the money was required to carry on the government of the colony. Now, we find that those people who bought the land at the invitation of the Government, are looked upon as robbers of the people's patrimony. Well, it seems to me that every industry has a day, when it is the pet of some Government, and the pastoralists at that time were the pets of the Government. They were looked upon as noble fellows, going out into the west and reclaiming the country from the blacks. Now that they have brought in revenue and have acquired land they are looked upon as robbers of the people's patrimony. We come then to the sugar industry and we find that the planters started on pretty much the same basis. They were looked upon as pioneers, and as people who were spending large sums of money for the development of the country, and for the purpose of introducing a new industry. They succeeded in introducing it, but times have altered, and now they are looked upon as robbers of the people's patrimony. The day will come when the miners, who are now the pets of the people of the colony, will be looked upon as robbers of the people's gold, and they will have to pay heavy duties. I think that time is not very far distant. From speeches that I have heard in this Committee, it seems to me that the miners do not want to pay any tax at all. They do not want to pay a tax on machinery, or gold, or dividends. I think, however, that they should pay a tax on machinery, on gold, and on dividends. They are not, in my opinion, taxed to the same extent as any other industry in the colony. If it is contended that they are, I should very much like to see it proved. They get their claims at a very low rental, and pay no taxes whatever.

Mr. SAYERS: More than you pay for back country.

Mr. CROMBIE: Squatters have had their rents trebled and quadrupled during the last eighteen months, after a season when I do not think any private individual would have thought or dared to increase their rents. They have just gone through a very severe depression which is not over yet; indeed it seems at the present time worse than ever. The losses from drought now are greater in some places than they were two years ago.

Mr. BUCKLAND: Wool is going up.

Mr. CROMBIE: Yes, wool has been going up the last few days; but that is a very small matter. Unless rain comes, I do not know what the pastoral industry will come to within the next three or four months. Well, after taking everything into consideration, I would be inclined to pass this tariff very much as it is. I do not altogether agree with the proposals in every point, and I think the Colonial Treasurer is quite willing to have it altered in some minor matters. If it had been a thoroughly protective tariff I should have perhaps coincided with it more than I do, but I think that such a tariff would be out of place at the present time. A revenue tariff is what we require most, and as long as it is in the direction of protection so much the better for the colony. With regard to the sugar industry, there is no doubt that it is in a very depressed state. At the same time, I think that depressed condition is caused by the low price of sugar, and not by the want of black labour. The planters have got as much black labour as they require, but the time is coming, and that within two years, when black labour will be done away with. In view of that fact, I think it will be necessary for the present Government to take the matter into consideration before the two years are over. I am not a separationist, and I should be very sorry indeed to see this colony

split into two parts; but at the same time, rather than see the sugar industry—one of the grandest industries we have in the colony—destroyed, I would assist the Northern members as far as I possibly could in getting separation. If the industry cannot be saved by any other means, I should certainly adopt that course. I have heard a great many arguments against the proposed increase on the duty on maize from Northern members. One hon. member stated that it would not pay the people in the North to grow maize at 10s. a bushel, because they had other industries there that would pay them better than agriculture. Well, I think that people who can afford to buy maize at 10s. a bushel because they can find more profitable employment than growing it, can well afford to pay 6d. a bushel extra on the maize they consume. Therefore, it appears to me, that argument falls to the ground. There has been a good deal said in the course of the discussion about protection and freetrade, and a comparison has been made between the different colonies by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp. The hon. member, among other things, quoted the population of Victoria and New South Wales, stating that in 1886 the population of New South Wales was 1,001,966, and the population of Victoria 1,003,000. He cited those statistics as an argument in favour of freetrade. I regard them in a totally different light. I am not much given to the study of figures, because the more I study them the more I get into a fog, and it seems to me that this is the case with a great many other people who quote figures. I have come to my conclusions from observation, and I think the argument brought forward by the hon. member proves the contrary to what he intended. The fact that the population of Victoria is 1,003,000, and that of New South Wales 1,001,966, is in my opinion an argument in favour of protection, because the colony of Victoria is only about one-third the size of the colony of New South Wales, and the latter is quite as rich as the former in minerals, in agriculture, and in pastoral pursuits. Probably, if New South Wales had been a protectionist country it would now have nearly 3,000,000 of people instead of 1,000,000. The quality of land in New South Wales is quite as good as the quality of the land in Victoria. I know places in the latter colony that are as much subject to drought as any part of New South Wales. The Wimmera district is very much subject to drought and that is one of the best agricultural districts in Victoria. Arguing the matter in this way I look upon Victoria as an example for this colony, and I believe that if we had protection pure and simple, in a few years we should treble our population. And while speaking on this subject I may mention that I do not like the Immigration Act at present in force. I believe it brings people to the colony who are not the best people to introduce here from Europe. I think that if we had a protective policy the very best people in England, Scotland, Ireland, and from the continent of Europe, would come to Queensland. But instead of that we are introducing—I will not call them paupers—but people whose passages are paid by the Government, and who, when they get here, look to the Government to pay for everything else. That is another reason why I have objected to this freetrade policy, and I hope before very long to see a protective policy carried out in this colony.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Jessop,—Before referring in any way to the discussion on the Budget Speech, I wish to make a few remarks in justification of the course I took on Thursday night last, when I suggested the adjournment of the debate. At about a quarter to 11 o'clock, when hon. members are anxious to catch the last

train or tramcar leaving the city, so as to reach their homes, the hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Lissner, came across and asked me to move the adjournment of the debate. I hesitated promising to do so, but he said that he and several other members on the other side wished to speak; I knew that seven members on this side also wished to speak, and the matter being so very important to the populous electorates of Queensland, several of which were represented by them, I thought it was only fair that they should have an opportunity of speaking. I refer to the hon. members for Bulimba, Bundamba, Cairns, Warwick, Fassifern, Woolloongabba, and myself—Oxley. I venture to say that these seven members represent more population than fourteen members who have spoken on the other side whom I could name. Considering this, I thought it was my duty to my constituents, seeing that they are very considerably affected by the tariff proposals, to speak on the subject, and in moving the adjournment of the debate I did so out of kindness to members on both sides who desired to speak. For this act of kindness the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government made a bitter, vindictive, unprovoked, personal attack upon me. He held me up to my constituents and to the public as a member who neglects his duty. He has spoken of me as a member anxious to initiate party acrimonious debates—that he could not pick out a single member in the House who was more conspicuous for introducing debates of that kind. He told me that my absence from the House was conspicuous; that I did not listen to the debates—paid no attention to them—and in the same breath he contradicted that and told me that for three or four days he had noticed that I had been taking notes. How in the world I could take notes without listening to the speeches of hon. members I cannot tell. Now, sir, I think I can appeal to you. You know pretty well, ever since I have been in the House, that from half-past 3 until half-past 10 o'clock at night I am very seldom absent from my seat. I never fritter away my time in the refreshment-room drinking whisky and smoking cigars. I do think it is unfair for the hon. gentleman to attack me in the way he has done. As far as the initiation of acrimonious debates is concerned, the speeches I have made during the last ten years—since I have been a member of this House—are recorded in *Hansard*, and I challenge the hon. member—he may search my speeches there; he will find them in plain language—I call a spade a spade, and when I am attacked I admit that I endeavour to give “a Roland for an Oliver;” but I challenge him to find a single speech I have delivered in which there has been so much discourtesy or so much personality introduced as in the speech he made on Thursday last with reference to myself. I said the speech he made was vindictive. I shall endeavour to steer clear of breaking any of our rules by imputing motives to members. I do not wish to do so, but I will state the facts and leave hon. members to draw their own conclusions. I, sir, have been the cause of a very bitter disappointment to the hon. gentleman—I was going to say the “innocent cause,” but perhaps hon. members would not believe in my innocence. However, sir, I have been the cause of some very bitter disappointment to him. He had set his heart upon getting the seat for Oxley—had made up his mind that he should have it for one of his Ministers. Well, sir, having been the representative of the Oxley electorate for ten years, I considered that I had a prior claim to it. I, therefore, was not willing to give up the seat without a contest. I contested the election with the candidate brought forward by the party at present in power. The hon. gentleman at the head of the

Government did his utmost for his candidate. He went twice to the electorate, attended his meetings, spoke on his behalf, and, I believe, did his level best to get him returned. Well, sir, the result of the poll was that the party suffered a most crushing defeat.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Question.

Mr. GRIMES : Hon. members may cry out "question," but I am keeping within the Standing Orders, and I shall have my say. I say the result was a crushing defeat for the present Ministry. Not only did the Premier lose a seat, but he lost a Minister who would have been exceedingly useful to him in this House—a gentleman, who, although an opponent of mine, I give credit for being very able in knocking Bills into shape for Parliament; and he would have been extremely useful to the party opposite in knocking some of their Bills into shape. The want of such a gentleman has been painfully apparent during the present session. Of course the Government have had to fall back upon the hon. the leader of the Opposition to do this for them now; they would have felt much more independent if they had a capable man on the other side to have done something in that line. But, sir, disappointments of this kind may happen to us all through life, and it is just as well that we should meet them in a philosophic kind of way; that we should not allow them to take great hold of our minds; that we should show that we have minds something above the average of minds, and should not allow vindictiveness to run rampant, because, if we do, even in the case of a Premier, it will lead to a very undignified and humiliating position. I think I have justified the action I took in moving the adjournment of the debate, and I have given hon. members an opportunity of judging what was really behind the unprovoked attack that was made upon me. I will now refer to other matters. Various subjects have been introduced into the debate. We have had the old stalking-horse of the Land Act introduced; indeed half the debate has been taken up by the discussion of the Land Act. We have had the old cry of black labour and the sugar industry introduced by the hon. member for Leichhardt, Mr. Paul, and mentioned by other hon. members present this afternoon, and it has been referred to by the hon. member for Cambooya, Mr. Perkins. During that hon. member's speech he made a very pointed allusion to myself—an allusion I intend to reply to. He referred to certain sugar-planters who combined arrowroot-growing with sugar-growing, and who grew cane about the height of the bench before him; and yet those individuals came down to the House to say that from their experience cane could be grown by European labour. I am not ashamed of being an arrowroot-grower; it is quite as honourable a calling as the one the hon. member has—a brewer. The product of an arrowroot mill is quite as useful as that of a brewery. The product of an arrowroot mill helps to make babes into strong men. The product of a brewery tends to make strong men helpless and childish. That is the difference. The hon. member referred to the short cane that was grown. If he knew anything about cane-growing he would know that we do not value cane by its length any more than we value beer by the depth of the glass. Sometimes juice from lanky cane is very wishy-washy, as some beer is when it is in a "long-sleever." The hon. member has not shown that he is well-up in sugar-growing by his reference to short cane. Short cane entails less cartage and sometimes realises more profit. He has also raised the old cry that the party on this side have strangled the sugar industry. In

refutation of that charge I will refer to a remark made the other night by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp. I was delighted to hear it, and I wish it could be printed in red letters, or in letters of gold, or anything that will bring it prominently before the public. Referring to some trips he had made to the North, the hon. member said he saw, in the district of Mourilyan, a plantation where—now that they had cleared the scrub away and got the cane planted—two or three white men with implements were doing the work where forty kanakas had been used before. If the action taken by hon. members on this side in stopping black labour has brought that about, we have done good not only to the colony but to the planters themselves. If we have taught them that two or three white men with implements can do the work of forty kanakas, then, I say, we have done them good; I was delighted to hear from the hon. member, who no doubt knows a good deal about the matter, that it has made a complete convert of him. The hon. member says we have not to look to black labour to support the sugar industry; that it is not to be carried on even by small European settlers working through a central mill; but that it is to be done by intelligent European labour with labour-saving appliances. That is exactly the ground I have taken up, and, while advocating the use of white labour, I have endeavoured to show, from my own experience, that by intelligent European labour, with labour-saving appliances, it is possible to work a plantation cheaper than by the employment of kanakas. I am pleased to hear from the hon. member that it has been tried in the North and has been found successful; and the acknowledgment of the hon. member for Townsville does away for ever with the charge that we on this side have strangled the sugar industry. It is not the question of labour that has affected the sugar industry, but the low price of sugar. We have before us three proposals for taxation—a land-tax, an income and property tax, and taxation through the Custom-house. I have not been a supporter of the land-tax, but I certainly would much prefer to support a land-tax, as introduced by the leader of the Opposition, than I would to support the proposed mode of raising revenue; it would be much fairer, at any rate. I favour a property and income tax, because it will get at those individuals who are not bearing their fair share of taxation. It will get at the shiny-coated bumble-bees and drones of the hive. Hitherto we have pressed too heavily on the workers, and I think it is time we laid a little burden on those who are more able to bear it. I should like to get at the absentees from the colony. At present they are drawing large incomes from Queensland, and the only time we can get at them is when they "shuffle off this mortal coil," then the Treasury gets a little from them in the shape of probate stamps and succession duties. But we should get a little from them as they are going along. Then there are our capitalists—our money-lenders—what do we get from them? We have stamp duties on mortgages, on transfers, and on releases, but they get out of this burthen by throwing it entirely on the borrower; he has to pay all this while the lender gets scot-free. Some means ought to be adopted that would reach them. Then there are the speculators—men who do nothing else but speculate with their money, and who are reaping large profits by buying up land and re-selling it. The transfers come upon the purchaser, and the seller again gets off scot-free. What extra burden will the proposed tariff place upon those persons? It will make but a slight difference—very little when compared with the way in which it will press upon us. I say that instead of looking to the Custom-house for

increased revenue we should have looked in other quarters. Our present direct taxation, principally through the Customs, reaches £3 18s. 8d. per head on all in Queensland, and I think the Administration ought to have paused before they submitted to us proposals of this kind, increasing these duties by something like 10 or 15 per cent. There seems to be a wide difference of opinion amongst hon. members in reference to this proposed tariff. Very few who have addressed the Committee have expressed their approval of it. One gentleman did so this afternoon, and before he sat down he qualified his approval very much. Nearly all hon. members have expressed their disapproval in some shape or form. Some, I know, have expressed their pleasure at seeing that the Government have had the courage to introduce protection, and they congratulate the Government upon it. We did not get many "hear, hears" from the Ministry when hon. gentlemen referred to it in that way. But when any hon. member referred to it as only an increased tariff for revenue purposes he was cheered by members of the Ministry. No doubt, being a freetrade Ministry, they still have their longings for these old lines. Before we enter much upon the radical change proposed to be made in the fiscal policy of the country this matter ought to have been made a test question at a general election.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: So it was.

Mr. GRIMES: Hitherto it has not been a general question touched upon by candidates throughout the colony of Queensland. Perhaps candidates were never questioned at all upon this matter. Very little reference was made to it in my own electorate, although I am the representative of a farming constituency. I think it would be far better, if we are to have a protective policy in Queensland, to have the question decided at once and for ever at a general election. At present we cannot depend upon it. It will not have its desired effect if it is brought in in a half-hearted way. Capitalists who perhaps would like to invest their money in manufactures will not have that confidence in the permanency of this policy if it is brought in in the way it has been. They will be afraid to invest money in factories lest there should be a change in the minds of the electors at the next general election, and a return to the freetrade policy, which would ruin them. By this means we shall check the expenditure of money in manufactures, and the effect of the proposed tariff will be only to encourage monopolists—the few monopolists we have at the present time. That will be the effect of this half-hearted way of introducing a protective tariff. Whatever name this tariff may be called by—and it has had many names—by one it is called a protective tariff, and by another a tariff to increase revenue, while one referred to it as a hybrid—but by whatever other name it is called, to my mind it resembles an animal peculiar to the Australian colonies—the platypus. It has the beak and the capacious maw of the duck, and is able to gobble up all the hard-earned savings of the working man. It will gobble them up one after another, and leave them destitute. At the same time it appears to have the body of a rat. There is no doubt, when the present Ministry framed this tariff, they departed from nearly all of their political principles. It is not necessary for me to endeavour to prove this, because it has been already proved by the quotations from *Hansard* read by the hon. leader of the Opposition. I say that it is a tariff that has not the approval of the majority of the Ministry at heart. They may agree to it as a matter of policy, but they do not really believe in it; and I shall be quite prepared to see the hon.

leader of the Government give way to the pressure that will be brought upon him by members of his own side, backed up, perhaps, by a few on this side. By this tariff, it appears to me that we are going back to a period in the history of the old country, when they had a policy of this kind, and they abandoned it, and condemned it as wanting. In 1842, before the Budget proposals of Sir Robert Peel were introduced, there was a comprehensive tariff such as this, which comprised some 1,200 articles, and what has been the result? From that time to this there has been a gradual reducing of the Customs duties. Only thirteen articles are comprised in the present tariff, mostly articles of luxury. An article written by Sydney Smith upon the tariff of that day seems so applicable to the tariff proposed by the present Ministry that I shall trespass upon the time of the Committee by reading it. It expresses in very forcible language his opinions in reference to the tariff previous to the year 1842, and it is equally applicable, with one or two exceptions, to the tariff of the present day. This is the language of Sydney Herbert Smith:—

"Taxes upon every article which enters into the mouth or covers the back, or is placed under the foot. Taxes upon everything which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell, or taste. Taxes upon warmth, light, and locomotion. Taxes upon everything on earth or under the earth; on everything that comes from abroad or is grown at home. Taxes on the raw material, taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man. Taxes on the sauce which pampers a man's appetite, and on the drug that restores him to health; on the ermine which decorates the judge, and on the rope which hangs the criminal; on the poor man's salt, and the rich man's spice; on the brass nails of the coffin, and on the ribbons of the bride; at bed or board, *couchant* or *levant* we must pay. The schoolboy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle on a taxed road; and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, which has paid 7 per cent., into a spoon that has paid 15 per cent., flings himself back upon his chintz bed which has paid 22 per cent., and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a license of £100 for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from 2 to 10 per cent. Besides the probate large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel. His virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he will then be gathered to his fathers to be taxed no more."

That, with one or two exceptions, is a very truthful description of the tariff introduced by the present Ministry. This tariff will press exceptionally heavily upon the poor man and the man with a large family; the best colonists we have in Queensland, and the very class of colonists we most desire to encourage to come here. As a family man with a large family, I feel the burden, and those who are not in the position I am in will feel it still more. There has been a deal of sympathy expressed for the farmer during this debate. I did not think the farmers had so many friends in this Committee as they appear to have. They have jumped up on all sides, and it seems as if the farmers were likely to come in for a little consideration. I will just give the Committee a farmer's idea of this tariff. I have a number of real honest farmers in my electorate of Oxley. Some of them are hard-headed Scotchmen, who can see as far through a deal board as most people, and this is their view of the proposals of the Government. One farmer speaks of it in this way. He says it puts 6d. into one pocket and takes 1s. 6d. out of the other. If the gentleman at the head of the Government, who is said to be one of the largest agriculturists in Queensland, proposes this tariff as a sample of his sympathy for the small agriculturist, they may well say, "Save us from his protection!" That is the opinion of a hard-headed Scotchman in my electorate, and I do not wonder at his holding it. I am prepared to admit that it is difficult to protect or assist

the farmer in any way by the tariff. I do not see how putting 1s. a bushel on maize coming into the colony is going to benefit the farmers at all, when at certain seasons of the year, when the crops come in, we have more maize in Queensland than we can consume, and our farmers are actually competing against themselves and reducing the price. That is the case, because maize, as grown in Queensland, is an article that cannot be kept; it must be sold at once. Queensland is so prolific of insect life that before the corn is cut from the stalk it has weevil in it, and it must be sold immediately it is picked and thrashed. The farmers cannot keep it except at serious loss, and during the season when maize is coming into the market, if there has been anything like a fruitful season, there is no maize coming from the other colonies, and under those circumstances a tax of 1s. a bushel on maize must be inoperative and useless, and when the farmer here has no maize to sell, it only becomes a burden upon the community of consumers. The same arguments will apply to butter. When we find butter often quoted in the Ipswich market at 5d. a pound, where will be the use of putting a protective duty of 4d. a pound on it? Protection, then, will not help the farmer, and we must look for assistance to the farmer in some other direction altogether. Let the Government assist—let us all unite in assisting—in the establishment of some staple article of produce that we can export in any quantity. Let us assist them by conserving water, and by establishing schemes for irrigation. Let us assist them by putting all labour-saving appliances on the free list—all farming implements and machinery. Let us put them in such a position that, by the use of those implements and the newest designs of labour-saving machinery, they may be able to compete successfully with other countries. Let us above all remove all taxation from articles necessary to life. Put taxation upon luxuries if you will, but put the farmer in the position to live cheaply and keep his men cheaply, and then he will be in a position to compete with those in foreign countries. Those are the lines we ought to follow if we wish to do the farmers any good, and not attempt to heap upon them taxation which they are unable to stand.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You want low wages.

Mr. GRIMES: The working man does not look so much to the amount of the wages placed in his hand on the Saturday night as to what it will purchase. The man who is married asks himself: "What can I save after keeping my wife and family?"

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: On 8s. a week.

Mr. GRIMES: He says: "Put me in a position to live cheaply and then I can work cheaply." I maintain that is the policy for this country. We are looking to our mineral, pastoral, and agricultural products, and we have to compete with other countries yielding those commodities; and before we can do so successfully we must have the cost of living in Queensland as cheap as it is in those countries, and then we can pay wages which will keep men in comfort. Hon. members have interjected something about 8s. a week. That may be the wages they pay, but it is not the rate of wages I pay.

The HON. P. PERKINS: Less than that?

Mr. GRIMES: The hon. member for Cambooya says he pays less than that. The lowest wages I pay is 14s. a week and board, and I pay from that up to 10s. a day as wages. I hope the constituents of the hon. member for Cambooya will read this. He confesses to paying his men 8s. a week.

The HON. P. PERKINS: You said you paid your men 8s. a week.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And works them sixteen hours a day.

Mr. GRIMES: They work ten hours a day and are paid for overtime. I do not work Englishmen like some hon. gentlemen opposite work their kanakas, until they drop in the mill and are carried out to die. Hon. members who are seeking to increase the tariff on agricultural produce must not look to me for assistance. I look in another direction, and maintain that the way to assist the farmers will be by reducing the tax on machinery, and the other ways I have indicated. I opposed that tax when it was first put on, and I oppose the addition, and will assist in removing it altogether. I think in a colony like this we should admit machinery entirely free. Let us be in the position to get the best machinery at the cheapest rate, and by the help of intelligent men we shall be able to apply that machinery so as to cheapen production. I shall oppose the proposed tariff on boots and shoes. I think it is monstrous that the working man should have to pay 1s. 10d. on his blucher boots whilst the gentleman who imports a pair of hunting boots does not pay any more. I cannot understand how the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government could come down with such a proposal; and I can only account for it by saying that he feels the want of a very able gentleman whom he wanted to have by his side. If that gentleman had been there, and had anything to do with the construction of this tariff, we should not have had it in this form. It is proposed to increase the duty on bran to 4d. per 20 lbs. That will come exceedingly heavy on a large number of those who are endeavouring to supply the large towns of Queensland with milk. At the present time the milk supply to the inhabitants of Brisbane is raised mostly by bran and chaff.

The HON. P. PERKINS: And water.

Mr. GRIMES: The hon. gentleman must think the milkmen deal as largely in water as he does himself, but they do not dilute their milk to the same extent that the hon. gentleman dilutes something I shall not mention. I shall oppose the duty on flour, because I think that would be the last straw that would break the poor man's back. Why should a tax be put on flour?

Mr. MURPHY: No tax is proposed.

Mr. GRIMES: It has been proposed as an amendment.

Mr. HAMILTON: By your own side.

Mr. GRIMES: The hon. gentleman who proposes it need not expect my support. Now, there is to be 3s. a cwt. on iron castings. These iron castings imported into Queensland we cannot get made here simply because they are imported on purpose to supply breakage of machinery not made in the colony, and if we have to go to any of the foundries to get castings to fill up these deficiencies we have to pay enormously for a pattern. I have to do with machinery and with our foundries, and I know that. Besides, the castings I mention cannot be made here. We cannot produce malleable iron castings in Queensland yet, and there is a great deal of the machinery that comes here, parts of which are of malleable iron. Castings for our mowing machines, reaping machines, and such like, have to be imported, and if any hon. member moves an amendment in that direction I shall support it. Now, I would call attention to some of the exemptions. The Treasurer has exempted tailors' trimmings. I do not know whether he is aware what that will allow to come in here free. Things which are

used as trimmings by the tailors and shirt-makers are used also for other purposes. I may refer to one single thing—"herden." It is used in the tailoring business, and it is also used in making sugar-bags, and as drying cloths, and hundreds of other purposes? How will it be possible to distinguish between what is going to be used as trimmings and what is going to be used for other purposes? This exemption will open the way to a deal of dishonesty.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan): Where are sugar-bags made?

Mr. GRIMES: They are made here sometimes.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Who makes them?

Mr. GRIMES: I have had them made, preferring to give work to those on the plantation rather than buy them.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is too thin.

Mr. GRIMES: They are made here, and I should like to see the industry extended. I shall oppose the removal of the excise duty on beer, and my first reason for doing so is that by putting the duty on raw material you make others besides the beer manufacturers contribute to the revenue. Hops are largely used in every household—for bread making and other purposes. The general public will, therefore, be made to pay a part of this excise duty which formerly has been collected from the brewers, and probably from the retail dealers. Although the late Government raised something like £30,000 from that duty, it did not raise the price of beer to the consumer. Then I shall oppose it on this ground: That it will lead to the use of chemicals instead of the raw material; instead of the proper ingredients for beer—malt, hops, and sugar, or glucose. We know that it is possible to make a kind of beer, using nothing else but chemicals. There are books published directing persons how to make ten or twenty drinks from chemicals alone, and it is well known that chemicals are employed in the manufacture of beer. It is so often done that it is necessary for brewers who have a reputation for brewing good liquor, and who would like to keep that reputation, to caution their brewers that they are not to bring on the premises any deleterious drugs. We had this from the member for Cambooya, the Hon. P. Perkins. I will give his own words from *Hansard* on the subject. The hon. member said:—

"I cautioned our brewer four years ago that if he brought any chemicals into the place I would prosecute him, and that circumstance is well known to the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp."

That shows that it is a common thing for brewers to use chemicals to produce beer. We do not in every case meet with gentlemen like the hon. member for Cambooya, who really honestly brew their beer. There are numbers of others who do not do so. While, therefore, we might fearlessly allow the excise to be remitted, and the proposed duty imposed on malt and hops, in the case of the hon. member, yet it must be admitted that others might take advantage of the change in the way I have indicated. Under all the circumstances, I am of opinion that it would be far better to keep the excise duty on beer than to transfer the duty to the material used in its manufacture. Another reason why I object to the proposal is that the excise is and will continue to be an increasing source of revenue from year to year, while the receipts from the duty on the raw material will most likely decrease from year to year, and we shall have to look to other sources to make up the deficiency. If, therefore, no one else moves an amendment, I shall at the proper time

submit a proposition to retain the excise on beer. I have given a pretty good idea of the alterations in the tariff I shall support. I shall support an increased duty on whisky, brandy, rum—on all kinds of spirits. Methylated spirits we can make in the colony, and there will be no harm in the same duty being placed upon them.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not rise for the purpose of making a long speech upon the tariff. I rise more particularly to make a few remarks in reply to some that have fallen from the hon. member who has just sat down. The hon. gentleman professes to be a freetrader. I cannot understand why, holding those principles, he sits on that side of the House and how he could expect to get from his own leader a more favourable tariff than this, according to his own ideas. He blames this side of the House for not having adopted a land-tax as a means of raising revenue in preference to the proposals now issued by the leader of the Government. But I would like to remind the hon. gentleman that, although a land-tax at one time emanated from members now sitting on the other side of the House, they thought proper to abandon it when the time came to press it home. And why did they do so? Because they knew that the country would not stand a land-tax.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson): Do you remember the compact they entered into?

Mr. MURPHY: I remember the compact the then leader of the Government entered into with his followers.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: What compact?

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL: To support the second reading and then let it go.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I do not know anything about it. You may have heard of it; I did not.

Mr. MURPHY: It was mentioned in election speeches. Although that understanding was never stated by the leader of the Opposition in this House, still we knew perfectly well, from what we heard from his followers, that such a compact had been entered into.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I never heard of it.

Mr. MURPHY: Then the hon. member said, why did the Government not propose an income-tax or a property-tax? But the hon. gentleman opposite is not in favour of an income-tax or a property-tax.

Mr. GRIMES: I am.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member may be, but the gentleman behind whom he is sitting would not propose either an income-tax or a property-tax. On the other hand, in all probability, he would have brought in a much stronger protectionist tariff than the one now proposed.

Mr. GRIMES: I am on the cross benches.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not think that during the election the hon. gentleman pretended that he was sitting on a rail. He may feel it incumbent upon him to ride on a rail now, but I do not think that is the line upon which he was returned. It has never been my misfortune since I have had the honour of a seat in this House to listen to a speech in which so much crass ignorance was displayed than in the speech we have just listened to. The hon. gentleman said the effect of a protectionist tariff would be that even before the present Government left office the working men of the colony would be almost destitute. I should like the hon. gentleman to go to the colony of Victoria, where a protectionist policy has been

in operation for the last twenty years, and see whether, advocating a freetrade policy, he could find a single constituency, or a single working man throughout the length and breadth of the land, who would believe in the sentiments he has just uttered, whose vote would not be a protest and a distinct denial of the fact as stated by him—that at the end of five years the working men of this colony would be reduced to beggary by the operation of a protective tariff. Why, sir, a protectionist tariff is introduced for the purpose of benefiting the working man; he gets all the benefit from protection. It establishes manufactories, and finds work for every man in the colony. That has been abundantly proved over and over again by countries where protection has been tried. I am not going into the theory of freetrade and protection, but the hon. gentleman has only to look to Canada, or the United States, and he will find that every statement he has uttered here with regard to protection will be refuted by the logic of facts in those countries. I know what the hon. gentleman wishes to do. He wishes to reduce the labour of this colony to the level of labour in England. He wants to get labour for his arrowroot mill at from 3s. or 4s. or 8s. a week. He wants his labourers to work sixteen hours a day for a mere pittance. That is his object. He has let the cat out of the bag. He may be prosecuting an industry that does not require any protection, for all I know; but I am certain that he is speaking from his own selfish standpoint. I never heard a sentiment uttered by that hon. member that was not narrow-minded and selfish, and he is now trying to carry them out in regard to the present tariff. Well, sir, although the tariff, as brought in by the Government, does not meet my views as a protectionist altogether, still I shall vote for it as it stands. I should like to see it altered in some respects, but I shall do nothing that will in any way endanger the measure from coming into operation. I look upon it as a good beginning. You cannot make a sudden reversal of the fiscal policy of a country without necessarily treading on the toes of a great many people. Therefore, in order to achieve the end we have in view, I for one am willing that we should commence slowly and gradually. And this policy, which we think is the best for the country, will, I am sure, commend itself even to the most ardent freetrader in the House; and when he has seen the policy at work for five years he will, as the freetraders in Victoria did, come round to the views of the protectionists. The prosperity that this protectionist, or semi-protectionist, tariff will bring to the people of this country will cause them to say that the greatest benefactor the colony has ever had is the gentleman who introduced this tariff into the House. I have no hesitation in saying that this side of the House will be able to appeal to the electors at the end of five years, and point with pride to the work they have done in passing this tariff; and we shall find that it has commended itself to the people of the colony. I shall have much pleasure in supporting the proposed tariff.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Jessop,—At one time I thought I should let this debate pass by without saying anything on it until we came to the details; and, as I am suffering from a severe cold, I shall not make a very long speech to-night. Probably I should not have said anything at all but for the remarks of the hon. member for Toowoomba the other night, which, I think, ought not to go forth unchallenged. Before referring to that I will say a few words on the tariff. I must confess that I am very much disappointed with it. No tariff has been brought down to this House since we have had responsible gov-

ernment that has created more disappointment and discontent. It is neither a protective tariff nor a freetrade tariff. For the protectionists it does not go far enough, and for the freetraders it goes a great deal too far; and it would be much better to say at once that it is simply a tariff for the purpose of raising revenue. Although the public have not called out very loudly, they are calling out silently—they are thinking loudly about it—they are thinking a great deal more than they say; and I do not think the hon. member for Barcoo will find his anticipations realised when he goes before his constituents at the end of five years; he will not find that the colonists have approved of this tariff as much as he thinks. I am rather surprised at the Colonial Treasurer bringing down this tariff, inasmuch as people expected something very much different. We were told during the general election campaign that such a boom of prosperity would overtake the colony that we should scarcely know what to do with our wealth. The boom has come, and it has fallen upon the working people of the colony. This tariff, I maintain, falls the heaviest on the man with the smallest means; and how the Government could bring in a tariff which has that effect, in the face of the arguments they used during the last session of the last Parliament, I am at a loss to know. To a man, those on the Ministerial bench—with the exception of the Chief Secretary, who was not in the House—said plainly that they would not allow any additional taxation to be placed on the people.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Did you refer to *Hansard* before you made that statement?

Mr. McMASTER: I am referring to *Hansard*.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Then quote correctly.

Mr. McMASTER: I will quote it if the hon. gentleman wishes. On the 17th August, 1887, in the debate on Ways and Means, the then leader of the Opposition, now the Colonial Secretary, moved this amendment upon the resolution that had been moved by the then Chief Secretary, Sir S. W. Griffith:—

“That, in the opinion of this Committee, the financial position of the colony, as disclosed in the Premier's Statement, does not warrant the imposition of any further taxation on the people of Queensland.”

What does that mean? It means that they did not intend to levy further taxation on the people. To show that that was what they meant when the question was put, the hon. members then sitting on the Opposition side walked outside the bar.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: And some on your side went with them.

Mr. McMASTER: You did not stand your ground like a Scotchman, or you might, with their help, have carried the division.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not want to carry the division.

Mr. McMASTER: The taxation then proposed by Sir S. W. Griffith would have fallen on the shoulders of those best able to bear it. Under this tariff there is not an article that the working man uses—I am speaking of labouring men, not mechanics—that is not taxed, except the needles which his thrifty wife mends his clothes with. The mechanic gets his tools free, but the man who earns his 3s. or £2 a week—and there are thousands in the colony earning that rate of wages—will find that this tariff will increase his burden to the tune of 7s. or 8s. per week. Whom does this tariff benefit? The large capitalists.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The working man-

Mr. McMASTER: It does nothing of the kind. We have been told that the working man has to pay for his 6s. 6d. boots just the same as hon. members on the other side will have to pay for a pair of boots that cost 30s. Is that a benefit for the working man? Of course we shall be told that those boots can be manufactured in the colony, and that it will give employment to a certain number of shoemakers in the colony. But everybody in the colony is not a shoemaker; and even if employment could be found for a few hundreds or thousands, why should every man, woman, and child be made to pay a heavy tax to keep that trade up? I am not going into figures to-night, because there is a gentleman on this side very clever at figures, who will be able to show, before the tariff gets through, that this tariff will fall the heaviest on the class who can least afford to pay it. It was distinctly thought from that amendment that the hon. gentleman believed there was no necessity to tax the people heavier than they were. But now there is a tariff proposed, not with a few small additions, but increasing certain duties by 100 per cent., and in many instances even more. The working people will not have to pay only 15 per cent., they will have to pay 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. even. Every man puts a profit upon the duty, and then the goods reach the retailers, who put something on, so that before they reach the consumer the articles will have gone through two or three hands—what the hon. member for Toowoomba calls the middlemen. I will give another quotation from a speech of the hon. Colonial Secretary—a remark made by him when he was before his constituents in the Balonne electorate. This is taken from the *St. George Standard* of April 21. The hon. gentleman addressed the electors in the Divisional Board Hall, Mr. Munro being in the chair; and in speaking of the Griffith Administration, the hon. gentleman is reported to have said:—

“He did not think it was the duty of the Opposition to formulate a policy; but he would now state that their policy—”

The policy of the party he was supporting—
“Would be this—no extra taxation and retrenchment in expenditure. (Cheers.)”

I wonder if those gentlemen would cheer him now when they have read this tariff. I do not believe they would. I have no doubt the hon. gentleman is quite satisfied now, because things are different, and he is on the Government side of the House instead of on the Opposition. The consciences of the hon. members seem to be very elastic. I saw in another paper, which I have not by me now, that the hon. Colonial Secretary stated that, although he was the nominal leader of the Opposition of the day, Sir Thomas McLlwraith was consulted on all matters of importance in connection with the party, and he would resign cheerfully to give place to that gentleman and allow him to take the leadership. I have not the least doubt that Sir Thomas McLlwraith was consulted in regard to that amendment against the land-tax. Therefore, the policy of the whole party while they were in Opposition was “no more taxation;” but immediately they went across to the Government side they increased the duties. The people of the colony would at once see from that who were their friends and who were their enemies. I am quite sure that this tariff will not protect anything in the colony, but will simply harass the working classes to such an extent that when the next election comes the people will say to those who now sit on the Government side, “We have tried you and have found you wanting.” There is a very deep murmur now, and if hon. gentlemen only knew all that is said by their friends outside—by persons who supported them and placed them in power—they would be astonished.

I need say no more upon the tariff until we are dealing with the items in detail. It is my intention to support a higher tariff upon spirits, and I shall endeavour to keep the present excise duty upon beer. The working man does not get one iota of benefit from the tariff, and I do not believe the publicans will. The brewers will receive what profit there may be. One Northern member said working men can get more beer for one shilling in the North now than before the duty was placed upon it; therefore, I think that taking the duty off will increase the price of a “long sleever.” All those things that may be considered luxuries and not necessities of life should be taxed. The hon. member for Toowoomba referred to me as a strong freetrader. I am a freetrader, but at the same time I am prepared to assist in encouraging local industries. There is a great deal of difference between a hard-and-fast protectionist and a person wishing to encourage local industry. I notice that the Minister for Mines and Works smiles at that remark; but nevertheless I could give him some quotations from *Hansard* where he strongly opposed any further taxation being placed upon the people; but he sits there complacently and smiles at the thought of taxing the people to the tune of 25 per cent. We hear a great deal about protection in Victoria. The hon. member for Barcoo cannot speak half-a-dozen words without mentioning Victoria; we shall know all about it by heart before long. What has protection done for the Victorian farmer? The farmers there are now calling out not for protection, but for bonuses. A few weeks ago a deputation waited upon the Chief Secretary there, asking that they should be protected, and that there should be a bonus for exporting wheat. I also saw where, not very long ago, the shipowners asked to have their ships protected in Victoria. They wanted their ships to come in free of light dues, and pilot dues, and harbour dues, while foreign vessels were to pay. The more protection they were given the more they wanted. We have heard a great deal of the prosperity of the working classes in Victoria; but have not relief camps been organised within the last two years?

Mr. MURPHY: No.

Mr. McMASTER: There were meetings of the unemployed, and there were demonstrations in various places in Victoria calling upon the Government to find employment for the working men. I am not certain whether relief camps were actually established. Those who could not find employment in Victoria crossed the border and went into New South Wales; hence there was a large number of unemployed in New South Wales. There was a large number of unemployed in Queensland also at that time, but the Government immediately set to work and found employment for them inland, and gave them free railway passes. Some, who did not want work would not go away; they would not leave Brisbane on any pretence whatever. Therefore, so far as comparison goes with protectionist Victoria, I think Queensland stands very favourably. We hear a great deal of the prosperity of Victoria, but I attribute a great deal of it to the smallness of the colony, the closeness of the population, and the consequent ease with which it can be governed. They have not the thousands of miles of country to look after that we have in Queensland. Again, their railways all run into one focus, the capital of the colony, and their shipping is confined to one port. Here we have ports all along our coast, and it is much easier to govern and keep the Civil service going in Victoria than it is in either New South Wales or Queensland. No doubt when this tariff comes

out of committee it will be greatly altered, and I will do my best to assist those who will try to reduce the taxation on the articles of daily consumption and increase the taxation upon luxuries. The hon. member for Toowoomba spoke very openly and plainly about a certain class of men in Brisbane whom he terms the "middlemen"—men who, he tells us, are making rapid fortunes at the expense of the poor farmers. If he was behind the scenes he would change his tune.

Mr. GROOM: I have been there.

Mr. McMASTER: I do not think the hon. member has been. He certainly referred to a case where a farmer got a return of £1 a ton on hay. I said at the time that that might be a very fair price for the article. If the hon. member chooses to come up to the Brisbane market, I think I can show him hay which has been there for several weeks, and has been in the hands of several auctioneers, who cannot get more than £2 a ton for it. The hon. member tells us, that if we could prevent the importations from the other colonies, the farmers here would get wealthy in no time. It is not the "middleman" who insists upon importing from the other colonies, but gentlemen who have good cattle and horses, and will not use the article that is frequently sent down from up country.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Nonsense!

Mr. McMASTER: I know what I am talking about. I know the Darling Downs members will probably tell me that I am crying down the produce of Queensland; but there is not a man in the Committee who would do more to assist the farmers than I would, for I have been a farmer myself. I maintain that if you go upon the Darling Downs to-morrow you may see a number of stacks of apparently good hay, but if you cut them you will not find one in six that is not spoiled.

Mr. GROOM: That is not true.

Mr. McMASTER: I have seen it myself, and I have a further proof of it in the goods that come down to the Brisbane market. When a good article does come down it fetches its own price. I can inform the hon. member for Toowoomba that within the last ten days I saw chaff sold in the Brisbane market at £6 2s. 6d. per ton. The bales were 2s. 6d., and the farmers get the bales for nothing, as they are sent up to them.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Nonsense!

Mr. McMASTER: It is not nonsense. I know the custom of the trade as well as any member of the Committee. I saw that chaff sold for £6 2s. 6d. per ton, and the very next item was sold for £3 2s. 6d., because the one was good chaff and the other was an inferior article. There are large quantities of produce grown on the Darling Downs, and while Providence grows them, as the hon. member for Port Curtis said the other night, the farmers, by their want of knowledge, destroy them. The hon. member for Toowoomba himself admitted that they had not the same knowledge in preserving their hay, oaten and lucerne, as the farmers in New South Wales have. If the hon. member for Rosewood, and other members holding somewhat similar views, could have their way in arranging the tariff, I venture to say that in a very few years the farmers on the Darling Downs would be half ruined. The taxes they would put upon farming produce would form the best handle the Northern people could get for separation, and if the North was separated, and the people there had the right to form their own tariff for agricultural produce, I would give very little for the prosperity of the Darling Downs. If it was not for the quantities of agricultural produce con-

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sumed in the North, the quantity of agricultural produce grown in the Darling Downs to-day would swamp Brisbane in a fortnight.

The HON. P. PERKINS: You do not know anything at all about it.

Mr. McMASTER: I know all about it. I would assist the farmers as the hon. member for Oxley would assist them, by giving them their machinery free of duty, and by reducing the rates on the railways for the carriage of their produce. Let them have a market for their produce by pushing branch railways or tramways into the agricultural districts. That is the best protection we can give the farmers. If the Colonial Treasurer desires to do a kindness to the farmers here I would advise him to get out two or three rare good Scotch farmers from Ayrshire to show them how to prepare their produce after it is grown.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Then you would say I was introducing cheap labour.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why do not you go yourself?

Mr. McMASTER: You could not pay me enough. There is no reason why these farmers, if introduced, should be paid at a cheap rate. There is no doubt the farmers have not been properly treated, and have not been encouraged as they ought to have been, by having cheap carriage to market provided for them. Now, the protection they are getting is 10½d. a bushel on corn, and it is extraordinary that, although the price of maize is pretty reasonable, the farmers of the Downs, expecting a protection of 1s. a bushel, are withholding, and the Brisbane merchants cannot get enough to supply their customers. Only last week they had to import 700 or 800 bags of maize because they could not get enough. I say the farmers, therefore, are very much to blame. Then, as to the tax on oats. You are handicapping the farmers. They will never grow oats in Queensland to perfection, and you are simply taxing the farmer for the seed he sows, for he has to import the seed. As to potatoes we shall be dependent upon the Southern colonies until next May; and I am told the wheat crops of the Downs are a perfect failure. If the wheat is a failure, oaten hay will be a failure, and the wheat will be cut for hay. If we cannot get the oaten hay here we must import it. I know that during 1884 it was imported and sent out west to feed the sheep and cattle, and that was the only traffic the railways had. I agree with hon. members who have spoken concerning conservation of water and irrigation. Then if the farmers are helped with cheap machinery, low railway rates, and accommodation for the produce when it comes here, there will be no necessity to cry out against the middlemen. As a matter of fact very few of the middlemen touch the produce until they have seen it. It used to come down to order, but now the produce dealers prefer to see what they are buying. If the hon. member for Toowoomba chooses to come up to the markets he will see at once the difference in the quality of the produce sent down, although I admit that during the last few weeks it has been better than it was a few months ago. As far as the cry against the middlemen is concerned I think the farmers are beginning to see that they are not so badly treated after all. The hon. member for Toowoomba said something about them being charged for not only commission and freight, but advertising, but the auctioneers never advertise produce.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They charge for it.

Mr. McMASTER: It is never done.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: How do you know?

Mr. GROOM: There is an advertisement in the *Courier* this morning.

Mr. McMASTER: That is an advertisement of sales effected, and is not charged for. I know that advertisements are not charged for, because I ordered produce from the Downs which came here and it did not suit me. It was then put up to auction, and I got the account sales in which there was no charge for advertising. Therefore I think the middlemen are dealing fairly and honestly with the farmer, and I am quite satisfied that without the middlemen the Darling Downs farmers cannot get rid of their produce. To talk of the farmer storing his produce until he can sell direct to the consumer is absurd. Is it likely that the Chief Secretary, for instance, is going to buy his bales of hay and chaff at the markets? Why, the cost of cartage would be more than the auctioneer's charge of 5 per cent. for sales effected. I notice that the hon. member for Toowoomba wants to put a tax on flour, and I hope he will not succeed. As I understand his amendments, he wants to allow wheat to come in free. So far I go with him. That is a step in the right direction, and I will support him. I am satisfied that the tax upon wheat is an injury to the farmers of the Darling Downs. Talk about the middlemen! Why, the farmers are in the hands of three men with their wheat, and have to take whatever is given to them; but if wheat comes in free you will find flour mills in every seaport town along the coast. There is a heavy duty proposed upon bran and pollard. That is very severe, and I hope the Committee will not pass such a tariff. I am satisfied that flour will be allowed to come in free, and that the farmers will be assisted in every possible way. Now, touching butter. The hon. member for Toowoomba referred to me, and said I had informed him that I had paid as low as 3d. a lb. for butter. That is a fact; I have seen tons of it at even less than 3d., but it was not butter really. It was simply sour cream, not fit to be used. I know many who sold it at 2d. and 1½d. a lb., and the cause of that is simply, as the hon. member for Port Curtis and the hon. member for Toowoomba stated, that the farmers have no knowledge of how to make butter. The hon. member for Port Curtis told us how butter rose from 4d. to 6d. per lb. when the cream separator was used. I quite believe that. Really good butter could not be bought in Brisbane last summer for less than 10d. a lb. I know that, because I looked up my books and found that 10d. was the lowest price I had paid, and that was only for a few months. There is no doubt, therefore, that the reason given by the hon. member for Port Curtis and the hon. member for Toowoomba is the correct one. Only recently a deputation waited upon the Minister in Victoria asking him to give encouragement to the establishment of travelling dairies, so that the farmers might learn the art of butter-making. I think that would be a good idea to assist the farmers. The hon. member for Toowoomba, in speaking of this dairy at Helidon said that they cannot make it pay, as they are not getting sufficient milk. What has that got to do with the tariff? Will the increased tariff make a little milk do? These are the words the hon. member used:—

"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."

Does not that say they want milk, and that it does not pay because they cannot get enough milk? Now, they are going to ask us to increase the duty, and make everyone else pay the high

tariff, so as to make the manufacture of butter pay a high dividend upon a small quantity of milk. Why should we be called upon to increase the tariff upon butter to make that one manufactory pay? I will not say any more just now, as I have no doubt that we are all anxious that this debate should soon finish. I know the Colonial Treasurer wants to close the debate to-night, and when we come to the items I shall endeavour to reduce the tariff upon the necessaries of life, and I shall assist in reducing everything that increases the cost of living to the working man. I shall be against removing the excise duty on beer. With reference to the tariff, I should like to know what has occurred during the last year that has induced the Colonial Secretary, the Minister for Mines, the Minister for Lands, the Postmaster-General, and the Hon. Mr. Pattison, in the face of what they stated when on this side of the House, and in the face of the fact that the revenue has increased for the year £238,000, to consent to such a tariff? We are told that we must increase the burden upon the people, and upon those who can least afford it, by putting an increase of about 25 per cent. on the taxation. I hope the Committee will strike the duty off those articles which are necessary, and put it on beer, spirits, and other luxuries.

Mr. LISSNER said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not wish to keep the Committee long, and I do not think I can adduce any fresh arguments for or against protection, or for or against the tariff before us. I am, amongst many others, very anxious that this matter should come to a head, and let the people of the colony—the merchants, the consumers, and everybody else—even the poor man, who has been talked so much about—know the position they hold from this out. Of course this Parliament is different from the last. There are now sixty-two electorates and seventy-two members. I do not say they are all log-rolling, but I think the majority are very much inclined that way. I do not think that any Government will ever satisfy the sixty-two different electorates in all their little games. For my own part I would rather pass the honour and glory of being Chief Secretary in a muddle like this. It is always very difficult to bring in any innovation; but this is not an innovation that has been brought in for the detriment of the public. I think that if people have to do business they must look at it from a business point of view. Perhaps it would have been better to have taxed the land, and to have brought in an income-tax. I do not want to go into the details of those schemes now, although the leaders of both parties in this Committee have agreed apparently, like a coalition Government, that it is not the time to bring in an income-tax, as it would be very hard to work the scheme. A land-tax I believe was introduced—I was absent at the time—by the late Government, and then withdrawn. The present Government have brought in their tariff proposals to make up the deficit in the revenue. I am not a protectionist—there is no doubt about that. I have the feelings of a freetrader—perhaps not on a very broad basis, but for the simple reason that all my interests and my constituency are in the North; and the North and the South of Queensland seem to be two different countries, and it will take a long time to legislate for two countries. However, while we are one Queensland I feel that I must protect my constituents, at least by my speech, and I do not think I can protect them much further than that. It is impossible to endeavour to legislate for each electorate separately, as if they were sixty-two different colonies; but we should have two colonies. I have no doubt the South will be just as glad to get rid of us as we will be to get rid of the South. The last speaker—the freetrader

of the Valley—compared Victoria and Queensland; but we cannot do that for the simple reason that Victoria is a fine little country with a large population. We can very easily get over that by making Queensland a nice little colony. There is not the slightest doubt about that; and Queensland can still have 500 or 600 miles of seaboard to get the Government yacht "Lucinda" alongside. I think everyone would be satisfied if we could come to some amicable arrangement, and part like brethren. Let us go on our own hook at the one end, and let the South manage its own affairs. I am a separationist, hard and fast. I went on a trip to England on that question, and I confess I should not care to be Lord Knutsford myself. That gentleman seemed to have imbibed some of the sentiments of the leader of the Opposition. I could almost fancy I heard the Hon. Sir Samuel Walker Griffith talking to Lord Knutsford. However, we had to make the best of a bad bargain and come home as defeated separationists. I have still the same convictions as before, but although I have been beaten I do not think that separation will come as the outcome of this tariff. An hon. member who is not in his seat just now, and who seems to lead the Northern party on the opposite side of the Committee, accused the Northern members on this side, who formerly spoke strongly in the interests of the North, with being silent now that they sit behind the Colonial Treasurer (the Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith). It is no use barking when you can get nothing for it. I did not speak because I did not expect to get anything. But when the hon. member wants to make it appear that he has discovered a plot between the Northern members on this side of the Committee and the Government, I must state that such is not the case—that no such plot exists among the Northern members. I know we met once but it was not for that purpose. Nor do I think that the Treasurer, even if we were inclined to be so roguish, would lend himself to an arrangement by which we should be allowed to bring in amendments on these tariff proposals, so that we may have the kudos of having looked after the interests of the North. That is not the way we play. However, I am glad we have found out that the gentlemen who were great antagonists to the separation of the North have turned round and seen the error of their ways—that they have all at once discovered the wrongs of Ireland. We are glad they have found out that there is some reason in the cry for separation. I did not want to speak on separation at all, but I have been led into making these remarks by some assertions that were made on the other side of the Committee, to the effect that we were afraid to open our mouths to say anything about separation for the North. I hold the same opinions now as I have expressed on previous occasions. With regard to the proposals before the Committee, I presume the Government see no better way of raising revenue and equalising the public income and expenditure. I do not think it is a very strong protective tariff, but I suppose it will gradually be made stronger. I consider that it is a revenue tariff. Some hon. members have trotted out the poor man a good deal in the course of the discussion, in order to make themselves right with their constituents. I could of course trot out the poor miner or the poor widow, but I do not intend to do anything of the kind. The poor man will have to pay his share of the debt as well as the rich man; but the rich man will pay a larger proportion. We shall have an opportunity of proposing and considering any amendments that may seem desirable when we come to the several thousand little articles to be debated. I do not, therefore, want to enter into a discus-

sion of butterine or any other little article. I am very anxious to see the tax on machinery very much reduced, and I do not think that I am at all selfish in that desire. I spoke bitterly, as bitterly as I could, against it in the last Parliament, when the late Government brought in the 5 per cent. duty on mining and farming machinery. I did not believe in it; because I consider it was a very bad system to try to get revenue from people who live by their industry, and who have to acquire machinery to carry on that industry. People do not buy machinery for a luxury. At that time I had reason to speak strongly on the subject, as the tax was then an innovation, and it was introduced without any intention of making a protective tariff. It was a special duty, the other duties imposed at that time being the excise duty on beer, and an increase on the import duty on wines and spirits. A good deal of talk was indulged in then to the effect that we should not charge the poor man any more for his beer. I do not know that it will make any difference to the country if the excise duty were abolished or retained. It is, however, an objectionable impost in some outside districts where a brewery is established in an isolated place, as you must have an isolated commissioner to look after an isolated brewery, and so much isolation is undesirable. However, it will depend on the majority of the Committee whether the tariff is passed in its present form or not. I am personally in favour of the amendments given notice of by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, and I hope they will commend themselves to the Committee. We have heard a great deal from publicans and people in the country against a duty of 20s. a gallon on spirits, but when they get used to it they will find it is nothing. Other countries pay it. As I said before, I will not go into the details of the tariff. We shall have any amount of opportunity of considering the duty on each of the articles when we come to deal with them seriatim, and as there are other hon. members who wish to speak on the subject, I do not propose to occupy much more time. I must, however, refer to a remark made by the hon. member for Toowoong. The hon. member stated that it was a wrong thing to put 25 per cent. on jewellery; I do not think so. In my opinion it can stand it very well indeed. The hon. member argued that a man who wished to be dishonest could put £1,000 worth of precious articles in his hat, and so smuggle them into the country. I would point out that they have a similar duty in Victoria, and they can collect the duty there very well without much chance of fraud. Frauds will always take place under any tariff. There never was a tariff that somebody would not like to evade. Some succeed in their attempts, and others are caught. At any rate, there is a chance of having gentlemen who are in the trade appointed as honorary valuers of imported jewellery. They will be called in by the Customs officer if he has any doubt as to the value of any article in this line, and, without knowing whose goods they are, the valuator will be asked to appraise them, and there is not much fear that he will allow others in the trade to get their articles into the colony without paying the duty required by the tariff. I think the tariff is not so very bad, and if the amendments of which notice has been given, are considered by the representatives of the constituencies, and a give-and-take principle is adopted all round, I have no doubt that it will be carried, and in the long run will be conducive to the prosperity of Queensland. There is one article I would like to see protected more than it is in this tariff. I see that asses are not protected. I think it is not right that Queensland asses should be left open to such extraordinary

competition as this tariff allows, and I trust that when we get into Committee somebody will bring in an amendment to protect asses as well as other articles.

Mr. MORGAN said: Mr. Jessop,—I think it has been pretty generally admitted that the Northern members do not like the proposed new tariff. The hon. member who has just sat down said the tariff was not so bad after all, but evidently he thinks it is quite bad enough. But, sir, much as they dislike the tariff, those hon. members are going to vote for it, not because they like it or dislike it, but because they dislike the Opposition more. That is about the reason why they are going to vote for the tariff as it stands. The reason they assign is, that the finances of the country are in such a deplorable condition that additional taxation is imperatively necessary in order to adjust the relation between revenue and expenditure. Well, sir, perhaps it is true that the finances of the colony are not in such a prosperous condition as they might be, but I do not think that in any one of the speeches we have heard any evidence adduced to show that the condition of the finances is due to mismanagement or corruption, or any of those sins of commission or omission that have been so frequently charged against the late Government. I hold now, as I have held all along, that the state of our finances is mainly due to the effects of the long drought through which the colony has lately passed. I think that is open to demonstration. I mentioned the fact in the debate on the Address in Reply, and, in following me, the hon. member for Carpentaria, Mr. Palmer, challenged my conclusion, and said that the drought had had nothing—or, if anything, very little—to do with the state of the finances. I think that is palpably absurd, and I interjected, “What about your flocks?” He stopped to say that the stock returns would show that there had been an increase all along in the stock of the colony. I interjected, “Not continuously.” He replied, “Yes, continuously.” I think, sir, if the hon. gentleman will look at the returns furnished to this House by the Chief Inspector of Stock, Mr. Gordon, he will find that what I said was right and that what he said was wrong. There has not been a continuous increase. There was an actual falling off of some hundreds of thousands without taking any account of the natural increase which, under favourable circumstances, would have taken place. I repeat that, in my opinion, the drought is mainly responsible for the condition of the finances of the colony. And, even after the drought had broken up, the country had to contend with very disastrous floods which caused losses and rendered necessary extraordinary expenditure upon railways and various public works. But, sir, notwithstanding the adverse climatic conditions that the predecessors of the present Government had to contend with, I maintain that if they had taken advantage, as their predecessors had all along done, of certain so-called sources of revenue, and raised by that means as much revenue as had been raised in previous years, they would have been able to quit office without any deficit, and I think, with a small surplus. During the early part of this year the Lands Department published a return of lands sold by auction during the years from 1879 to 1886 inclusive. These are the figures of the return, showing the area and average price of all the land sold by auction during the last eight years: In 1879, 12,617 acres were sold at an average price of £1 16s. 9½d. per acre; in 1880, 82,714 acres were sold at an average of £1 3s. 2½d. per acre; in 1881, 267,969 acres were sold at an average price of 18s. 0½d. per acre; in 1882, 84,021 acres were sold at an average of £1 15s. 9½d.; in 1883, 47,455 acres were sold at an average of £2 10s. 7½d.;

in 1884, 13,882 acres were sold at an average of £5 1s. 10½d.; in 1885, 3,743 acres at an average of £17 10s. 0½d. per acre; and in 1886, 1,560 acres at an average price of £41 7s. 9d. per acre. During the tenure of the McIlwraith Government, from 1879 to 1883, they sold about £600,000 worth of land. During 1884-5-6, while the Griffith Government were in office, they sold about £200,000 worth—about 17,000 acres. Again, the return shows the area of land alienated by pre-emptive purchase during the same period under the provisions of section 54 of the Pastoral Leases Act of 1869. In 1879, 43,520 acres were alienated at 10s. per acre, making a total of about £21,500; in 1880, 12,800 acres were alienated under pre-emptive purchase at 10s. per acre—about £6,000; in 1881, 84,480 acres were disposed of in the same manner, giving about £42,000; in 1882, 28,160 acres were sold, yielding £14,000; and in 1883, 51,200 acres were sold for £25,500; so that in five years the receipts from pre-emptive purchases amounted to, say, £119,000. During the existence of the last Government not a single acre of land was alienated in that manner; consequently not 1s. was received from it. These papers are published under the hand of Mr. Hume, Under-Secretary for the Department of Lands in this colony, and I quote them to show that during the reign of the McIlwraith Government they received from pre-emptive purchases—a source of revenue which their successors refused to take advantage of—about £99,000; from sales of the public estate, a source of revenue which their successors also refused to take advantage of, and I think rightly refused to take advantage of to the same extent as was done previously—from that source they received about £400,000 in excess of what the Griffith Government had received during their tenure of office; and then, as I showed previously, the late Government paid in endowment to local authorities, another source of expenditure which was beyond their control, £370,000 more than was paid by the McIlwraith Government during a similar period. If we add these sums together they will make a total of £869,000—nearly £900,000—so that I contend that if the late Government had taken advantage of the same sources of so-called revenue as their predecessors did, the deficit would have been non-existent. However, it does exist, and there is no use refusing to acknowledge the fact. It is a burden, but, I think, had it not been for the drought through which we are now passing, and which promises to result in very serious consequences to the colony generally—I say had it not been for that there would have been very little cause to fear a deficit of even £600,000; the Treasurer might have relied upon the ordinary sources of revenue to work it off if due economy were practiced, but we have the drought staring us in the face; there is no present appearance of it breaking up; we have not yet begun to feel the effects of it, but I am afraid that during the next twelve months we shall feel it pretty severely. I think the Government have therefore a right to look for additional revenue, but I think, Mr. Jessop, that they are looking for a great deal more than they are entitled to receive. The Premier in his Financial Statement said he hoped to get a net revenue of £130,000 during the next twelve months from the taxes proposed. I am inclined to think he will get a great deal more, and a great deal more each succeeding year; and that in course of a few years he will be able to show such a swinging surplus that he will be in a position to say: “Well gentlemen, if you do not like the taxation as it exists we will reduce the *ad valorem* duty from 15 to 7½ per cent., but we must have additional revenue, and if you will not give it to us

in that way we must take it from the land." I quite expect that he will look to secure revenue from sales of land by auction to a larger amount than we find set down in the Estimates for the ensuing year. It is pretty clearly understood that while the existing Land Act is in force, it is impossible to look for any very large increase in the revenue from sales of land by auction, unless the land is sacrificed at a very low rate per acre. If such a proposal is ever made again, the House should object to allowing sales of land in the manner in which the lands in the Springsure district were sold some years ago. It is a great mistake for Parliament to allow any Treasurer, present or prospective, to say to his Minister for Lands, "Revenue is short, and I must have money; get it out of the land; sell the land at a good price, if you can get it; if not, at an indifferent price; but I must have the money." If the House fixes a sum at which a certain area of land should be sold during the following financial year it would be a sufficient safeguard against anything of that kind. There is very little doubt that the tariff will pass substantially as it was introduced by the Premier.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

MR. MORGAN: I think it will. We have all got our little tariffs in our pockets, and no two of them agree; and if we differ among ourselves, the Treasurer will remain firm and gather strength from the differences which exist on both sides of the Committee. That is just what I fear. No doubt there is great dissimilarity between the North and the South, and the Committee should, as far as possible, show every consideration to the condition of affairs prevailing in the North. So far from trying to harass the North, we should strain every possible nerve to endeavour to help them in the direction of making protection fall as lightly upon them as possible. In the extreme South a policy of protection will be welcomed by a very large proportion of the people. I do not mean the city people, whom some hon. member well compared to drones; they are not really workers; they produce nothing; they are simply useful as machines for paying taxes. It is the miner, the pastoralist, and the farmer who produce the wealth on which those people live and grow fat. These producers are entitled to some consideration, but at the same time we must consider the wants and requirements of the people of the North. We have refused to allow them to employ black labour after the end of next year, and we have very rightly put a stop to the traffic in, or at all events to the unlimited supply of, black labour. But there are other means by which we can assist the sugar-planter. I do not hold with the view that the reverses which have overtaken that industry are due to legislation on the part of the late Government. The sugar industry in Queensland has suffered the same as the sugar industry in other parts of the world has suffered—namely, from low prices due to the competition of bounty-fed beet sugar. I have heard it said by Northern members that the cure for this is black labour. I do not think it is; the facts are against it. Any hon. member can, by inquiry, ascertain the state of the sugar industry in the West Indies for instance; islands which are by nature fitted for the production of the sugar cane. What is the condition of that industry there? Plantations have depreciated in value to that extent that it hardly pays to work them; very few of them are being worked, and the majority are going out of cultivation. This is the state of things in islands where the blacks outnumber the whites by a hundred and even a thousand to one.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: They will not work.

MR. MORGAN: I believe they would work without the slave-driver's whip if they were well treated, which, I fear, has not always been the case. However, the fact remains that the sugar industry there, in the midst of hundreds of thousands of blacks, is languishing, and it is languishing because the cheap sugar produced on the Continent under bounties provided by Government is under-selling them in their own markets. And that state of things has had its influence on the sugar industry here. But there was something else that had an influence in that direction. Not so many years ago the sugar-planters of the North went about crying, "Woe, woe!" and depreciating their own industry, telling the financial institutions that the Government had quite ruined it, and that it was not safe to put money into it. They cried "wolf" so long that the banks and financial institutions at last believed them, and from that moment sugar-growing in Queensland has no doubt depreciated, and it is now, according to those engaged in it, at a very low ebb. The question for consideration now is, how to help the sugar industry? There is no one willing to see that industry go to the wall. It is yet a valuable industry, bringing a large sum of money into the colony annually. I can hardly think it is threatened, as some say, with total extinction. The junior member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, threw out a suggestion the other night which is well worth consideration, and that was, to impose a duty on flour. Hon. members may ask, how is a duty on flour going to help the sugar industry? We could impose a duty of £1 a ton on flour without increasing the price of bread to the consumer, and at the same time make it a benefit to the sugar industry. With such a duty the Treasurer would be in a position to go to the Governments of South Australia or Victoria, and enter into a reciprocity treaty with them to the effect that we would admit their flour free provided they would admit our sugar on £1 a ton more favourable terms than the sugar of other countries. That would confer a benefit on the sugar-growers of the North without injuring the South. The Northern people, in their agitation for separation, were largely influenced by the belief that if they had the right to frame their own tariff, they could at once enter into reciprocity treaties with the Southern colonies, and so find a market on more favourable terms than at present exists. I hope something will be done in that direction, and if a move is made it will receive a good deal of support from Southern members. But if they are to get support from us, they must meet us in the same spirit in which we are disposed to meet them. In trying to secure advantages for their own district, they ought not to try to impose restrictions on the industry in which a large portion of the people in the South are engaged—I mean farming. We want protection. Hon. members may say the farmers are already sufficiently protected. They are not. In this very city we on the Downs ought to have the first right to supply the market with farm produce, but we have at present no such right. It is a fact that maize is imported to Sydney from South Africa, and sold in the market there at 1s. 9d. per bushel, and bought there for the Queensland market, and is sold here at 2s. 1d. and 2s. 2d. per bushel, under-selling our own producers. We are working our farms with white labour, while black labour is employed in South Africa. We therefore compete with black labour. Now, even gentlemen in this city, and the men who like to make a little show by driving some lean old "garron" of a horse about on Sundays, object to paying half-a-crown per year to help an industry that is calculated to be of immense service to the State; but I think that ought not

to deter the Premier. He should insist upon carrying at least the measure of protection that he proposes, and I hope that the hon. member for Toowoomba, notwithstanding what has been said by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, will succeed in carrying the extra duties which he proposes in his amendments. If he does it will be a benefit to the colony, and will soon make itself apparent even to such heretics as the hon. member for the Valley. It will make farming a profitable industry, and until that is done there will never be close settlement. It is all very well for Ministers for Lands to propound schemes for settling people upon the land, but until they can show that settlement upon the land not only gives a living, but some reasonable guarantee of a fair return for the capital introduced, they can never have any extensive close settlement in the colony. That brings me to the extraordinary speech delivered the other night by the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Archer—a speech which I listened to with very mingled feelings. I listened with pleasure to it, as a speech; but I think the matter furnished very deep cause for regret. That hon. member is known as an influential representative of Queensland, and his speech, I think, read out-side, is calculated to convey an erroneous and detrimental opinion of the colony and the state of agriculture in the colony. He told the Committee that the colony has been fairly proved to be unfit for agriculture. These are his words:—

“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, 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.”

Then the hon. member for Normanby, Mr. Murray, described a recent trip he made to the Southern Downs, which were supposed to be the farming districts. He said:—

“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 there are 100 acres of wheat in the whole district. I was there the other day and did not see a bit.”

The hon. member probably passed through Warwick by the night express. Had wheat been growing on either side of the line for miles, the hon. member could not have seen it. Even if he went through Warwick in the daytime he could

have seen no wheat. The farming districts are at some distance from the main line of railway, and cannot be seen by passengers in passing trains; but they are there all the same. Now, in regard to this doleful tale told by the hon. member for Rockhampton and the hon. member for Normanby, I would like to give the Committee a few figures. As to there being no wheat grown in Warwick, that being the premier wheat-growing district of the colony, I would say that in the year 1887, there were 10,563 acres of wheat in the whole colony, of which the Warwick district contained 4,495 acres, the Allora district 2,931 acres, and the Toowoomba district 2,096 acres. The Warwick wheat-fields brought in a return of 91,000 bushels, the Allora wheatfields 59,291 bushels, and the Toowoomba wheatfields 21,035 bushels. The average yield per acre over the whole colony was 17 bushels 15 lbs. per acre. That, I think, is sufficient answer to the speech made by the hon. member for Normanby. Unfortunately the present season is not very suitable for the cultivation of wheat, or any other crop; but it is not true, as was stated by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, that there has been no wheat this season. There is still hope; rains, though not so much as we require, have fallen during the last forty-eight hours upon the young wheat fields in that district, and I, for one, am still in hopes that we will have rain. As to the quality of the flour produced there the hon. member for Normanby was hopelessly in the wrong. The flour produced in the Warwick and Allora districts is equal to any flour manufactured in Australia, and, I believe, it is equal to any produced in the world. It is made by machinery of the latest type, and the very fact that while the wheat lasts, not one bushel of Adelaide flour finds its way into that portion of the colony, is sufficient proof of the truth of what I say. In regard to the speech of the hon. member for Rockhampton, which it is to be regretted was ever delivered, I daresay that hon. member thoroughly believed in the truth of what he was saying; but we know it is not so very long ago, since it was held to be a fact that the Darling Downs would not even grow a cabbage. I think the absurdity of that idea has been amply illustrated; but the hon. gentleman evidently still places some faith in it, for he knows very little of what has been done in the way of agriculture in the Ipswich and Toowoomba and Warwick districts. He told us of his efforts to cultivate fruit in the neighbourhood of Rockhampton, and, judging from his remarks, those efforts must have been disastrous failures; but those failures have not happened to agriculture over the whole colony. In 1887 we, after about five-and-twenty years experimenting in farming, produced 182,000 bushels of wheat, 13,343 bushels oats, 31,493 bushels barley, 1,631,890 bushels maize, 18,856 bushels rice, 15,018 tons sweet potatoes, 15,661 tons English potatoes, 60,806 tons sugar, 216,184 lbs. arrowroot, 424 cwt. tobacco cured leaf, 50,000 tons hay, 118,672 gallons of wine, 1,765,998 lbs. grapes for table use, 6,268,000 dozen bananas, 208,694 dozen pineapples, and 772,000 dozen oranges. I regret to say the returns do not supply any information as to the product of butter, but it is a very large item indeed. I know people in the district from which I come who are drawing from Brisbane middlemen as much as £40 per month for that one item alone. They make good butter, and not of the character the hon. member for Fortitude Valley described as bringing 2d. or 3d. per lb. If that hon. member knew as much about butter-making as he professes to know, he would not have made the statements he made to-night. He is not the only member who has made statements of that kind, as the hon. member for Port Curtis, in speaking the other night, spoke

of the want of knowledge of local dairymen. I say the great bulk of those engaged in dairying in this colony have ample knowledge of butter-making and as a rule a good marketable article is produced; but in the summer months it is very often spoiled in transit to market. The Railway Department takes no care to convey the product in a marketable condition at the metropolis. It is put into the train at mid-day at Warwick in vans, or often in closed trucks which are used for the conveyance of other goods. It then travels 165 miles when it ought only to travel 100 miles, and freight has to be paid on it over the extra and unnecessary 65 miles. The journey is thus lengthened unnecessarily, and in the closed vans the atmosphere is often fouled by reason of other produce—hides for instance—carried in the same vans, and the result is that if the butter is not corrupted it very often arrives in a condition very much like oil. That is not the fault of the maker, but is owing to the fact that there is no suitable rolling stock provided by the Railway Department for the conveyance of perishable articles of that kind. A few years ago, when the present Minister for Works was in office, he imported from America two or three refrigerating cars, and I thought it possible that they might be employed in carrying fruit, vegetables, butter and milk to the Brisbane market. But what was done with them? They were put into the Railway Workshops at Ipswich, or some lumber yard, and there they have remained ever since. I tried to get them employed on the Darling Downs line, but the answer I got was that it was utterly impossible to use them profitably, as it required from nine tons to ten tons of ice for each carriage, and that would not pay. It was then suggested that cars should be specially constructed, with a view to ample ventilation for the conveyance of such produce, and I believe a promise was made that that would be done, though whether it has been done or not I do not know. The Minister for Railways might direct his attention, or the attention of his commissioners, when he gets them, to that matter, and see that carriages suitable for the conveyance of fruit, butter, vegetables and milk to the Brisbane market are constructed and put upon the line. We have been told that the Downs farmer is amply protected already by getting his produce carried at a very low rate. I am not aware that he has much to be thankful for in that direction. Produce of that kind is carried at a lower rate than some other articles, but I do not think it is carried at a loss to the State. If there is a small loss proved by the figures, that ought not, I think, to be sufficient to induce the Government to increase the rates. Even in the tariff for the conveyance of farm produce there are some extraordinary anomalies existing at present. The department will carry four tons of hay in a truck weighing about seven tons, from Warwick to Brisbane for 12s. 9d. per ton, and though you can get twice as much grain, or, say, flour, into the same truck and thereby save the use of rolling stock, if you send flour to Brisbane you are charged 18s. 9d. per ton. Why this absurd difference? Again, if you carry wheat to Brisbane, where it is not required or consumed, you can carry it at the lower rate of 12s. 9d. per ton, while the freight on flour, for which there is a demand, is 18s. 9d. per ton. That is an absurd anomaly which should be corrected without delay. Those things are felt very keenly by the farmers, and I hope as they are pointed out to the Minister for Railways he will direct the attention of the officials to them, and have those anomalies righted as soon as possible. It was at one time hoped that we would be able to get supplies of flour down here, and when we were anticipating a reduction

in the tariff we were met by an actual increase, and the millers were consequently despondent. I am much pleased to see in this tariff that the Colonial Treasurer has been courageous enough to go one very long step in the direction of protection, but I would rather have seen the tariff more positive in that direction. There is no doubt the tariff will return him a large revenue, and though it has been called a revenue tariff, no one can deny that there is a large measure of protection provided on some articles. What I object to in it is, that while it professes to, and no doubt will, help the farmer to the extent of an increase of 50 per cent. on many articles of produce, it will on almost every article he consumes increase the duty 100 per cent. That appears to me a very serious objection. You do not confer a benefit upon a man by giving him 6d. in exchange for 1s., and that is about how it is going to strike the farmer. I hope the Colonial Treasurer, when the items are passing through committee, will be prepared to give us a little larger measure of protection to meet the 50 per cent. increase upon articles of consumption, and that he will place the farmer on the same level as those engaged in other industries, and then they will have no reason to complain. I do not think it at all necessary to go further into detail. Those are the only objections I have to the tariff as it stands, and I have intimated my feeling and the direction in which I will endeavour to give my vote.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Jessop.—It is now a fortnight since I delivered the Financial Statement, and, without expressing any opinion about the quality of the debate, there is no denying the quantity of it. If we consider the importance of the subject, of course there may be some justification for it, but if all debates were prolonged in the same way as this one has been, it would leave very little chance either during this or any other session for other work to be done. Of course a great deal might have been avoided. There was a great deal of extraneous matter introduced which had nothing whatever to do with the subject, and I am quite sure it will be a warning to hon. members when they see the slight progress made during the session to reserve a great deal of the talking to their constituents, and settle down seriously to the work of the Committee. No one will deny that a great deal of the talk has been beside the question. The hon. member who has just spoken might have said what he had to say during the last three minutes, as three-quarters of his speech had nothing to do with the question. The first three-quarters of his speech was a second edition of the *Warwick Argus* on the Melbourne Exhibition. That would be very useful in Warwick, but it is a matter that we possibly have not time to attend to here. Well, I will first review a few of the criticisms that have been made on the Financial Statement, and the first on it that was made was outside the Statement itself, but it was the first criticism made by the leader of the Opposition, and that was that it was a great loss and a pity that no Loan Expenditure Bill had been foreshadowed in the Financial Statement. Well, it may be a great loss, but it has not been the practice in this House since I have been a member of it for the Treasurer to give a statement of his proposed Loan Expenditure for that year, or for the following year. It has never been the practice in this House, and it has most undoubtedly never been the practice of the hon. member himself. One of the most striking features of the last Ministry was that they passed the £10,000,000 loan long after the different debates of the session were over—and when all their measures had passed. They passed the Loan Bill at the very end of the

session when it was impossible for members to give it that attention which it should have had. I have never been an advocate of obstruction. Since I have been a member of this House I have always tried, on whatever side I was sitting, to put down obstruction, because I have gone on the principle that members should speak their minds plainly, that the people outside will then know what they mean, and that you do not require to go to the length of obstruction in order to force your views on the House, but if ever there was a time when obstruction was necessary, and might have been justified, it was at the time the £10,000,000 loan passed through the House. If I choose to revise my opinion with regard to obstruction in this House that is the only thing which makes me think I have acted too strictly in opposing obstruction in every way. Now the hon. gentleman tells us that he had occasion to advise the late Treasurer that no loan expenditure should pass this House until an Appropriation Act had passed. I think that was capital advice. We pass big loan votes, and we authorise the Treasurer to raise the money at home and put it into the consolidated revenue, and when the hon. member says we ought to appropriate that in detail and tell the House every year—taking it thoroughly into our confidence and getting its sanction for every year's expenditure, he says only what is right, and I quite agree with him there. The Legislature of New South Wales has pretty much the same kind of Loan Bill as we have with an Appropriation Act. Victoria has a Loan Bill such as ours, with a separate Appropriation Act every year, and the same practice is adopted in New Zealand. At the time when the Appropriation Bill was first framed there was not the same necessity for the change of action that the leader of the Opposition suggests now. I think he is quite wrong when he says that all my predecessors as Treasurers, and, of course, I myself, will require to get an Indemnity Act passed for what we have done in the way of expending money that has never been appropriated. I do not think he is right there, but I believe there are evils that have resulted from our own present Loan Act, and the appropriation clause contained therein, which should direct the attention of every Treasurer to what he has suggested—that is, that we should have an annual appropriation for every particular item that is to be spent during the year. However, I do not think the hon. gentleman was right in his law when he said we required an Appropriation Act. Our Loan Acts are all Appropriation Acts. "All sums borrowed under the authority of those Acts," the 5th clause says, "shall be paid to the Colonial Treasurer and shall be by him placed to the credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, to be applied to the several purposes for which the same shall have been raised, and shall be accounted for in the same manner as if they had formed part of the current annual revenue of the colony." I look upon the first four lines as an appropriation clause, and it has always been acted upon as an appropriation clause. To show that it is meant as an appropriation clause, the next clause says, "The appropriation of all sums paid on account of salaries, or to supplement salaries, from moneys received under authority of this Act, shall be annually sanctioned by the Legislative Assembly." That is to say, that we are to be authorised to spend the money on the works authorised in the various items of the Loan Act, but, in addition to that, all the salaries of the men employed are to be specially appropriated. Clause 5 is a special appropriation, so that all Treasurers certainly do not require an indemnity for what they have done, unless they have gone beyond

that law. That law says that the sums shall be spent according as they have been put down in the Loan Act. That was an Appropriation Act that was perfectly necessary, and it was more than necessary. It was suitable to the circumstances when it was framed, but it must be remembered that when it was framed we had not ten-million loans; we had not three-million loans; a modest five hundred thousand was a great thing in those days, and every item was specifically mentioned, and the work upon which it was to be spent. The items were not put down under general terms, but after very careful consideration of the requirements of the different works. The amount of money was carefully calculated, and the Treasurer had his work before him. There was the Act, and he was bound to spend the money appropriated, and no more. The appropriation was complete. But a great change came afterwards, and it came gradually. I do not mean to lay the whole blame of the breach that has gradually taken place in the law on the hon. gentleman opposite, because it gradually came with bigger loans. More general items were put down in those loans and more power was given to the Treasurer and the Government of the day. But the thing culminated in the year 1884, when the £10,000,000 loan was introduced. Ten millions of money was asked for, and during the time that that proposal was before the House it was perfectly impossible for hon. members to have any idea as to whether the amounts were being properly appropriated, and whether the appropriations were for the good of the country. It was perfectly evident from the evidence given by the Minister for Works when he was asked to go through the items that he knew nothing about the amount that would be required. He actually admitted that many of the items would require twice the amount to complete them that appeared in the schedule to complete them; and, in fact, he claimed that he would have the power to go on spending the several items to carry on any of the works commenced. That, of course, was breaking the law. We have seen in the last ten years in Queensland perhaps one of the most wonderful phenomena in the world. We have seen the late Minister for Works—Mr. Miles—a man remarkable for shrewd common sense, but never for any great financial ability—occupying the highest position that a Minister ever occupied in any colony. It was simply because the whole of the powers of the Government and of Parliament had been handed over to that one man. That was what actually took place, and in this way: Various items were put down—£1,000,000 for this railway, £500,000 for the next, £300,000 for the next. £10,000,000 was voted for the existence of that Ministry, because surely they could not presume to vote money for a Ministry that was going to succeed them, and I give them the credit for their whole possible life—that is five years. They knew that £10,000,000 would not complete all those works. I estimated that they would cost £16,000,000, and we know now that they will require more than £16,000,000. Here was a Minister entrusted by Parliament with the expenditure of £10,000,000. He could not possibly spend it all in the time, as that meant an expenditure of £2,000,000 a year, and he had to complete about £16,000,000 worth of work. He therefore rambled over the Estimates, to do what work he liked. One line was to cost £150,000, but as it would cost £300,000, he would spend that amount on that line. In another case where £150,000 was to be spent he would not spend any. Then, when the next Loan Bill came in, that was made right by an Act of Indemnity as it were. There is not the slightest doubt, as the leader of the Opposition had said, that an Act of Indemnity will

require to be passed, and for what I have done since I came into office, I have not the slightest doubt that I shall require an Act of Indemnity. If I do I am perfectly sure that the hon. gentleman requires an Act of Indemnity for what he did before he went out of office. I am glad he drew my attention to this matter, and I do not think it is time wasted in explaining it as I have done now. When I made my Financial Statement I explained the position the Government were in. I am afraid some hon. members have misunderstood me through not reading the Financial Statement, and what I actually proposed. The position I placed before the Committee was this: I had to frame the Estimates without a single addition. Anyone who says that they are framed without great reductions having been made in the Estimates, simply has not read the Estimates. I could have made the amount of expenditure as large as I liked, by leaving out, say, £500,000 of the interest fund, but it would have to be paid all the same. I put down the actual amount of money I was bound by law to provide for schedules. Then I added to that the amount required for the Civil service, and for every contingency connected with it. There are no additions to the Civil service—or they are so small that it is not necessary for me to refer to them. They are virtually the Estimates of last year. I may here remark that we got very little assistance from our predecessors in framing them. We came into office about the middle of June, and I do not think it was an unreasonable expectation on my part that when I went into the Treasury I should find the Estimates left by my predecessor ready as to the expenditure for the incoming year. I know that under similar circumstances I have left that information, and under similar circumstances before, I have got it; but there was no information whatever. I went to the heads of the departments, and got them to make up the Estimate of expenditure. That accounts for the amount of work we have had to do during the recess. When the under-secretaries gave me their Estimates, my business was to cut them down where I could, and I did. That left a deficit of £192,000, and my first natural action was to strike out what I could from the Estimates for the Civil service. I knew I was going in for a policy which would increase the cost of living to those men, and that made the act all the more ruthless. Still it required to be done, and I hold that no Treasurer should hold office unless he can make both ends meet. I cut off, therefore, all the increases, unless under some very special circumstances. I know quite well that there are a great many men who are going unrewarded, and losing the increases they are entitled to by length of service or ability; but I cannot possibly be blamed, not being able to act as I should have desired. In the very short time we have been in office we have not had time to find what men there are in the service of the Government whom we could part with with advantage. Therefore, to have taken any action would have been simply injudicious, and would not have had my support. That is a matter which must be gone into in detail. I know that I considered the matter when I had a strong majority, and failed to accomplish it; but in this case I have done what was the next best thing—I have kept the Civil service without any increase. The hon. member for Toowong criticised my action, and said that there were a great many ways in which I could have kept down expenditure, but he will find he is wrong if he examines the Estimates, and he will have every opportunity of seeing how the Estimates were framed when we come into detail. I had to face this deficit of £192,000, and I reduced the expenditure, while

I increased the revenue, after having consulted with the different revenue-earning departments—that is, the railways, the post office, and so on—and having taken the best possible information as to the possible revenue, and the Estimates of expenditure, which the leader of the Opposition has characterised as fair Estimates. I got them from the departments, and after consultation approved of them, and adopted them, and cut down the Estimates into the state they are in at the present time, and reduced the deficit to £135,000, as I said in the Financial Statement. The leader of the Opposition, of course, ought to have tried to show what other course I might have adopted, although I must say I followed the only method I could think of, and gave my arguments for it. He agrees no doubt with me so far as the income-tax is concerned, but at the same time sticks to his idea that a land-tax was the proper thing—or at all events a property-tax. He says he would not have bound himself to a land-tax alone had he had a longer time to consider the matter, but would have gone in for a general property-tax. The arguments that were brought forward by the hon. gentleman and those hon. members who supported him were not at all arguments which go in favour of a land-tax. The member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, and the member for Passifern, and other members gave their ideas on the subject. The hon. member for Ipswich, for instance, said that what we want to get at is the unearned increment, and that remark was cheered by the leader of the Opposition as being a good argument. In fact it was the only argument brought forward, and the hon. member, of course, thinks it is a fine thing to say that. I have read about the unearned increment for the last thirty years, and I know that there are very few men who study political economy and take an intelligent view of the matter who do not believe that it is a fair thing to get as much of the unearned increment of the country for the people as you possibly can. That is a very fair thing, but the question is, how are we to get at the man who enjoys the unearned increment? Take, as an illustration, a block of land in Queen street sold last week for, say, £1,000; what did the man who bought that land pay for it? The hon. member for Toowoomba picturesquely would tell us that probably that piece of land was part of a thousand-acre block purchased many years ago at £1 an acre; but the man who bought it for £1,000 had to pay that £1 an acre for the land plus the increased value it derived from all the accumulated advantages afforded by the progress of the colony. If a railway was made into Brisbane, he paid for the increased value it derived from that circumstance; so that if you go to him and tell him that you will impose a tax on the land for which he has paid such a high price, you will make him pay a tax, according to the argument that has been advanced, which ought to be put on some other individual. Who is this other individual? We cannot find the man. It is exactly for that reason, just as in the case of an income-tax, you cannot get the man who got this thousand-acre block at £1 an acre. Would it be fair to tax the man who had the land, and say, "You got all that increased value, but not by your own industry?" He might all the time have been keeping a public-house in Ipswich. Would it be a fair thing to put that tax on him because he was honest enough to stick to the land all the time? There must be common sense in everything, and it would be far better if the hon. member, instead of indulging us with these remarks about unearned increment, would explain what he wants taxed. I think I have now disposed of the suggestions that have been made as to the course legislation should have taken to

fill up the deficit that I was obliged to fill. Members will no doubt recognise that the problem I had to solve was how to put £135,000 into the Treasury, and provide a surplus over that for carrying on the Government; also, if possible to make provision for the deficit that actually exists at the present time. I tried to do that, and I did it by the tariff which is now before the Committee. The leader of the Opposition has admitted that he is a protectionist from opportunism. I have been a protectionist for a long time. I have not, as the hon. gentleman has said, brought in a very protective tariff, but I have made protectionist speeches a dozen times in this House. I have, however, never heard the hon. member make a single allusion to protection until, in his Financial Statement last year, he made a general reference to fostering native industries. If the hon. member means to say now that he was held back by a strong-minded colleague who was a freetrader, that says very little for the doctrine of opportunism. The hon. gentleman objected to members on this side laughing when he announced himself as an Opportunist. I know the meaning that members attached to his utterance. The construction they put upon it is that the hon. member in effect said, "I have been a freetrader all the time, but I saw that the tide was against me and that the majority at the next election would be in favour of protection; therefore I am an Opportunist on the policy of protection." That is the sense in which they took it. I know the sense in which the hon. gentleman used the expression. He would have us to believe that he had been a protectionist all the time, but that he had an old man of the sea around his neck, and was prevented giving free expression to his views. All at once, however, when he has got rid of this old man he comes forward as a protectionist. Yet I have never heard him make a protectionist speech on any subject. I have made protectionist speeches and given my ideas, and I would like very much to know what his ideas are. Even protectionists on the other side of the Committee have spoken about this tariff pressing heavy on the working man. I defy any hon. member to pick out a dozen articles, not left out of the tariff, which can be inserted without touching the working man just as much as the articles now embodied in it. There is not a single article in this tariff on which the duty has not been increased over and over again for freetrade purposes, even according to the announcement made by the late Treasurer. Still, at the same time, knowing that quite well, and in order to gain a point it has been argued that the tariff is not big enough to encourage native industry, and that it is a great pity we have touched the working man. What are the amendments which have come from the other side of the Committee? There is the friend of the working man, the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom; how is he going to amend the tariff? By shoving a great deal more on the working man. The hon. member for Warwick is going to do the same thing, and all those members who spoke about the working man are going to do exactly the same. It is a very fine thing to say that we are the friends of the working man, but it does not mean anything. I shall be very glad to hear any suggestion that will lead me to give the working classes everything they consume at a lower rate than they will get it under this tariff, if the suggestion will lead towards protection. I should be very glad to hear any such suggestion, but I am perfectly satisfied that it cannot be done. The object I have in view is to make a tariff that I can afford to make. I tell protectionists I know very well that during the last elections the sentiment of the country

was in favour of protection. But I do not think there was enough said on that one subject that could have brought out the intellectual thought of the constituencies, and I say this, that I doubt very much the wisdom of going in for protection at the present time. I would say that it would be a wrong thing to do anything of the sort. The question, as pronounced on by the constituencies, was certainly not decided enough to justify me in going one step further than I have done, and I was bound to go that step to get the revenue I want. I will now deal with another matter, and that is the accusation brought against me by the hon. gentleman, and elaborated by some other members, that there seemed to be a sort of covert attempt on my part, through this tariff, to bring about the separation of the North from the South. Of course that is founded on this: that the southern part of the colony, being more populated than the northern portion per square mile, they are therefore in a better position to start industries which may derive encouragement from the tariff, and in that way have an advantage over the North. Well, there is no doubt of that, and I could not prevent it. But I justify it in this way: that the North will get a good deal of the indirect advantage. One great argument in favour of protection is this—and there is no class of men in the world who have affirmed it more than the diggers of Australia—that it opens up other sources of employment. The diggers in Victoria, with the exception of one place, have, for the last thirty years, returned protectionists. They know very well that, although their labour is not protected, yet, if they have families, they can turn their sons to do something else than working down the same mine that they have worked in. And that argument will tell, I have not the slightest doubt, on the miners of Charters Towers and Croydon, when they come to understand it, quite as forcibly as it has done on their brother miners at Sandhurst and Ballarat. I do not think the hon. gentleman thought seriously that I was plotting a matter of that sort. If any suggestion could have a tendency towards helping on separation, I think it was the suggestion made by the hon. gentleman himself, when he said he did not see why we should not have a differential tariff—why we should not charge 1s. on bottled beer coming into the port of Brisbane, and 6d. on bottled beer coming from any foreign port into Townsville.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I did not instance beer.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: The hon. gentleman did not instance anything. I will take anything else he likes. Timber, for instance. Why should not timber pay 5s. per 100 superficial feet down here, and go free into Townsville? There is no reason against it; but if we have to deal with the North on such terms as that—that they are to have a separate tariff—the sooner they have a separate Government the better. That suggestion of the hon. gentleman destroys all feeling between us as fellow colonists. We must have a tariff, and the same tariff—we must try and combine under one—because anyone in Australia can see that if our Government had to be carried on under such a bond as that, that the North must have a separate tariff, the sooner they separate and do the best they can for themselves the better. I do not think the tariff will hurt the North, because they will get a great many advantages out of it. I was very much amused at the speech made by the hon. gentleman—especially that portion of it when he spoke about opportunism. It was about as nice a little lecture as I ever listened to, considering how

apt it was to the circumstances. The funniest part was where the hon. gentleman declared the Colonial Secretary to be a freetrader, that the Minister for Lands was also a freetrader, that the Minister for Works was so and so, and then declared that he himself was an Opportunist. Why should not they be Opportunists, too, especially seeing that they have very much better reasons for being Opportunists than the hon. gentleman. When the Colonial Secretary introduced that amendment last year antagonistic to the proposals of the then Colonial Treasurer (Sir Samuel Walker Griffith), to the effect that under the circumstances no taxation was necessary, it was a very straightforward amendment. I had some doubts as to how far it was necessary, and I believe that if the finances had been properly managed in 1886 no additional taxation would have been necessary. But they were going on from bad to worse; they were so bad when we came into office that the best possible statement made by officers who had just left office the week before, showed that they could not possibly carry on the Government except at an annual loss of £119,000. That is why we are justified in being Opportunists—if it be justifiable at all.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is in your sense of the word.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: Well, the hon. gentleman is an Opportunist in exactly the same way as a Yankee—these are my sentiments, gentlemen, if they don't suit you I can change them.

THE HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is what you say of your own colleagues. It is not the opportunism I spoke of.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER: One thing I noticed with some curiosity is that none of the protectionists on either side of the Committee ever looked back to see the bonuses we have given to freetrade in this colony. I have been at the foundation of a good deal of it myself, and I did it for a certain object. I knew that I was violating the principles I myself advocated, but I did it for the good of the country. For instance, in 1869, when we found the whole trade of Queensland done from the big port of Sydney, it was the object of every Queensland statesman to try and remedy that. What did we do? In the face of my principles as a protectionist I consented to give a subsidy of £55,000 to a trading company. There is not the slightest doubt that it was pure freetrade; but we have to consider where we can gain between the two principles. We have to remember that one of the advantages to producers in the country is that in no part of the world are there greater advantages than we offer for trade in the shape of harbour and river improvements. We have incurred large expenditure on those works, we have brought them to be as near perfection as possible, and so far as harbour dues are concerned, our ports are as free as any in the world. That has to be considered, and we want to do something by means of this tariff so as to protect our own industries, and, at the same time, counterbalance in some way the leakage that has been going on in that direction—at all events, to get some advantage from the money we have expended. There have been a great many amendments suggested. Hon. members have kindly let me know what alterations they intend to propose in certain directions, and I may say that I have been deluged with correspondence from all parts of the colony. It is astonishing to consider the character of the correspondence I have received. Take Maryborough, for instance. They object to a land-tax and do not believe in protection, but want a heavy duty on timber and furni-

ture. Then the farmers on the Darling Downs; they do not go into the question of freetrade and protection as a general principle, but want a heavy duty upon farm produce. In fact, all through the country every man wants everything he produces protected, but he is opposed to protection upon any other industry. As a matter of fact, I have not got very much real information; so far as principle is concerned, from any part of the correspondence I have had; but I have had a great lesson on the selfishness of humanity in general. I have had to boil the correspondence down and make the best of it. The first amendments I have are those given into my hands by Mr. Philp. He proposes the following changes:—Champagne, 20s. per gallon; brandy, rum, whisky, geneva, old tom, other spirits and cordials, 14s. per gallon; bulk ale, in wood, 1s. per gallon; cigars, 7s. 6d. per lb.; carriages, carts, etc., material for carts, etc., musical instruments, silks, silks made up, gloves, and furniture, 25 per cent.; hops, 9d. per lb.; malt, 4s. per bushel; quartz, sugar, and other machinery, and sewing machines, 5 per cent.; bags and sacks, cornsacks, woolpacks, sugar bags, agricultural implements, fuse, and seeds, 7½ per cent.; dynamite, gelatine, lithofracteur, 1d. per lb.; bran and pollard, 2d. per bushel; wheat, green fruits, and steel rails, free; boots and shoes, 10 per cent.; oatmeal, 2s. per cwt.; castor oil, in bulk, 6d. per gallon; rope, 4s. per cwt. Now, these alterations would involve increased duties to the amount of £89,000, and decreased duties to the amount of £54,000. Adding the increase and the decrease together it would alter my tariff to the extent of £143,000. My own tariff only alters our present arrangements to the extent of £300,000; which virtually means that a private member shall alter the tariff to the extent of 40 per cent., or nearly one-half. I am quite prepared to take any amendment that I think reasonable, and that agrees with the principle of my tariff and does not affect the amount to any extent; but an amendment of that kind cannot be carried, or my tariff goes. With some of the details of the hon. member's amendment, such as the duty on champagne, which is a luxury, I might agree, but the adoption by the Committee of the whole amendment would damn the tariff, and it goes out of my hands. That is the immediate consequence. There is a great similarity between the amendments suggested by the hon. members Mr. Stevens and Mr. Groom. With the exception of two items, they go in the same direction—namely, increasing the duty on various items of farm produce to something like 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. I cannot accept that. I think I have gone a great length. I believe in disturbing industries as little as possible. When I wanted to see in what way we could help the farmers, it was thought that could be best done by imposing a duty on malt, hops, and barley. I find I have made a mistake in not putting enough on barley; it was my mistake, and I shall be prepared to remedy it. But I did not put on more duties, because I do not believe the colony would stand it. Protectionists may overreach themselves by having too high protective duties, and I have been assured of that by men who have the greatest amount at stake. I could give instances, but it would only needlessly lengthen my speech. The duties on most of the products are sufficiently high already, and after the speeches made by hon. members, I do not think it would be wise to make them higher than they are at the present time. I see several places where we have done an injustice, which I will endeavour to rectify. For instance, there is the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowong, which is, I think, fair and reasonable. Although it does not apply to the extent the hon.

member said it did, still there was something in the contention that a man who holds stock on which the duty is proposed to be abolished should have time to work off the stock he has got, and I am quite prepared to move an amendment which will give the Committee time to consider that. A man holds stock on which duties are both abolished and increased, so that there would not be any great injustice done him. Still there is, theoretically, something in it which we ought to consider. There is another matter I did not consider, although I certainly ought to have done, and it is this: Many people have ordered material and machinery from home not calculating that the tariff would be altered. I have drafted a clause by which any material or machinery that it can be proved to the Treasurer was ordered prior to the announcement of the new tariff, and arriving in the colony afterwards, shall be subject only to the duty that was in force at the time the order was given. I think that is only fair. This, of course, will only apply to material and machinery ordered by persons for their own use; it will not apply to merchandise. I will give one case in point. A sugar plant was landed at Maryborough the other day—since the tariff was published—which was ordered ten months ago. It would be an unfair thing that the man who ordered it should be subjected to the increased duty. I therefore propose to insert a clause that will cover cases of this kind. I will refer now to the duty on beer, and will explain to the Committee the position in which I stand in regard to it; and I think they will consider that it is not an unfair position. As I said, I wanted to impose duties that would possibly benefit the farmers, and those duties would have been direct imposts on the brewers. There was an excise duty put on beer only a year ago, which I consider a most unwise duty; and it was quite impossible that, in any fairness at all to any of the interests concerned, we could increase that. I put on such duty as I could on the material that was being used, and proposed to drop the excise duty. If hon. members think they are going to keep the excise duty on beer, and also put a duty on malt and hops as in my proposed tariff, I shall object to it. I have put on the material as much as very nearly balances the old duty. Of course it is subject to this disadvantage, as one hon. member said, that the amount of duty, as protection comes into operation, is liable to decrease. But we shall get the advantage of protection; we shall have to tax something else.

Mr. UNMACK: The brewers pocket the difference.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That is a different thing altogether. The hon. gentleman said the other day that if we decreased the price the brewer derived the advantage. I beg to differ from him. I have made all the inquiries I can, and have come to quite a different conclusion. At all events I have balanced it, and if, therefore, the excise duty is not repealed, then I will strike off the duties proposed to be put upon the material. Now, there are many items mentioned there in addition to farm produce. There is the item of timber. I have explained the difference that there is between the North and the South. If the duty on dressed and undressed timber was put on to any great extent, the effect, I believe myself, would be pretty much that the Townsville and Rockhampton people would be handed over to a monopoly of Maryborough men in the course of two or three years.

Mr. HYNE: No, no!

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I knew the hon. member for Maryborough would say "No, no," but I have stated the opinion I have had all along. The hon. member says "no";

but I say "yes"; that is the danger I am afraid of. I have no objection to increase the duty on dressed timber in the North and South together, but shall object to any increase in undressed timber or log timber. In revising the tariff I think I made another mistake, and that was in putting in piece goods at 10 per cent., whereas made-up goods are at 15 per cent. I propose to add a good many items to the last list—piece goods—and decrease the duty to 5 per cent. There will be no 10 per cent. duties at all. The list of piece goods will be increased by adding other materials mostly required in making up manufactures in the colony. Then, in regard to the free list: I have added to that as much as I possibly could, and I am quite prepared to take suggestions, because I may have omitted some things that I think ought to be free, as well as those that are really present. I have been pressed upon all sides to reduce the tariff upon machinery. I do not think that is a right thing to do. I think 15 per cent. ought to be put upon machinery, for the reason that I am sure it will have the effect of causing all machinery used for our different manufactures to be made here in a very short time. I believe that will be the result, as I have seen the effect elsewhere. All machinery that cannot be made in the colony we ought to be pretty liberal with by putting it upon the free list. Therefore, in addition to a number of items which appear on the free list, I want power to be given to the Treasurer from time to time to proclaim in the *Government Gazette* certain articles to be free from duty. That power ought to be given, as we will not be able to classify the different items on the free list. I will not go into the details of these items; they include sewing machines, centrifugals, trificates, planing machines, joinery machines, hot air machines, gas engines, portable engines, diving pumps and dresses, and several other things. I have also taken some material out of the free list, which I thought it dangerous to leave there. Sheet iron, bar iron, angle iron, and T-iron I propose to add to the free list. There is one important item which I have not mentioned, and that is that I think the duty on fruit was a mistake. Still there ought to be a duty upon fruit that is imported in the shape of pulp fruit. I also think I was wrong in increasing the duty upon dynamite. I may go still further and say that I do not intend to move any addition to the duty on explosives. There is one article which is used greatly for adulteration, the imported amount of which is very small, and which I would like to see kept out of the colony altogether. I allude to saccharine, which is a dangerous poison used in any shape or form. It is made from coal tar, and is 280 times as sweet as sugar. The following remarks concerning it appeared in the *European Mail* of 27th July:—

"Our readers will have seen from time to time in the public journals laudatory comments of the qualities of tar sugar as an article of consumption in preference to cane or beetroot sugar, both on account of its relative cheapness and hygienic properties, its sweetening power being 280 times greater than its corresponding weight in ordinary sugars. But the Council of Hygiene and Salubrity of the Seine, Paris, has definitely settled, on the basis of the report of their experts, the certainty of its unwholesomeness as a sweetener. Saccharine, or tar sugar, is simply an artificial substance extracted from coal; it is a crystallised white powder, almost insoluble in cold water, and, on account of its concentrated strength, has been nicknamed 'the shadow of sugar.' It is extracted by an intricate process, in which sulphuric acid (vitriol) is the active agent. The sensation of sweetness it produces on the tongue lasts much longer than that produced by ordinary sugar, but it is much less agreeable, for it leaves an after-taste of bitter almonds and a dryness of the throat. It is quite possible that to its method of preparation, and the impurities which cannot be entirely separated from it, may be attributed the ill effects resulting from the use

of saccharine. But it is equally possible that it is dangerous in itself by reason of its intrinsic properties. At all events, its antiseptic qualities, by which the fermentation of substances with which it amalgamates is arrested, may become a positive danger. For the proper digestion of food it is absolutely necessary that the action of the gastric juices should not be paralysed; and it is precisely the contrary effect which is produced by the use of tar sugar. It has been ascertained that saccharine does not assimilate in the human frame. It is thrown off in almost the same proportion as it is taken. It simply passes through the body. But in cases of organic derangement it is liable to accumulate and produce unhealthy symptoms, such as indigestion, cramp in the stomach, and general discomfort. Admitting even that saccharine is absolutely inoffensive from a hygienic point of view, it must be borne in mind that it is at a disadvantage compared with the ordinary cane or beet-root sugar, inasmuch as it has no nourishing properties, and as M. Gérard, the chief of the Municipal Laboratory at Paris, has very justly observed, 'there is no reason why under the cloak of hygiene, as in the case of certain products which are made to serve the purpose of food articles, trade should not confine its operations to the sale of purely artificial goods.' And on this principle fossil flour might be substituted for legitimate wheat flour in the making of bread or pastry, which, being sweetened with saccharine, would offer the advantage of a permanent mineral article of diet. It is a curious fact, well worth noticing, that insects seem to have a positive dislike to saccharine. In a pastry shop, where a number of tarts and cakes had been sprinkled with tar sugar, it was observed that a wasp and the inevitable flies carefully avoided settling on them, the wasp especially, for on a cake sprinkled with saccharine being purposely put in its way it displayed an amount of irritation by no means flattering to 'the shadow of sugar.' It has been computed by Professor Salkowski that the quantity of saccharine which a man in sound health and of medium strength may take daily with impunity is not more than one grain and a quarter."

I have now gone over the various items in the tariff, and, of course, hon. members will see the difficulty of the task that we have before us. As a matter of fact it is a very scientific piece of work altogether, framing a tariff. They have been at it for over fifteen years down in Victoria, and they have a fresh one this year. It is a matter of great difficulty, and any number of small inconsistencies may be pointed out. I have tried to avoid these as much as possible, and have tried to make a working tariff. I believe myself that it will give the amount of revenue we require, and I ask the co-operation of members on both sides of the Committee to try and put it through as efficiently as we can, and in as short a time as possible. We are getting now into the summer, and we have a lot of very important business to do which I wish to get pushed on, and nothing can be done until we get this tariff out of the way. I will, when we get into Committee to-morrow, commence in the usual way by moving the items, paragraph by paragraph, as they appear here, and if any hon. member has an amendment to propose it can be proposed at the appropriate place. I beg to move that the Chairman do now leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The HON. P. PERKINS said: Mr. Jessop,—I have a few remarks to make before you report progress. I understand it is the intention to close the debate upon the Financial Statement to-night.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is closed.

The HON. P. PERKINS: With all deference to the Colonial Treasurer, I have a few observations to make before the debate closes.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: It is closed.

The HON. P. PERKINS: I refuse to say it is closed, and I have as good a position here as the Colonial Treasurer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am not trying to stop you.

The HON. P. PERKINS: We are all on equal terms here, and I am not going to be told or lectured by anyone that this debate has closed. I am independent here, and do not belong to any party, and I will not be shuffled or put upon by any member on either side of the Committee. If I am attacked by either one side or the other I have a right to defend myself and make any explanation I think fit. I trust the Colonial Treasurer will admit the justice of my remarks. If you had not rushed into the front to-night and denied me the opportunity of saying what I wished to say I would not have to say it now.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Chair!

The HON. P. PERKINS: You may say "Chair!" if you like, but you have put a very different complexion on the business now. I am very much pleased indeed with the able speech you have made. I think you are like others, in that you have had time to reflect, and you have discovered that you have made some mistakes.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must address the Chair.

The HON. P. PERKINS: I am looking at the Chairman. No doubt when a man has made a mistake the best thing he can do is to retrace his steps and get on to the right track as soon as possible. I am glad the Colonial Treasurer has discovered that he has made some errors, and no one will be more industrious than I will be in helping him to correct them. I trust before this day month we will be able to shut this shop. It is not legislation we want here, but we want a few capable and honest men to administer the laws in force in the colony at the present time, and if they are administered honestly this shop might be shut up for three or four years. What brought me to make these observations is some remarks made by the hon. member for Oxley, who often honours me with his attention, though he is not always complimentary in his references. I excuse him, because, possibly, it is the people he lives amongst is the cause of it—those people who grow the cane around him, those arrowroot growers which the late Attorney-General was in the habit of urging the leader of the Opposition to introduce from the old country to oblige the member for Oxley. I will put aside kanakas and Chinamen and aborigines; but I believe I am right in saying that the hon. member for Oxley has had the cheapest description of labour that anyone has enjoyed in this country or in any other colony in Australia. I will tell you how he got it. He managed to get into partnership with somebody on board ship. He got the people from Moldavia or Wallachia—people from the southern part of Europe who did not know his language. He got into partnership with a clergyman. He ran the people out to his arrowroot-growing garden, and, although he engaged them for twelve weeks, the conditions were such that they were glad to hook it in six weeks. When I interjected 8s. a week when the hon. member was speaking, I meant the wages the hon. member had promised those men, but they left when they got their colonial experience with him. Now, it is a very unfortunate thing that such persons should be returned to this House, if the hon. member is a specimen of the intelligence of the country. It is an unfortunate thing if we are to be afflicted with his continual prating of the poor man, the honest man, the hard-working man, and then hear of the hon. member striking such a bargain with him. I say it is a pity that we should be cursed with such representatives as that. I can only say that I am not in the habit of prating and belittling about my piety and honesty. I do not accuse myself of those luxuries, and I should

like to know what right the hon. member has to attack me in this Committee. I will read what I said of the hon. member :—

“ Why did I sign that petition? Because I discovered, after sitting for four or five years here, that the members for the South were incapable of legislating for the North. At that time they had not had free tickets given them to go up and see the North for themselves; they had no idea what it was like. It was always ‘ my plantation, my cane,’ or my something else. We heard of some bogus plantations in this neighbourhood which, I believe, have come to grief without the intervention of the blackfellow or the reduction in the price of sugar. I have listened to all this, and I discovered that we had a class of men down here who were one-sided, narrow, crippled, and warped in their views—that what suited them, did not suit the North, and that, at all events, the Northern people should dance attendance upon them.”

Now, is there one word of untruth in that? Does the hon. member deny it. He knows it to be perfectly true. He has taken three or four days to manufacture a story to tell this Committee. Now, whatever my faults and weaknesses are I do not think there is any member of this Committee, or anyone outside who knows me in business or otherwise, who would accuse me of want of courage or pluck, or being addicted to telling falsehoods, and I did not tell falsehoods when I alluded to the hon. member in that way. I believe the Minister for Lands inspected the hon. member's arrowroot garden and found it nothing but a mass of weeds, and that he has mean and cheap labour employed in it. I leave the member for Oxley at that. I leave him to his patron, the leader of the Opposition, who has used him for a considerable time. I leave him as a picture to this Committee and the country, and say that if he is a specimen of a sugar-grower, or a man of business, or anything else that is respectable or to be admired in this country, then I will want to get away.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Jessop,—I do not think there is much to reply to, but I will just tell the hon. member this, that on my plantation sugar-growing still continues. It had a fair crushing this season, whilst many of the large plantations of the North have gone to the wall. It is still going—perhaps not making large profits under the present price of sugar, but it is giving employment to fifty European labourers, and they are all happy and contented. Some of those labourers have been with me for ten or twelve years. That speaks for itself, and none of them are receiving less than 14s. a week and rations. That is the lowest wage I give, and many of those men at last season's crushing earned 25s. a week and rations by constant work. The hon. member may talk about 8s. a week. He may consider that a fair wage to give anybody. I do not. I give a fair wage and expect good men.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Do you call 14s. a week a fair wage?

Mr. MURPHY: It is a starvation wage.

Mr. HAMILTON: 1s. 6d. a day.

Mr. GRIMES: The present leader of the Government introduced mechanics for his station, and gave them only 15s. a week. I venture to say that men know when they have a decent employer. It is very strange that while others should be continually complaining about want of labour I can always get it. How is it that men will come to me season after season and year after year, and work on the plantation? Simply because they know they are well treated, and not kicked and knocked about hither and thither, and at last robbed of their wages. I have no difficulty—I have had none at any time to get men to do my work. I think that is a sufficient refutation of what the hon. member said, and we

shall see the arrowroot and sugar mill going on when half the sugar mills in the North are dead.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

PRISONS BILL—FIRST READING.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, intimating that they had passed this Bill, and transmitted it to the Legislative Assembly for their concurrence.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-two minutes past 10 o'clock.