

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 12 OCTOBER 1888**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

*Friday, 12 October, 1888.*

Petition.—Questions.—Sale and Use of Poisons Bill—committee.—Australasian Natives' Trustees, Executors, and Finance Agency Company, Limited—committee.—Motion for Adjournment—the rabbit Pest.—Additional Sitting Day—Government Business.—Customs Duties Bill—committee.—Adjournment.

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

## PETITION.

QUEENSLAND EXECUTORS, TRUSTEES, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED.

Mr. POWERS presented a petition from the directors of the Queensland Executors, Trustees, and Agency Company, Limited, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to confer powers, etc., 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.

## QUESTIONS.

Mr. PAUL asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to utilise the workshops at Emerald for repairs of rolling-stock on Central line west of Emerald, on Springsure and Clermont branches?

2. Also, if it is the intention of the Government to fence in the unfenced portion of the Central line of Railway?

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

1. Not at present.

2. Inquiries are now being made with a view of arriving at a decision upon this question.

Mr. DALRYMPLE asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Whether he will cause a survey to be made of that portion of the Main Coast Railway lying between Bowen and Mackay?

2. Whether he is prepared to extend the Mackay Railway line from Mirani, its present terminus, to the north side of the Pioneer River?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1 and 2. The Government are not prepared at the present time, either to order the survey of a coast line between Bowen and Mackay, or to extend the Mackay Railway from Mirani to the north side of the Pioneer River.

## SALE AND USE OF POISONS BILL.

## COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. FOXTON, this Order of the Day was postponed until Thursday next.

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

## COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. REES R. JONES, this Order of the Day was postponed until Thursday next.

## MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

## THE RABBIT PEST.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—I rise for the purpose of saying a few words with regard to a reply to a question I put to the Minister for Lands yesterday, and in order that I may do so I will conclude with the usual motion. I asked the Minister for Lands what steps the Government meant to take to prevent the further incursion of rabbits into this colony, and the reply I got was, that as it was found that, owing to the preventive means adopted on the border, no further spread of the pest was taking place, it was not the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill this session dealing with the question. I think that the Government are not doing their duty to the colony in leaving this matter still in abeyance. I consider that this question is now as pressing a question in this colony as ever it was; and I, moreover, consider that the Government are losing the most favourable opportunity that has occurred for some time for dealing with it. I hope such an opportunity will not occur again, because this opportunity is caused by the disastrous drought prevailing in that portion of the colony, more especially, where this pest is increasing so greatly at the present time. The Minister for Lands has evidently, in my opinion, deferred taking any action in this matter, from a report that was laid on the table of the House some time ago, a report from Mr. Donaldson, who is in charge of the fence at present being erected on the border. That gentleman in his report states that rabbits are only found here and there in small numbers on certain stations; and I wish to point out the fallacy of relying upon a report of this kind. I do not wish to impugn Mr. Donaldson's veracity in any way, but I will ask the House to go back to a celebrated report furnished to the late Government by Mr. Golden, who was the first man sent from Queensland to report on the rabbit question in New South Wales. He reported to the Government that the Govern-

ment of New South Wales were dealing so effectively with the rabbits and checking the pest so well that there was no danger of them ever getting into Queensland.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I do not remember any such report as that.

Mr. MURPHY: You will find it in the reports of the proceedings of Parliament.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I know there was a report from Mr. Golden.

Mr. MURPHY: Those were almost the very words of the report—that the New South Wales Government were dealing so effectively with the pest that there was no danger of it spreading to Queensland. He said that the rabbits were 150 miles, at all events, from our border, and that there was no danger; but within eighteen months after the report was written the rabbits were actually in Queensland. He also stated in his report that he could find only a few traces of rabbits in New South Wales on this side of the Darling, when it was well known at the time that the country was thickly infested. Immediately afterwards the Government sent another gentleman to report, and he reported exactly the opposite—namely, that the rabbits were approaching the Queensland border. It was in consequence of that report that the present fence was erected. I give the late Government every credit for putting up that fence; I believe they saved Queensland from a huge disaster by their action in that respect, because I believe that the rabbits would have got as far as the Gulf of Carpentaria by this time if it had not been for that fence. I am afraid the present Government are trusting to another report, similar in effect to the report that misled the late Government—namely, Mr. Golden's report—and I am afraid they will be misled by that report. It has been the history of this pest everywhere that it creeps along in an insidious way. Squatters may have rabbits on their runs for a year before they even suspect they are there; but suddenly they begin to see them, and in a few months after that the country is infested, and they find their stock is suffering in consequence. Sometimes the rabbits are not noticed until it is seen that there is something the matter with the stock, and it is well known that where the country is infested with rabbits the stock does not do well. Stock of all kinds hate the smell of the grass over which the rabbits have been. Hon. members may laugh, but that is a fact. I am surprised that, notwithstanding all I have said on this question on different occasions, I have not yet been able to make hon. members realise the magnitude of this plague. I am sure the Minister for Lands does not realise the danger that is hanging over this country now, more especially over the pastoral industry, and I am sure the Premier does not realise it either; otherwise they would not defer taking action for a moment. Mr. Donaldson may be correct in saying that he does not see rabbits in large numbers, but he does find them; and when they are established in small colonies they are only waiting for the proper time to develop into a swarm. And that time will come when we get the first rain. I do not like to prophesy as a rule, and it is not much of a prophecy to say that as soon as we get rain we shall find that portion of the colony thickly infested with rabbits within six months. They are not breeding now, for the simple reason that they are waiting, as many other animals and birds do, until the season is favourable. It is all very well for hon. members to laugh. They do not realise that what I am stating is a fact well known in natural history, and they are only laughing from pure ignorance. It is a fact well known in

natural history that these animals, like other animals and birds, wait until the season is favourable before they bring forth their young. I am stating what is well known to every bushman, and I care little for the ignorant laughter of hon. members one way or the other. What I want to impress upon the Government is the fact that now is the most favourable time for taking precautions to prevent the increase of the rabbits, and I am satisfied that if we allow this favourable opportunity for dealing with the pest to go past we shall find the rabbits at the Gulf of Carpentaria before we know where we are. Mr. Donaldson, in his report, refers to only a certain number of places in which he found rabbits, but I have good information that rabbits have been seen very much further east than any place stated in that gentleman's report.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson): Also further north.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes; also much further north.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Where further north?

Mr. MURPHY: I know they are at Cunnamulla and at Widgegoara. I have here a letter sent to me by Mr. King, and dated 10th October, 1888, in which he says:—

"My dear Murphy,—

"As I shall be leaving town without seeing you again I write to say that Mr. E. Bignell, of Widgegoara Station, which adjoins our Weelamurra Station, near Cunnamulla, called in at Gowrie on his way here to say that, in place of the rabbits being destroyed as reported, they have been scattered through the country, and that tracks, believed to be those of rabbits, have been seen on his run. Most men would keep these things to themselves, but Mr. Bignell has seen in Victoria the certain ruin which attends the advent of rabbits into a district, and considers it his duty to make this known in order that the Government may be able, in good time, to adopt some measures for the prevention of the further progress of rabbits in this colony."

That is good evidence that the rabbits have got a hold in this colony over a very much more extensive area than we thought they had. When Mr. Bignell states that rabbits have been seen on his run, it is at once a proof of his sincerity, because it does enormous injury to a run to say that rabbits are on it, and renders it unsaleable. No person would think of buying a rabbit-infested run, and no man would say there are rabbits on his run without some good and solid reason, and when a man says there are rabbits on his run we may take it for granted they are there. I will not further take up the time of the House, and I have only done so so far because I wish to impress upon the Government and this House the magnitude of this danger which is gradually creeping upon us, and which will in a short time, if we do not take the bull by the horns, ruin the pastoral districts of this colony.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—In common with nearly everyone who has any acquaintance with this rabbit question, I feel very much disappointed to learn that the Government do not propose to introduce a Bill this year to deal with the pest. The information supplied them by Mr. Donaldson is no doubt correct, so far as it goes, but, as the hon. member for Barcoo has said, it is well known to those at all acquainted with the natural history of the rabbit, that they do not increase in anything like their usual percentage in dry seasons; but the first rain and the first flush of the young grass will cause them to spread like smoke from a gun. Anyone who has seen the black ruin and devastation the rabbits have brought upon the settlers of both Victoria and New South Wales, will realise how we feel the danger that threatens us. I have myself had very considerable experience amongst rabbits, and I can speak

with a certain amount of authority on this subject. I have seen the progress of the rabbits almost from the time they commenced to increase in Barwon Park, in Victoria, until they reached the borders of Queensland; and I do not believe that anything the hon. member for Barcoo has said, either now or on any previous occasion, paints in too vivid colours the danger that threatens this colony. It threatens it, not only through a decrease in the producing power of the colony, but in the enormous discount that will have to be taken off the selling values of all properties. It threatens not only the pastoral but the farming community in almost as great a degree. The rabbits are coming very much eastward of the district reported on by Mr. Donaldson, and I myself received a letter on the subject from Mr. Amos, who manages Mr. C. B. Fisher's extensive properties in Southern Queensland, testifying to the march of the rabbits in that particular section of the country; and there is no doubt that, even in this very bad season and under unfavourable conditions for their increase, they are increasing and pushing forward very rapidly. My own experience tells me that they push forward their outworks—if I may use the expression—at the rate of 150 miles a year under ordinarily favourable conditions. No doubt the action of the late Government in fencing the country has been of enormous benefit to the colony, and they deserve every credit for their prompt action in this matter. I think their action checked the great wave of the rabbits, but in the meantime it remains for the present Government to continue the good work which the last Government initiated; and we had sincerely hoped that the Government would have brought some legislation before the House this session which would have enabled us to check their advance and increase in this colony. We are not sufficiently sanguine to hope that we shall ever be able to do away with the pest altogether, but we hoped for such legislation as would enable us to deal with it in such a way that it would no longer threaten to overwhelm one of the great producing industries of the country. A delay, even of six months, at this particular time of year, may be fraught with very great danger, and may quadruple the cost of the measures necessary to check the advance of rabbits in future. Various schemes have been suggested, and a representative conference of men from nearly the whole of Queensland was held in Brisbane some time before the sitting of Parliament to offer suggestions to the Government on this question. The Premier received a deputation from that conference, very courteously listened, and listened patiently to all we had to say on the subject; listened to the history of the measures that had been taken in New South Wales to deal with the pest; and promised that the matter should receive the favourable consideration of the Government, who would endeavour to devise some measure that would enable us to deal successfully with the pest. As I said before, we find with very much regret that no such measure will be brought forward this session. We think the fence suggested by Mr. Donaldson in the report alluded to by the hon. member for Barcoo would, in the absence of any legislative measure, be a decided check to their further increase, and in the event of no Bill being brought before the House it might be possible for the Premier to give us some assurance that this fence will be pushed forward. It would, I believe, be a check and a bar to the further progress of the rabbits at present. This question has been so often before the House that it has become almost a joke on the part of some members who have not come personally into contact with the pest. If they had seen, as I have seen, a large province, and a very fertile

province of Victoria, absolutely devastated and given up altogether to rabbits and dingoes they would feel that such a destructive result occurring in any part of this colony would be a great and a national loss. It would certainly be no laughing matter to those who are unfortunate enough to be engaged in pastoral pursuits, and the loss would react to a great extent on other industries in the country. I do not wish to detain hon. members long on this question, but I will just mention one particular instance illustrative of the magnitude of the danger that occurred in the case of one of my own friends. He had a third share in a station in Victoria. In that instance, within the four years of the advent of the first rabbit as far as was known, the whole place was given up absolutely to a caretaker, and his share of the money loss on the property was £60,000. Within four years from the appearance of the first rabbit on that station there was an absolute loss of £180,000, and the run was thrown up with all its improvements. That is only one instance out of many which have come within my own personal knowledge of the loss caused by these animals. I trust that, if the Government are not able to introduce a Bill to deal with the question during the present session, some steps will be taken in the direction of carrying out the suggestion of Mr. Donaldson, for a new fence to be erected as a further barrier to their progress.

Mr. ALLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I should have been very much pleased had there been no occasion to speak on this question this session. I assisted the hon. member for Barcoo a little last session in the action he took to bring the matter forward, and I regret extremely that the Government do not deem it expedient this session to bring forward a Bill for taking measures to keep back the rabbits from this colony. I know myself that the question is one that will require to be taken in hand sooner or later, and the sooner it is done the better it will be for the colony. I have presented several petitions from different parts of the colony—from about Inglewood, Clifton, and elsewhere—impressing upon the Government the importance of a measure dealing with the question being passed by Parliament. Like the hon. member for Barcoo and the hon. member for Warrego, I have received letters on the subject from gentlemen living in various districts, and among them Mr. Amos and Mr. Bignell. I have interviewed Mr. Bignell this week. He came down to Brisbane almost specially to impress upon any gentlemen who take an interest in the matter the fact that the rabbits are increasing in that part of the colony, in spite of the drought. They are increasing all over his run, and on the neighbouring run. On the latter station five rabbits were killed by one man in ten days. Mr. Bignell is a gentleman who is not likely to make a statement like that unless he had good grounds for doing so, and there is no doubt that, as the hon. member for Barcoo has stated, he has made the circumstances known simply for patriotic reasons. I regret that some members seem to look upon this matter as a joke. It was looked upon as a joke in Victoria at first, but that is not the case now. It was looked upon as a joke in New South Wales, and the member who introduced the matter there was nearly laughed out of the House. What has been the result? Why, last year they spent close upon half-a-million of money there in attempting to eradicate the rabbits, with no effect whatever. I am very glad that the action taken by the late Government in this colony in putting up the rabbit fences has had a most beneficial effect. A gentleman, who has a station on the border, informs me that he and his brother went out and rode along the fence for the

purpose of seeing for themselves what use it was, and on one side they saw the tracks of rabbits quite thick, while on the other side of the fence there were none. I regret extremely that the fence was not pushed further. There is an enormous gap of about 200 miles still to fill up between the Warrego and Mungindi. There are rabbits in that district, and before I sit down I will quote some figures showing how they may increase. I regret to have to take up the time of the House on the subject, but it is a matter of such great consequence that I do not think any apology is necessary. There are some young members in the House who have little acquaintance with that part of the colony, and I should like very much that they should gain some knowledge of the fearful nature of the pest, and the danger that is there threatened. I may tell hon. members of a strange anomaly with regard to those who live on the border. The men there are almost afraid to see a good season on account of the rabbits. It is the bad seasons that have kept the rabbits back, or we should have seen them coming into the colony in enormous numbers. Had we had good seasons the fence is not far enough advanced to prevent a great increase in the rabbits from the adjoining colonies, and, unless we take very good measures indeed to prevent the spread of the pest, the country will soon be overrun with them. I will take one or two illustrations in connection with this matter to show that the increase in rabbits is so enormous and so extraordinary that one can hardly calculate it. I will not use my own figures, but will quote those of the late chief inspector of rabbits in New South Wales. But before doing so I will quote one clause from Mr. Donaldson's report. He says, in the second last paragraph of his report, dated from Hungerford, 20th August, 1888:—

"I am unable to form any idea as to the number of rabbits in this colony, but three men under an overseer are able to catch from ten to twenty per week."

That is the number those men are able to catch but supposing those ten to twenty rabbits per week were not caught, but allowed to multiply, what would they produce? I wish to put on record what they might do. I quote now from perhaps the best authority in the colonies—Mr. James C. W. Crommelin—late chief superintending rabbit inspector for New South Wales. He has taken the trouble to write a very interesting account on the spread of rabbits in New South Wales and how to cope with it, as far as he knows. I will not quote very much from his report, but will specially refer to the figures he gives. On page 11, under the heading "Increase of rabbits," he says:—

"In my calculations I have taken six as the average at a birth, and allowed rabbits to breed nine months in the year; some think they average seven at a time, and some nine. I, myself, have got thirteen in one nest, and I have often seen ten and eleven. I have also found a nest with only two in it; so that, taking the average at six for each litter, and allowing half of the six to be does, I am well within the mark. Rabbits take the buck at three months, and at four months the does have their first litter. I have caught does not more than three parts grown, which were suckling young, and I have constantly caught does which were suckling young, and yet had young ones inside of them. I also, one day, found a nest with six young ones, just born, about three feet from the entrance of the breeding burrow, and about two feet further on there was another lot of nine youngsters just ready to leave. These must have all belonged to the same doe, as a doe will never allow another to occupy the same breeding burrow. The progeny, then, of two rabbits left undisturbed, and allowing them to breed only nine times in the year, and their first litter at four months old, would amount at the end of the third year to thirteen millions seven hundred and eighteen thousand (13,718,000). This would give six millions eight hundred and fifty nine

thousand (6,859,000) does to commence breeding with the beginning of the fourth year; that is, allowing half the sum total to be does."

These are absolute facts, Mr. Speaker. Now, taking Mr. Donaldson's report that three men can catch about twenty rabbits every week, you can estimate how those twenty would increase if left undisturbed and under favourable circumstances, when we remember that in three years two may increase to nearly 14,000,000, with about 6,000,000 does to commence the fourth year, and go on increasing *ad infinitum*. That will give one some idea of what we may expect even now, when the drought has kept them back, and I do sincerely trust that the Government will see that the matter is of such vast importance that even now, if it is late in the session, they should bring in a Bill to stop the ravages of this pest. I am sure that if they look into it, such a measure will receive the assistance of every member of the House. I do not wish to take up the time of the House, but I will just read an extract from a gentleman who has no personal interest in rabbits, and who is living in the south-western district. When I speak of the south-western district I refer to the part of the colony outside the fence which Mr. Donaldson in his report suggests should be erected—that is, one running from Mungindi, passing between the Bollon and St. George to Charleville, and across to Commogon Station. That will be in the district in which I myself and others are interested, and in which this gentleman lives. This letter will show the interest people in the district take in this matter. After writing on other matters he says:—

"How about the rabbits? What is going to be done? You are heavily interested in this district, and no one knows more about the animals than yourself, and it is very important you should act on this question. Were I a member, I would never leave the floor of the House until I had passed some good *Act re* those rabbits. You and Mr. Murphy were the original movers on the question, and I trust, for the benefit of this district and all along the border, you will assist him and the committee in passing the resolutions passed at the conference. The rabbits are coming in on us all around Currawillimghli, Bangate, Brenda, Bundalcer, and some are seen on Woolerina; and if measures are not soon passed by Government we can throw up the country, and let it become a breeding warren, to spread eventually rabbits all over Queensland. My past experience in Tasmania, Western District, and on Murray, in Victoria, compels me, though I have no interest in this district, to warn you all of the dreadful effects of these rabbits, if once they get a footing in Queensland. So, beware! Posterity will have cause to bless you, or to curse you, *re* your now acts on the subject."

That is written by a gentleman who is the manager of the largest property in that district, and who has no personal interest in the matter.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Do you mind giving his name?

Mr. ALLAN: Mr. Amos, manager for Mr. C. B. Fisher. These gentlemen would not make these statements if they could possibly help it. They decrease the value of their property very much in doing so, and they are only actuated by patriotic motives in speaking out straight. I will just refer to a fact that is given in the pamphlet by Mr. Crommelin, late chief superintending rabbit inspector in New South Wales. He says:—

"Less than two years ago, I gather from the papers, that the rabbits in New Zealand were eating the grass of between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 sheep, and thus costing the colony, it was estimated, about a million and a-half sterling annually."

So that it is not a matter affecting the squatters only. People are under a wrong impression who think it affects the squatters only. It affects the whole community. Of course, the squatters are interested—very deeply interested in it—

but the effects of the pest permeate the whole country, as will be seen from the fact that last year New South Wales spent about £500,000 in trying to stop the ravages of the pest without success. I will not take up the time of the House further. I trust most sincerely that the Government will reconsider their decision, and bring in a Bill dealing with the matter, even if it does extend the session a day or two longer. I do not know, but I believe there is a Bill in print now, and certainly the House should take some action to stop this pest from devastating the country should we fortunately, or unfortunately, get a decent season in the near future.

Mr. CORFIELD said: Mr. Speaker,—It was with surprise and regret I heard the Minister for Lands announce to members of this House yesterday that the Government intend to shelve, for the present, legislation on the rabbit question. Although they have been officially informed these rodents are not spreading more rapidly north and west is to my mind accounted for by the prevailing drought in the interior, and there is every reason to believe that with the approaching wet season—long before a Bill dealing with them becomes law if it remains over until next year—the colony will be overrun with them, and we shall have to incur far heavier expenses to get rid of them than if immediate steps were taken in that direction. The number of petitions presented to this House from all parts of the colony show unmistakably how seriously the public regard the matter, and I hope the Government will reconsider their decision and pass a Bill through the House this session.

Mr. PAUL said: Mr. Speaker,—I cannot say that I have resided in the rabbit-infected country, but I passed through such districts in Victoria, about ten years ago, and I can describe them as nothing but perfect deserts, the same as the Peak Downs and Springsure districts were, about the same time, changed to, by the ravages of marsupials. I can tell hon. members the result of that invasion of marsupials, for they came in overwhelming numbers never known before. In 1867 the pastoral returns showed that in those districts there were 850,000 sheep, besides large numbers of cattle and horses. That was the time when those districts were supposed to be only about one-fourth stocked. In 1875—only eight years later—the number of sheep had been reduced to under 200,000, and those that remained were dying from starvation and worms, brought about by the marsupials. Anyone who saw the Darling Downs about the same time, and noticed the great devastation that the marsupials caused, must be convinced that a great pest an invasion of rabbits would be. Although marsupials breed frequently, they are as nothing compared with the breeding capabilities of these rodents. This is not a question confined solely to the pastoral interest, and I trust that all hon. members, whether they represent pastoral, agricultural, mining, or commercial interests, will join in endeavouring to avert an evil which will overwhelm the country, if it is once allowed to obtain a footing within our borders. At the time I speak of, twelve years ago, the seasons were most favourable, and yet from Rockhampton to Tambo, a distance of over 400 miles, nearly all carriage was stopped. The carriers had to fill half their waggons with corn and chaff to feed their horses, and the consequence was that carriage went up to three or four times what it originally was. During that good season, between those two towns, I can assure hon. members, there were not two camps where carriers could turn out their stock to grass. Seeing that so many petitions have been presented to Parliament on this rabbit question, I am afraid that, if the Government do not take

some action in regard to it, they will run the risk of losing some portion of their well-earned popularity.

Mr. CROMBIE said: Mr. Speaker,—It was with surprise I found the Government are not going to take this matter in hand this session. I regret this very much, and I certainly did not expect it. At a deputation which waited on the Chief Secretary on this question I was led to believe that some measure would be introduced this session, and I do not know that anything has transpired since that time to alter the necessity for it in the slightest degree. It was proved then that rabbits were in the colony; they are still here; and I think the Government are making a great mistake in not bringing in a measure of that kind this session.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not rise for the purpose of prolonging this debate, though I think the subject is a very important one, and well worthy of the consideration of the House. My object is to point out that the action of the hon. member for Barcoo, in moving this motion for adjournment, is contrary to the ruling that has been given by you this session. On the 3rd October, under precisely similar circumstances, you ruled as follows:—

"Though there are instances where a motion of adjournment has been made after a question has been answered, in order that the matter might be discussed, it is against the practice of the House of Commons to raise, on a motion for adjournment, a discussion on an answer to a question, not only on the same day, but during the session in which the answer has been given."

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must excuse me. If he had intended to take exception to the action of the hon. member for Barcoo, he should have done so at the time. The proper time to take exception to anything that is said by a member who may be out of order, is at the time the point of order occurs. The hon. member did not call attention to it at the time, and he cannot do so now.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—This is something new, to say that a point of order cannot be raised because it was not mentioned at the time it occurred. I have known Bills thrown out on their third reading because they were out of order in their original introduction. If your ruling the other day was correct, this is a most irregular discussion, and as soon as attention is called to it it ought to be stopped.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must take into consideration what took place on the recent occasion. A question was raised as to a point of order; it was not I who raised it; and when the question was raised, I felt bound to point out that it was irregular to discuss an answer which had been given to a question. If the hon. member had raised the same question to-day I should have been bound to give the same reply. I could give no other. If the hon. member for Enoggera had wished to take exception to it, I still think he should have done so at the time he considered the hon. member for Barcoo was out of order.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—I might certainly have done so earlier, but I was anxious to ascertain whether a subsequent ruling of yours was or was not inconsistent with the former ruling; and while I was looking up that matter the hon. member for Barcoo ceased speaking. Besides, I was not desirous to put myself forward to stop the hon. member from speaking, because he appeared to me to be exercising a right which, until the time you delivered your ruling, I thought was enjoyed by members of the House. Even if the hon. member were, as the Colonial Secretary said the other day, moving the adjournment by way of

"running the blockade," I should not have felt bound to interrupt him; but I deemed it desirable to raise the question in order that I, as a new member, may know what are the privileges of members of the House, as I do not wish to claim a right that which is not a right. If there are any rules of the House that are binding on me they should be equally binding on all members. I will not refer to the matter further. I understand you to rule now that the hon. member was out of order.

The SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. member that there are certain times when members of this House may commit what might be properly called irregularities—things that are in opposition to the Standing Orders of the House. Every day almost the Standing Orders of the House are broken by members reading newspapers whilst in their seats. In this particular instance, I did not feel called upon to take exception to the action of the hon. members. The matter is one which may be left to the House to decide.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—The important point arises, that the House is gradually establishing precedents of its own, and the ruling you gave the other day was unquestionably one which the House must either affirm or disagree with. If your ruling was right on that occasion, undoubtedly the hon. member for Barcoo is out of order now in raising this discussion on an answer to a question. In my opinion, if the House affirms your ruling on this point, it is parting with one of its best privileges. The answer of the Minister for Lands was that the Government did not intend to deal with the subject this session. Then the course which the hon. member for Barcoo could follow on such an important matter as this was to avail himself of a future opportunity by giving notice of a substantive motion, or by moving the adjournment of the House. According to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, delivered the other day, the course he did adopt was clearly out of order, although with all due deference to yourself, I beg to say that the practice of the House of Commons in this respect has never been altered. On a question of extreme urgency such as this the Speaker has always allowed members to move the adjournment of the House, with the view of bringing the question more particularly before the notice of the Minister in charge of the department to which that matter referred. If I had had an idea that the question would have been raised to-day, I should, in consequence of what transpired the other day, have brought under notice cases in which Mr. Speaker Brand has allowed members, when a question has been put by a member which is not satisfactorily replied to, to move the adjournment of the House with a view of bringing the matter before the Government. We have not only our Standing Orders to guide us in this respect, as our Standing Orders say that where our own Standing Orders do not apply we may fall back upon the practice of the House of Commons. Now, the rules of the House of Commons, in so far as they affect a member's privilege in this respect, have never been altered, and consequently they apply to this case. In cases of extreme gravity and urgency like this the right to move the adjournment of the House has always been granted, and if your ruling is to be adhered to, one of the most valuable privileges of members will be taken away from them. On a question of gravity, which may affect any particular class or subject, they will be debarred from bringing the question before the Government. It may be a matter which requires to be dealt with immediately, or to which the attention of the Government is desired to be called. I am

sure you will receive my remarks in all kindness, because they are intended to be so, and I am perfectly certain that, if you reconsider the question and consult the authorities on the subject, you will find that privilege conceded to members, and it is one which they ought to be very slow to allow to be taken from them. They have the right to move the adjournment of the House when the reply of a Minister is not satisfactory, and in this case it was not.

The SPEAKER said: I would point out to the House that the hon. gentleman must be aware that his remarks have been irregular; but I do not wish to prevent a discussion in connection with this matter. I would also point out that the question raised the other day was not one of urgency or gravity, but was a simple question. The question was put to me whether the hon. member was in order in immediately rising to discuss the answer which had been given to the question by the Minister. I did not wish to give a decision at all, as I desired that the House itself should do so—that as the House had so often allowed the same thing to be done, the House itself should decide whether it should be done then or not. But when I was asked again to say whether it was regular or not, I was bound to say—what I still believe—that it was irregular. I would point out that this House, and also the House of Commons, allows its rules to be departed from on certain special occasions, and I presume that the House here would, on any occasion where the subject was considered to be one of gravity and urgency, allow an hon. member to discuss the answer to a question on a motion for adjournment. But, as I said before, the question was not one of gravity or urgency, but simply a point of order, and it is for the House itself to decide whether its rules shall be in exceptional cases strictly enforced.

Mr. DUNSMURE said: Mr. Speaker,—There is one point I should like to urge in regard to this question. I wish to say that I regret very much the answer given yesterday, and I hope, if a Bill cannot be brought in this session, that at least a sum of money will be placed on the Estimates to put up another fence.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: Mr. Speaker,—As I also represent a district which is, perhaps, more likely to be attacked by this plague than any other district in the colony, I may be permitted to say a few words. The Government are quite cognisant of the gravity of the question and danger of this incursion of rabbits from the southern colonies, and the matter has not in any way been neglected by them. The whole subject—the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, I am sure, will bear me out in this—is surrounded by great difficulties, and I had hoped that the conference of delegates from different parts of the colony would, at any rate, have suggested something of a practical nature, that might have been taken advantage of by the Government. But no such practical suggestion was made, and I am inclined to think that in some cases there is a desire to get up a scare in order to acquire the tenure of the resumed portions of runs.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Hear, hear!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am inclined to think so, and that that may have something to do with the matter. I think that it may have, and I have not arrived at that conclusion without taking the question fully into consideration. As the hon. member for Toowoomba suggested, this is a very serious matter indeed, and worthy of consideration, and I may say that the Government are quite prepared to do all that lies in their power

to get rid of this pest, and assist the pastoral tenants who are likely to be the first sufferers; but we also know that during the last few months, owing, I am afraid, to a great extent to the disastrous season we have suffered from, that the rabbit plague, if it has not been killed, at all events has been scotched for a while. I think it is hardly fair, having regard to all the facts, that the Government should be asked specifically to go into legislation requiring most careful consideration. That consideration, I may hardly say, it will receive at the hands of this Government, or at the hands of any Government which may occupy the Treasury benches. I am perfectly certain the late Government gave it careful consideration, but the difficulty is not so easy to cope with as some hon. members seem to think. I think the hon. member for Barcoo, who moved the adjournment of the House, knows as well as I do that the matter cannot be dealt with rapidly, and that there are many surrounding circumstances to be dealt with. I think the hon. member may rest satisfied that the Government will give the matter their serious consideration, and that it has not only been considered by the Minister for Lands, but by every member of the Ministry. He should be satisfied when he hears that the matter will be attended to, and that it is being attended to at the present time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. Hume Black) said: Mr. Speaker,—I think, in addition to the information which the Colonial Secretary has given, and which I entirely endorse, that it may be satisfactory to hon. members, and I am certain it will be to the pastoral lessees of this country, to know that the Government have not been neglectful in any way. And in taking this credit to the present Government, I beg also to offer my congratulation to the late Government for the steps they took, and the anxiety they displayed to carry out the wishes of the House to obtain all the necessary information, and do all they possibly could in the same direction, which I, having the department under my control, am most anxious to do. There has not been one stone left unturned, I am sure, to obtain the most reliable information that it has been possible to obtain on this most important subject, and I say that the hon. member for Barcoo really thinks that in this matter I depend entirely upon reports. I would like to hear what the hon. member depends upon. The distance from Brisbane to the south-western corner of the colony is so great that it is only by reports that we can ascertain the real truth in connection with this matter. This Government, and I may say the previous Government also, in my opinion, have taken the most adequate steps to obtain the most reliable information upon this subject, and what do we find? A few years ago, acting in the most judicious manner, this House passed a vote for the erection of a rabbit-proof fence along our southern and western border, of £50,000, and that amount was subsequently increased by another £50,000, making altogether £100,000. And the House was assured that if the Government accepted contracts—the previous Government especially—for the erection of that fence, that would prevent the influx of rabbits into this colony. I am not going to discuss the frightful calamity it would be to this colony if the rabbits were once to obtain a footing here. I have been connected with the pastoral interest quite as long as the hon. member for Barcoo; and, probably when he was a very young fellow indeed, I was actively engaged in it. I know from my actual experience the calamity it would be to this colony if Queensland were devastated by rabbits, like New South Wales or Victoria. The Government

have taken the most active steps, and are still taking the most active steps, to have that fence erected. Up to the present time 316 miles of fencing have been erected, and there are 252 miles contracted for, in course of erection, and being erected as rapidly as possible, considering the season and the difficulty of transit. We have 118 miles still unlet, but which Mr. Donaldson, our rabbit inspector, has full authority to accept tenders for, as soon as ever he can get contractors to go on to the ground and erect it. There has been no hesitation whatever, either on the part of the past Government or of this, in giving effect to the known wishes of the House in the matter. But it unfortunately happened that, before the south-western fence was erected, a few rabbits did undoubtedly get into Queensland. We have received authentic information of rabbits having been found, and I have laid on the table of the House a map which gives the dates upon which what were, in the majority of cases, traces only of rabbits were found. Wherever traces have been found, even when the rabbits have not been actually seen, they have been marked, and every record upon that map has been authenticated, and hon. members can satisfy themselves as to the dates upon which the traces were found, and the authority upon which the department has reason to believe rabbits did exist. Hon. members will see that the majority of traces were found from fourteen to eighteen months ago. Within the last twelve months there has been no extension northwards; there have been no traces. I was assured yesterday by two gentlemen who visited me, and who expressed the greatest anxiety upon the question, that rabbits have been found in some numbers at Adavale on the Bulloo, a long distance inland. I determined that I would ascertain without any delay the truth of this report. I immediately had a telegram sent to Adavale, and I received a reply just before coming to the House this afternoon. I am only referring to this case to point out to hon. members the difficulty that there is in relying upon reports. The hon. member for Barcoo said I relied only upon reports; but I take the first opportunity of verifying the truth or otherwise of those reports. The telegram I sent yesterday was to Mr. Walsh, the acting clerk of petty sessions, Adavale:—

“Has it come to your knowledge that rabbits have been seen in the vicinity of Adavale? If so please give particulars.”

I received the following reply to that telegram to-day:—

“Acting C.P.S. away on duty in the bush. Rabbits have not been heard of in the vicinity of Adavale.”

Now, this is one of many similar reports which the department are receiving from time to time from gentlemen who, no doubt, are fully aware of the danger of the incursion of rabbits if they are not checked, and they would only be too glad to see the Government of the country put to enormous expense for putting up an additional line of fencing. Now, so anxious was I to obtain the most reliable information on this subject, that, not satisfied with the reports that our rabbit inspector, Mr. Donaldson, was sending down from time to time, I wired to that gentleman to come to Brisbane so that I could have a personal interview with him, and ascertain the urgency or otherwise of additional legislation this session. He came here, and I had an interview with him. I found him a thoroughly intelligent, reliable man—a man who was so anxious to get back to his work that he only stayed a very few days in Brisbane, and immediately returned. He is, I really believe, one of the best men we could possibly have for this duty, and he informed me that the erection of the fence, which has cost us £78,000 up to the present time, has been effectual in preventing



an incursion of rabbits into Queensland. He said that traces were undoubtedly to be found here and there. He has now employed the two parties of men to whom he refers in his report—and each party consists of three men paid by the department and overseered by the overseers of the stations upon which they are employed—in the destruction of rabbits. The moment Mr. Donaldson hears that rabbits are to be found in any particular locality he immediately sends one of those parties of men, who are employed by the week and not by the number of scalps that they get. It is to the interest of the overseers or the managers of the stations to see that these men do their work, and what is the result? I may mention that, in addition to the two parties employed already, Mr. Donaldson has full instructions from me that if he finds it necessary he may put on twenty different parties. If he finds that the rabbits are increasing he has full power from the department to put on an additional party wherever necessary to stop their spread. All we ask of the lessees is that their manager or overseer shall see that the men do actually destroy the rabbits on their particular stations. The department is fully alive to the danger of the colony if the rabbits increase. I contend that, having once checked the increase of rabbits, we have some right to expect that the pastoral lessee will do something. The pastoral lessee represents that the rabbits are ruin to him, and he at once comes to the Government. It means ruin to him probably, and it is surely to his interest to do something in the way of destroying these rabbits. But I regret to say that in some cases, instead of that being done, application is made at once to the Government. The Government are to step in and save him from what he contends is ruin.

Mr. MURPHY: That is a very unfair statement.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I regret to say it is a very true statement. The Government have been accused, especially by the hon. member for Barcoo, of not accepting their responsibility in this matter. I contend that the previous Government went as far as any Government could be expected to go, and I certainly contend that since I have had the management of the Lands Department I have not left one single stone unturned to obtain the fullest and most reliable information, and I am prepared to lay it at any time before this House. Mr. Donaldson in his report, not knowing what the Government propose to do, states that another fence should be erected. The present fence goes from Mungindi to Charleville, and from Charleville to the western border. That fence will cost £98,000, and I may say there is every reason to expect that if the apprehensions entertained by some hon. members are realised—that the moment we get favourable seasons there will be a sudden wave of rabbits, notwithstanding the fact that we have already shut them out to a great extent—then by the time we have spent £98,000 the country will be asked for another £100,000 for another fence further inland. I know that the Government are fully aware of the danger, and I know that the Government are prepared to adopt every necessary step to prevent the spread of rabbits by the means I have pointed out. The Government will obtain the most reliable information during the recess as to the best means to be adopted, if they find that this plague is likely to increase; but I think it would be very premature, at all events, were we to introduce an elaborate scheme for the extermination of the rabbits at this late period of the session. I may tell hon. gentle-

men that a scheme has been prepared, and I am prepared during the recess to visit the locality myself, so as to be able to speak from my own personal knowledge as to what the danger to be prevented really is; and if I find that the danger exists to an extent greater than I am prepared to acknowledge at the present time, I shall be prepared, and the Government will be prepared, at the earliest possible date next year to bring down such a measure as will satisfy not only the pastoral lessees, but also the agriculturists of the colony—including those in the more northern parts of the colony—that the danger to be prevented will be effectually checked.

Mr. STEVENS said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad to find that the Government are taking such an active interest in this question, because I fancy there is an impression abroad that the Government were not pushing forward the fence as rapidly as they might. I gather from what was said by the Minister for Lands, and by the Colonial Secretary, that the remainder of the fence originally planned is to be finished, and I am glad to know that. There is not the slightest doubt that the erection of the fence so far has been of immense service. Persons who have travelled along it have told me that the difference in the pasture on the two sides of the fence is most marked. Where the rabbits are, the ground is bare, but on this side of the fence the grass is more or less good. I think the Minister for Lands was rather hard on those gentlemen who are deeply interested in this question, when he blamed them for not sending to the department any information they received, or facts which had come under their knowledge, as to the presence of rabbits on their runs. A squatter is hardly likely to advertise the fact that rabbits are on his run, because that would very soon settle it as a saleable commodity, besides injuring his standing with financial institutions. As to a Government official at Adavale stating that he had not heard of rabbits being in the locality, that does not prove that there are no rabbits there. We have had instances in which men have been sent specially to report on the presence of rabbits, and they have failed to ferret them out though they have been in the locality. I am positive that rabbits are in the vicinity of Cunnamulla at the present time, because I have conversed with men who have seen not only the traces of rabbits but also rabbits themselves, and I believe they are thoroughly reliable men. With regard to legislation on the subject, one of the chief objects is not that the Government should bear the expense, but that persons whose runs are infested shall be compelled to do away with the rabbits by the means decided upon. The Minister for Lands, in speaking of the fence, was rather unfair to the pastoral lessees when he made it appear that they would expect another line of fence to be erected at the cost of the country, which, I think, is not the case. I think that, whatever expensive legislation may be brought about, the pastoral lessees will be fully prepared to pay their fair share. It is evident that the Government cannot see their way to legislate on the question this session, but I hope they will do so early next session. The question is one of vast importance, and I hope it will not be from any action of this House that its vastness may be brought home to hon. members in the near future.

Mr. STEVENSON said: Mr. Speaker,—This is no new subject for this House to discuss, and hon. members will give credit to the hon. member who has just sat down for having been the first to introduce the question. The hon. member for Logan deserves more credit than anyone else for having brought the rabbit question

forward. I also have taken a great interest in the question, but I admit I have got rather lukewarm; from the fact that you cannot get three squatters from any part of the colony to agree as to the proper course to take. I was one of the delegates to the conference, and I had the greatest trouble to get them to make concessions to one another. In the North they wanted a fence hundreds of miles from where the rabbits were known to be, simply to protect themselves; in the South they were in favour of enclosing the country in small areas, forming a sort of network of fencing; and I had to tell them that if they were not prepared to make concessions to one another it would be impossible to get the Government to do anything. There was the greatest difficulty in coming to any conclusion. Besides, the reports are so contradictory that no man can rely on them. One says that the rabbits are in one place one day, and another day some one else says they are not there. When the hon. member for Warrego was out west electioneering, he sent down a report that rabbits had been seen at Adavale, but a Government official there reports that no rabbits have been seen there. One man believes in a fence; another man does not believe in a fence. I cannot see how in the world we are going to deal with the question under those circumstances. I think that if the Government get this fence erected along the border, they will have done all that can be expected of them, and the squatters will have to protect themselves afterwards. Notwithstanding all that has been said about rabbits, I believe they are something like marsupials—I believe they come and go. I have seen marsupials in large numbers one year and the next year disappear. Squatters have had to protect themselves from marsupials by putting up fences, and I am afraid that is the only effectual way to deal with the rabbits. What with droughts, marsupials, and rabbits, squatting is a pretty mean business; and it is just as well to see what the country will come to without Government protection. I believe the squatters ought to protect themselves after what the Government have done already. There is one thing alluded to as to what has been done by the late Government in regard to this matter; and I would like to say a word with respect to the management of the business. I never could understand why, after all the expense gone to in this matter, seventeen miles of the worst infested country was left open for the rabbits to come in as they pleased. I have never heard a satisfactory explanation of that in the House, and it is a thing I could not understand. Another point I may refer to is, that when the conference was held on this subject certain gentlemen were appointed to take the matter in hand. I was not one myself as I had not time to attend to it, but I believe the hon. member for Barcoo, the hon. member for Warrego, and the hon. member for Cunningham were amongst those appointed to look after the matter. I was one of the deputation that waited upon the Premier on the subject, and I can say we could not have been met in a more friendly spirit than we were on that occasion, and I understood that the Premier, along with the Minister for Lands, had taken the greatest trouble on the question, and were drafting a Bill to be introduced this session. I have also been led to understand since that the Government have been doing all they could in pushing on this border fence, and that an understanding was come to between the gentlemen I have referred to and the Government that there was really no pressing necessity for a Bill to be brought in this session. It is rather unfair, after that understanding, for the hon. member for Barcoo to

move the adjournment and blame the Government on the subject this afternoon.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the hon. member for Barcoo replies, I wish to take this opportunity of expressing the satisfaction I feel in finding that at last the efforts of the late Government in dealing with this question are recognised. We were told for months and months that we had done, and were doing, absolutely nothing, and that the fence was worse than useless. We were sickened by those stories for months, and all through the general election. Why, even during this session the hon. gentleman who moved this motion told the House that the late Government had done nothing, that the country was overrun with rabbits, and the fence was worse than useless! I am glad to find our efforts have at last been recognised, as they have been, gracefully and fairly, by hon. members and by members of the Government this afternoon. On looking at the map which the Minister for Lands has laid on the table I find it gives full details; and it appears from it that rabbits have been reported to be at various places north of the fence, but the dates in which they were reported from these places are all more than twelve months ago. So that practically there are no rabbits north of the fence, and all the places where they were reported to have been seen in this colony were to the north of the fence. That is what appears by the map, and it is a most satisfactory thing to see.

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to refer to the seventeen-mile gap in the fence, alluded to by an hon. member on the other side of the House. I may say that the first I heard of that was about three months ago, and I then went to the Under Secretary for Lands and asked him whether he was aware of the existence of such a gap in the fence before that time, and he assured me he was not, otherwise the Minister for Lands would have been informed. I have not seen the particulars of the information which the hon. member refers to, and I am not sure that it is an established fact yet that there ever has been a gap of seventeen miles in the fence. When I heard of it I suggested, I think to the Minister for Lands himself, and if not to him to the Under-Secretary, that the gentleman in charge of the erection of that fence should be called upon to report upon that point, and tell us whether any such gap existed; but I do not know whether he has received any information on the subject. I have been very pleased at the tone of the discussion upon this subject, and especially that adopted by the gentlemen connected with the pastoral interest, and I am glad to find that they have done ample justice to the late Government in the matter. I adopted the plan of having marked on the map of the fence every authenticated place where rabbits were found, and I am glad to see that the Minister for Lands is keeping up that system. I would like to know from the Minister for Lands whether Mr. Donaldson was requested to report upon the existence of the gap of seventeen miles which had been spoken about, and whether any such gap existed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said: Mr. Speaker,—By permission of the House I will reply to the hon. gentleman. With regard to that gap in the rabbit fence, I hold in my hand a report from Mr. Donaldson on that particular subject. I had a telegram sent him asking for a full explanation about it. His report is too lengthy to read, but I will lay it upon the table of the House for the perusal of hon. members who may wish to see it. The substance of it is this: No doubt the gap did exist but it was all under water, and, as the water receded, the fence was immediately carried as far as it could

be got safely into the water. Mr. Donaldson most emphatically states that no rabbits ever got in through that gap. He says in his report that the gap in the rabbit-proof fence is now reduced to three miles, and that he expects to have it all closed in by the end of September. I have not had any information from Mr. Donaldson as to whether it has yet been entirely closed.

**AN HONOURABLE MEMBER:** Is there water there still?

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** I believe there is about ten miles of water there now. I do not think I am justified in saying that the whole of the gap will be closed, even at the time mentioned by Mr. Donaldson, because there is a sort of lake there which in flood time spreads out for miles, and, as the flood waters recede, the fence is carried up to them without any unnecessary delay. There has been an immense amount of difficulty in the erection of this rabbit-proof fence, owing to the vicissitudes of climate in that district. At one time of the year a great deal of the country is under water and the teams cannot travel with wire or fencing, and then, in a few months, so excessive a drought prevails that the men cannot work for want of water. But, in order that no time should be lost, and that the Government should not be blamed in any way for neglecting this very important subject, I may mention—what I forgot to mention before—that about two months ago two other gentlemen were sent out to assist Mr. Donaldson. It was perfectly impossible that he could control and keep the whole of this enormous border-line in order single-handed, and he has now the assistance of two most active men, who are thorough bushmen. The three, between them, will be able to send in more frequent reports than we have hitherto had concerning the fence and the progress of the rabbits, and the Government will be in a position to give very much more frequent and reliable information than they have been able to give up to the present time.

**MR. ALLAN** said: Mr. Speaker,—With the permission of the House, before the hon. member for Barcoo replies, I wish to make a personal explanation in regard to what fell from the hon. member for Clermont with respect to my being one of those gentlemen appointed to look after the bringing forward of a Bill dealing with this subject this year. I admit that I was one of those appointed, and when I came down here at the beginning of this session I made a point of asking some of the other gentlemen appointed with me to look after this matter and see what course we should take, and the answer I got then was, to me, thoroughly satisfactory. I was told that the Government were going to deal with this matter themselves, and had a Bill drafted for the purpose. Had I known that the Government were not going to bring one in I certainly should have thought it imperative on me to insist that the committee appointed for that purpose should have drafted a Bill. That is the answer I have to give to the statement made by the hon. member. As for his remark, that he presumed we had come to some arrangement with the Government—

**THE SPEAKER:** I must point out to the hon. member that he is exceeding the bounds of a personal explanation.

**MR. MURPHY,** in reply, said: Mr. Speaker, —I will not detain the House long, but I wish to say a few words in reply to the remarks made by the Colonial Secretary to the effect that this rabbit scare is only being got up by squatters for the purpose of securing the resumed part of their runs. That is a statement which I think requires no contradiction from me, because it will be allowed by most members of this House

that the rabbit scare is a real and live one, and though some squatters may take advantage of their position to put the Government into a hole, I must say that that is not the intention or wish of the general body of squatters in the colony. They have no desire to acquire the resumed part of their runs or to make use of the rabbit scare in any way for that purpose; and I know that I am speaking the opinions of my brother squatters all over the colony in saying that they do not wish to make this rabbit scare a lever to better their position in any shape or form. I think the remark of the hon. gentleman was entirely uncalled for and unfair. I also think the remark of the Minister for Lands, that the squatters in the districts where the rabbits were now coming were not giving the Government any assistance in exterminating the pest, was a very unfair and uncalled-for reflection. I know for a fact that, on all stations where rabbits are at present, the squatters are employing men on their own account to exterminate the animals. And Mr. Donaldson, in his report, states that the squatters there are helping the Government parties in the district. I will just read a few words from his report to prove that. He says:—

"The arrangements made with the owners of Currawinya and Caiwarroo Stations—that the Government agrees to pay the wages of three men for each camp, the station providing rations and an overseer (if necessary), besides removing the camp where required—I find works very well on these stations."

There it is shown that the owners of the stations are giving assistance.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** It is the Government party.

**MR. MURPHY:** Yes, it is the Government party; but the station provides them with rations.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** And the Government pay for the rations.

**MR. MURPHY:** And the owners of the station remove the camp where required, thereby assisting the Government, and yet the hon. gentleman said the squatters gave no assistance to the Government. But, besides that, they are destroying rabbits at their own expense on many stations, and I am sure that the hon. member for Warrego will indorse the statement that the pastoral tenants in that portion of the colony are doing all they can themselves, as well as assisting the Government parties. They are rendering assistance by providing Government parties with rations, even although they are charging for them, because it is a great convenience to the Government to get the rations for their men on the spot. I know that the station-owners there are destroying rabbits independent of the Government altogether, and have done so long before any rabbiting party was sent there by the Government. The leader of the Opposition tried to lead this House astray just now in the most disingenuous way. He argued that, because the marks on the map to which he referred had been there for twelve months, therefore there were no rabbits north of the fence. The hon. gentleman knows that that was not an honest statement of the facts; because if he had read this report of Mr. Donaldson he would have seen that rabbits are actually in the colony. Because they have never changed the marks which were on the map twelve months ago, that does not prove anything; it does not even prove that rabbits were there.

**MR. JORDAN:** Yes; it does.

**MR. MURPHY:** Very well; the hon. gentleman says "yes, it does." I say that what he says is true; but the fact that no further marks have been put on the map simply shows that no attempt has been made to localise the rabbits

since the late Minister for Lands localised them on that map. Mr. Donaldson says, "I am unable to form any idea as to the number of rabbits in this colony, but three men, under an overseer, are able to catch from ten to twenty per week," and yet the leader of the Opposition tried to make the country and this House believe that there are no rabbits in the colony. Mr. Donaldson's statement completely did away with that argument. I do not wish to say anything more about this matter. I know I have wearied the House over and over again on the subject. I have wearied myself; I am sick and tired of the whole matter. I am only sorry that my efforts have been in vain so far as galvanising this Government and the late Government into action is concerned. I give the late Government credit for what they did, but the mistake they made was that they went too slowly. The present Government are making the same mistake. This matter cannot be done slowly. If we are going to stay the pest we must act promptly and quickly, and what I complain of in respect to the late Government is that they got on too slowly, that they did not act at once. If, instead of sending Mr. Golden down South to make the false report he did make, they had only written to the neighbouring Government, they would have found that it was absolutely necessary to fence the rabbits out of Queensland. They would have been convinced of that, and would have started twelve months before they did. It was because their action was delayed that the rabbits got into the colony. The present Government are doing the same thing. As the Colonial Secretary has said, it is no doubt a difficult question to deal with. The pastoral tenants have tried and failed, but that is no reason why another attempt should not be made to grapple with what we know is an extreme danger to the colony. I am sorry the Government have not dealt with the matter.

#### THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: How is it to be done?

Mr. MURPHY said: I have no doubt there is a way to do it, and I am sure the Government will be able to find a way out of the difficulty. They have made an attempt to deal with the question so far as drafting a Bill goes, and I am only sorry that they did not see fit to bring that Bill before the House. With the permission of the House, I will withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That, during the remainder of this session, the House meet at 3 p.m. on Monday in each week, in addition to the days of meeting already appointed by by Sessional Order, and that the Government business take precedence on that day—

said: Mr. Speaker,—When the session commenced, I anticipated that we would finish business towards the end of October, and the reason I gave for that was that it would be a good thing if we could resume the winter sessions that we had in previous years. That was my desire. I think it very undesirable that we should sit during November, December, January or February, and the only way to get out of the difficulty is to finish the session as soon as we can; and we can hasten over work, at all events, by sitting on Monday. Northern members will be especially inconvenienced by a motion of this kind. I think Southern members will find it equally convenient. I know quite well it is imposing a heavy duty upon members of Parliament to sit during Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; but, at the same time, we are not imposing any duty upon them that we are not imposing, to a heavier extent, on ourselves.

When I say "ourselves," I mean the Ministry, who have decided to bring forward this motion. It is, of course, very heavy work; at the same time it is very much better that we should finish the work we have to do in the cooler part of the year, than carry the session into the hot months, when we shall not be so well able to carry on business. I know that I am very much disinclined to sit during November, and very likely will not. I may indicate at the present time the work that is before the House. Of course hon. members can see what is on the notice paper. There is very little there that will take much time, with the exception of the Estimates, and the Estimates themselves should, this year, not be the matter of much debate, considering that they are pretty much the Estimates of the previous year; and I have calculated upon that accordingly. I cannot move this motion without expressing my thanks to the Opposition for the way in which they have treated the heavier business before the House. The assistance I have received from the leader of the Opposition in the most important measure, next to the Customs Duties Bill, now before the House has been very great. As hon. members must have seen, he has been quite as indefatigable as any Minister in his attention to the work of the House. I, therefore, feel that personally I must make that statement, because, of course, it involves a considerable amount of work on him, he at the same time not being a Minister. In the interests of speedy and good government I ask hon. members to meet me on this motion to sit on Mondays. I cannot see any reason against it; and the reason that applies to hon. members who have to work on either side of course applies equally to Ministers—or perhaps to a greater extent.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I do not rise to offer any opposition to this motion, but I regret very much that the necessity should have arisen for it to be made. I thank the hon. gentleman for the very generous remarks he has made respecting whatever assistance I have been able to give. I have always laid down for myself a certain rule of conduct in this House: that is, to assist as far as possible in the conduct of public business, and I trust I shall always do so. I think to do serious work on five evenings a week is more than any man can undertake—that is, if it is continuous work. In England they do not do it. They take Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and Wednesday is an off-night. I have a vivid remembrance of one or two weeks' work of that kind, and it was more than I could stand when I was stronger than I am now. I, therefore, think that in arranging the business paper for Monday the hon. gentleman should take the Estimates, or something that may be considered light work. We are all, I believe, anxious to finish the session as soon as possible after disposing of absolutely necessary work. Before I sit down I wish to offer a suggestion to the hon. gentleman with regard to the next motion on the paper—that Government business take precedence on Fridays. If he carries that, private business is gone for this session. I, therefore, suggest that he should give members next Friday, at all events. If he does not they will have no chance of getting their business through this session. If that motion were made after next week instead of to-night, there would be no objection to it.

The PREMIER said: I have already intimated to those members who have private business on the paper that I am quite willing to give them next Friday.

Question put and passed.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That Government business have precedence on Friday, in addition to the days already set apart by Sessional Order for such precedence—

said: Mr. Speaker,—As I have just stated, I have already agreed to let private business take precedence next Friday. I felt myself that otherwise it would be allowing too little time for private business, and there is nothing gained by debarring private members from getting their business through. I may say, in addition, that, consistent with the carrying on of Government business as well, we shall always be open to meet private members in a similar way to this. There is no necessity to alter the motion, because, as I have stated, I have already made arrangements by which private business will be taken next Friday.

Question put and passed.

## CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

## COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith), the House went into Committee to consider the Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1—"Repeal of Acts in schedule"—

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: That although that clause might raise the debate on the Beer Duty Act of 1885, which was mentioned in the schedule, it would be more convenient to postpone consideration of it until they came to the schedule.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was no use discussing the beer duty on that clause, because they could only talk about it; they could not decide the question.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 to 6 passed as printed.

On clause 7, as follows:—

"If the importer of such goods, or his agent, shall neglect or refuse to pay the duties imposed thereon within seven days after such examination and assessment by the proper officer, or other person appointed for that purpose under any regulation or order by the Governor in Council, and also the cost of such examination and assessment in the event of the valuation being greater than declared on the bill of entry, the Collector or other proper officer may, and he is hereby required to, take and secure such goods, with the packages thereof, and shall cause the same to be publicly sold within the space of twenty days at the most after such examination, and at such time and place as such officer shall, by four or more days' public notice, appoint for that purpose, and the said goods shall be sold to the highest bidder, and the money arising from the sale thereof shall be applied in the first place in payment of the duties due upon such goods, together with the costs and charges that shall have been paid or incurred for or on account of such examination and sale, and in the second place towards payment to the importer or his agent of the declared value of the said goods as entered, together with any freight and charges paid thereon by such importer or his agent, not exceeding ordinary or current rates, and the balance (if any) shall be paid, the one moiety thereof to the officer who shall have detained and secured the goods, and the other moiety to the account of Customs duties, and such last-mentioned moiety shall go to and form part of the Consolidated Revenue of Queensland. Provided, nevertheless, that the Collector of Customs may, if he shall think fit, elect, after payment in the first place of the duties, costs, and charges as aforesaid, to pay the balance to the importer of the said goods or his agent, less ten pounds per centum, which sum so deducted shall be paid, the one moiety thereof to the officer who shall have detained and secured the goods, and the other moiety to the account of Customs duties, and such last-mentioned moiety shall go to and form part of the Consolidated Revenue of Queensland."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that last night the hon. member for North Brisbane took exception to the clause, but he believed the

exception arose from a misapprehension. The proviso gave an alternative mode of dealing with a case in which false entries had been passed. It had no reference whatever to the 10 per cent. duty that was in the Act of 1870.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the intention of the clause was, that a man should not, under any circumstances, gain anything by making an undervaluation. It was provided that if he did make an undervaluation, and did not pay the proper duty, the goods were to be sold, and out of the proceeds he was to get the declared value of his goods—the value he entered them at.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: After paying duty in both cases. The 10 per cent. is an additional fine.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that if the object was to impose whichever penalty might be most beneficial to the country, the 10 per cent. being simply an arbitrary additional fine, he should offer no objection to the clause.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 8, as follows:—

"If any package entered for duty is found to contain goods not mentioned in the entry or invoice, or if any goods are found which do not correspond with the description thereof in the invoice, and such omission or non-correspondence shall appear to the Collector of Customs to have been made for the purpose of avoiding the payment of the duty or any part of the duty on such goods, or if it shall appear to the Collector of Customs that in any invoice or entry any goods entered for *ad valorem* duty have been undervalued with such intent as aforesaid, or if the oath or declaration made with regard to any such invoice or entry is wilfully false in any particular, then in any of the cases aforesaid all the packages and goods included or pretended to be included, or which ought to have been included, in such invoice or entry shall be forfeited, and the importer of the same shall for every such offence forfeit and pay a sum not to exceed two hundred pounds or less than ten pounds, to be recovered before any two or more justices of the peace sitting in petty sessions in the district where such offence to be tried shall be alleged to have been committed."

Mr. DRAKE said it might be desirable to increase the penalties under that section. The Act was originally drawn when the duty was 5 per cent. Now, with the exception of a few articles on the 5 per cent. list, all goods passing through the Custom-house would have to pay a very much higher duty, and the temptation to smuggle would be so much greater. An increased penalty might tend to prevent smuggling.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the penalty of £200 was a big one, and he did not think it could be increased.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 9, as follows:—

"No goods entered out for drawback on or after the twelfth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, shall be entitled to a greater amount of drawback than the duty actually paid on such goods."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that last night the hon. member for North Brisbane pointed out that the clause was not necessary, and that it was provided for elsewhere. He had since found that it was provided for in the Customs Regulations Act.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the idea was a very good one. It was possible if the drawback was more than the duty now payable.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said it was possible where the duties had been decreased. By that Bill they would actually get back the duty paid, and he thought that was fair. The hon. member suggested that it was worthy of consideration whether a person should not get as a drawback the actual amount that was due on the same class of goods at that particular time. Suppose a case of goods introduced, the duty

upon which had been, say, 2d. per lb. before, and it was decreased now to 1d. per lb., he thought it was only fair that the importer should get back the 2d. actually paid, because the principle of giving drawbacks was that the import duty should not be exacted at all. He did not think it would be fair to introduce the other idea.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the consequence of that would probably be that goods would be re-shipped which had formerly been imported at 15 per cent., they would be exported, and a drawback of 15 per cent. allowed. The shipper would make arrangements to put them on board the ship at a cheap freight, export them to Sydney, and bring them back again, and pay, perhaps, a duty of 5 per cent. That was what the leader of the Opposition was trying to guard against, and he was sure it could be done.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that had not occurred to him, but the idea was a good one, and he did not think that should be allowed. The Act of 1873 provided that the drawback should be the actual amount paid on the goods. The clause should read that they should not be entitled to a greater amount of drawback than the duty which would have been payable on the goods if they had been imported after that date.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he did not think any great hardship would be incurred by that clause, because there was very little export trade of that nature; and if any export trade should spring up it would be in order to obtain the difference between the drawback and the first duty.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought they could get over the difficulty. He thought it was a fair thing that they should be allowed as drawback the amount paid; but to prevent fraud of that kind they might provide that the clause should not apply to articles in the 3rd schedule—the articles to be exempted from duty. The *ad valorem* duties to some extent might be operated upon, but they were not as likely to be operated upon as the articles in the free list. For instance, supposing paper were free. Those who had paid  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. *ad valorem* would claim that drawback, and send the paper down to Sydney, and then bring it back free; and as there was the possibility of that they should provide for it, by saying that no drawback was to be allowed at all in respect of articles in schedule 3.

Mr. UNMACK said he thought that was hardly fair. He thought the drawback should be equal to the duty imposed under schedule 3.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the articles in schedule 3 were exempted from duty. He would draft a clause stating that no drawback should be allowed in respect of any goods included in schedule 3. He did not think it was of any importance.

Mr. UNMACK said the suggestion scarcely met the case, because it chiefly referred to those goods which had been reduced from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to 5 per cent. *ad valorem*, and to some goods having formerly fixed duties. It would pay them to send the goods away, and pay a nominal freight from here to Sydney, in order to save the difference in the duty.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he thought it would meet the case if they provided that the drawback should not be greater than the duty which would have been payable on the goods if they had been imported after that date. He believed if the duty were 1 per cent. the drawback should be 1 per cent.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that would cover it, but it was a violation of the fair principle of the Custom-house. The principle

of the Custom-house was that when a man brought goods not for use in the country they were stored here, and he could get the drawback the moment he took the goods away. It was not a matter affecting the revenue to more than £20, and he would accept the amendment of the hon. gentleman.

Mr. ISAMBERT said the hardship was not so much as was imagined. Clause 19 provided for anything of that kind, and he thought they should not give discretionary powers to the Treasurer. Certain dates should be put in clause 19, and that would meet the difficulty.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he would propose that the last five words of the clause be omitted, with the view of inserting the words "if any, which would have been payable on the goods if they had been imported after that date."

Amendment agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 10 passed as printed.

On clause 11—

"The Collector of Customs may, subject to regulations to be approved of by the Governor in Council, permit the entry of any goods under this Act in such form and manner and on such conditions as he may direct to meet the exigencies of any case to which the provisions of this or any other Act relating to the Customs may not be strictly applicable."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he hardly understood the meaning of the clause.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said if there were a duty upon fresh fruit, for instance, the object would be to get the fruit straight away on to the table of the consumer; and if importers had to wait until the customary forms were gone through, the fruit would be bad. The particular arrangements would have to be left to the Customs officers, depending upon the good faith of the people.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12 passed as printed.

On clause 13—

"It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council from time to time to exempt from the payment of duty, and to order to be admitted free of duty, any machinery which, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, having regard to the appliances available therefor, cannot be constructed in Queensland."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the clause was a very difficult one to frame. He did not wish to have, nor did he wish any other Government to be subject to continual questioning by importers in regard to the kind of machinery that was to be exempted. In the first place, the wording of the present clause was unfortunate in regard to the phrase "having regard to the appliances available therefor." He had looked at the criticisms passed by the hon. member for North Brisbane last night, and what he said was quite correct. The clause gave far too much power to the Government—a power he did not want for himself. The meaning he intended to give to the clause was not that they should exempt all machinery that, having regard to the appliances in the colony at the time, could not be manufactured here. That would be too narrow. He wanted it to go a good deal beyond that, and the only way he saw out of the difficulty was to substitute the word "possible" for the word "available," and make it read "having regard to the appliances possible therefor." If he were acting as Treasurer, and a man claimed that a certain machine should be exempted, he should say at once that that machine could be just as well made in the colony as an ordinary boiler. If the man then stated that the tools applicable were not in the colony, that would be a valid objection on his

part if the word "available" were retained; but it would not be valid if the word "possible" were there. Even then a great deal would be left to the Treasurer. He could not avoid that; but whenever an exemption was made in regard to any machines, they must provide that it was gazetted; so that all who imported similar machines would be on the same ground.

Mr. ISAMBERT said there was one piece of work likely to be imported, and that was a platinum retort for the manufacture of sulphuric acid. It was well known that that could not be made in the colony, and the manufacture of sulphuric acid ought to be encouraged. The article was a platinum retort for concentrating sulphuric acid.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Why could it not be made in the colony?

Mr. ISAMBERT said it was a very expensive thing, and was a specialty.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he thought that would come under the 3rd schedule, which exempted articles to be used and applied solely in the fabrication of goods within the colony.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought that would meet the views of the Committee better to substitute the word "possible" for "available"; and if no hon. member wished to move a previous amendment, he would move that the word "available" be omitted with the view of inserting the word "possible."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that substituting the word "possible" for the word "available" would not make any difference. It would still be a matter of opinion over which there would be no control. If the Minister responsible for the administration of the Act thought that certain machinery could not be made in the colony there was an end of it; there was no appeal. He did not wish to give undue power to any Government, but the clause proposed to give absolute power in regard to the exemption of machinery from duty; and the effect upon the establishment of new industries in the colony might be serious. No doubt there were some machines that could not be made in the colony at the present time; and some of them ought to be in the free list. Phonographs, for instance, were not likely to be manufactured in the colony for a long time, and there was no reason why a duty should be placed upon them for some time to come. The scheme of the tariff, as he understood it, was to encourage new industries; and though there were some kinds of machinery that could not at present be made in the colony, everything was possible in time. But under the clause what was possible would only mean what in the opinion of the Government was possible. He thought the hon. member was trying to do what was impossible in defining the circumstances under which the Government might safely be allowed to alter the tariff.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that what the hon. gentleman said struck him as the difficulty in connection with the clause, as he did not himself believe in giving the Governor in Council so much power. In inserting the clause he had the idea that the Government should have the power to meet cases which could not be given in detail at the present time, but he would much rather incur the other difficulty of making such machinery pay duty than give such a wholesale power to the Government as was given under clause 13. He would like to see some way to limit it, but he could not do it better than by the amendment he had suggested himself.

Mr. HAMILTON said it had been considered desirable that many machines should be exempt from duty, because, although, as the leader of the

Opposition said, it was possible to make them here, they could not be made with the present appliances in the colony, unless at very great expense. For that reason certain machines had been already exempted from duty, such as printing presses, hydraulic machinery of different kinds, and planing machinery and machinery for joinery, and so on. It was considered desirable to put them on the free list, because, although they might possibly be made here, they would cost a great deal of money. For the same reason that clause had been introduced, in order that other machines might be placed on the free list, which could not be made here conveniently with present appliances. For instance, there were Black's steam pump, which was a patent, and other steam pumps used in mining, and they, like several other machines, should be placed on the free list. He thought it a wise thing to allow the Colonial Treasurer to put such machinery on the free list. The foundry men in the colony imported those pumps from England, and acted here simply as agents for them; but as soon as they could be made here they could be taken off the free list and a duty imposed upon them just as on other machinery.

Mr. AGNEW said it was possible that there were firms in the colony importing these pumps, but he questioned very much whether there was a foundry in the colony that imported them.

Mr. HAMILTON: I will give you the names of foundries importing them—Walker's and Tooth's.

Mr. AGNEW said it was a pity they did import them. He thought Walker's foundry had sufficient machinery to make those particular pumps in the colony.

Mr. HAMILTON: The pump is a patent.

Mr. AGNEW said that was the difficulty, and he was glad to hear the Colonial Treasurer say that he was not in favour of the present patent laws in the colony.

Mr. HAMILTON: What do you say to planing machines?

Mr. AGNEW said most of them were patents too. They could not always be importing those machines, and there must be some stage at which they would be manufactured for the first time in the colony, and he held the opinion that they would never have them manufactured in the colony unless they put a duty upon them. Some of them could not be manufactured here at the present time, as the patent rights prevented that being done, but there were no difficulties in the mechanism to prevent them being made here. More difficult machinery was being made in the colony than that referred to by the hon. member for Cook. They were engaged in the manufacture of locomotives—and a locomotive included a pump, and a difficult pump—in the colony, and they had already manufactured dredges, which were admitted by most people to be as good as those brought out from home.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Far better.

Mr. AGNEW said an hon. member said "Far better," and he believed they were; but he would point out that if they could manufacture locomotives, engines, and dredges, there was no reason why they could not manufacture such small articles as pumps.

Mr. HAMILTON: When we have the appliances to manufacture them the duty can be imposed.

Mr. AGNEW said the hon. member was in error in supposing that they had not the appliances for the manufacture of those articles. Another inconsistency in the argument might easily be shown, as if they exempted those pumps and other machines mentioned there was much more

reason for exempting the machinery and appliances by which they were made. The planing machines mentioned were purely wood-planing machines, and any man with an ordinary hand tool—a jack-plane—could plane a piece of wood, but no man with a hand machine could plane a piece of iron; and if it was proper to exempt machines for planing wood, it was more reasonable to ask that the appliances for making those other machines should be exempt. He thought it was very dangerous to have that clause in the Bill at all, as the employers of machines in the colony would at all times represent to the Ministry of the day that the particular machines they used could not be manufactured here. There were a few things which could not be made here, and if they admitted any machines at all free of duty, they should be those used in the manufacture of machinery. Personally he would like to see clause 13 eliminated from the Bill. He had to pay his share of the duty on machines brought into the colony, and was still willing to do so; he would rather do that than see a clause like that passed under which every one would be striving to bring in their particular machines free. In the interest of the manufacturing industries of the colony it was well that that clause should be omitted. If it were not, the Government of the day, whatever party might be in power, would be harassed to death by people who wished to bring machines into the colony free, and who would represent that such machines could not be manufactured in the colony, while at the same time they could probably be turned out by the local factories at nearly the same price as it would cost to import them. Let everybody pay the 15 per cent. duty, and they would assist very materially in bringing about the manufacture of machines in the colony. They all knew that they would have to be made here some day, that they were not for ever going to import them, and they might as well begin now as that day five years. He sincerely hoped the clause would be omitted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not understand whether the leader of the Opposition contended that Parliament could not give the Government the power that would be conferred on them by that clause. The arguments the hon. member used, seemed to be that he knew of no instance in which such powers were delegated to a Government. There were such instances.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I know that.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the only question was whether, as a matter of policy, it was a right thing to do. When he put that clause in the Bill some six weeks ago, he thought it was a reasonable proposal. Of course he had got a great deal of information since then. The difficulty he foresaw had been mentioned by the hon. member for Nundah—namely, that applications would be continually made to the Government to admit certain machinery free. He (the Colonial Treasurer) did not now think that that was a power which should be given to anyone, and he believed the better way would be to omit the clause from the Bill. The remedy, if it was found desirable to exempt any machinery, would be to have the exemption passed through Parliament in the ordinary way. He thought, therefore, that they should negative the clause.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he only rose to say that he did not mean to suggest that Parliament could not give that power to the Government. Of course it could. Somebody in the neighbouring colony had foolishly contended that it could not—but he should not say foolishly because some of the judges thought so—and the Privy Council had decided that Parliament could delegate such power to the Government.

Question—That the clause stand part of the Bill—put and negatived.

On clause 14—"Machinery of certain vessels to be deemed imported goods"—

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that provision was included in the resolutions which passed the Committee of Ways and Means, but it was considered necessary to insert it as a clause in the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15—"Liquors containing more than 25 per cent. of proof spirit to be deemed spirits"—passed as printed.

On clause 16—"Colourable evasion of duty"—

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Does the hon. gentleman know how this clause has worked? Has it worked satisfactorily?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes; I understand it has worked very satisfactorily.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 17, as follows:—

"When any goods, which in a raw or unmanufactured state would be liable to a lower rate of duty on importation, are before importation subjected to any treatment which, in the opinion of the Collector of Customs, certified by him to the Colonial Treasurer and confirmed by the Treasurer, has been applied by way of partial conversion, or preparation for the conversion, of such goods into an article of merchandise which would be liable on importation to a higher rate of duty, but so that the goods cannot fairly be charged with such higher rate, then such goods shall be liable on importation into Queensland to duty at a rate equal to one-half of the duty which would be chargeable upon the article of merchandise into which they have been so partially converted or prepared to be converted."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that clause was intended to meet certain cases, but the same objection would probably be applicable to it as was applicable to clause 13. He, therefore, thought they had better negative it.

Question—That the clause stand part of the Bill—put and negatived.

Clause 18—"Duties on articles contracted for before the commencement of the Act"—passed as printed.

Clause 19—"Existing duties to be collected till"—was amended by inserting in the blank the words "thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight."

On clause 20, as follows:—

"Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or the schedules to the contrary, if, within thirty days from the passing of this Act, any person proves to the satisfaction of the Treasurer that orders for machinery, including engines, to be used by him and not for sale, were sent from Queensland before the twelfth day of September one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, either by himself or on his behalf, he shall, provided such machinery is delivered in Queensland within six months from the passing of this Act, be entitled to have the same admitted to entry, on arrival, on payment of duty thereon at the rate of five pence for every one hundred pounds of the value thereof."

Mr. HODGKINSON suggested that the period should be extended to sixty days.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the word "thirty" in line 2 be omitted, with the view of inserting "sixty."

Mr. HODGKINSON asked if it would be sufficient to give the proof referred to to the local officer of Customs, or must it be given to the Colonial Treasurer personally in Brisbane?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No; to the local officers.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.



On clause 21, as follows:—

"All goods imported for the supply of the public service of Queensland shall be exempt from the duties and imposts of every description whatsoever."

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the words "by the Government," be inserted after "imported."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH asked would that cover material imported by the commissioners for railways? It would be better to insert "by or on behalf of the Government."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he would accept the suggestion.

Question—That the words "by or on behalf of the Government" be inserted—put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to, with a further verbal amendment.

Clause 22—"Laws relating to the Customs, except where inconsistent, to be deemed to be incorporated with this Act, Customs Duties Act of 1870"—and Clause 23—"Commencement and short title"—put and passed.

On the 1st schedule, as follows:—

"FIRST SCHEDULE."

Date of Act.	Title of Act.
34 Vic. No. 1 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1870.
37 Vic. No. 8 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1874.
40 Vic. No. 5 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1876.
44 Vic. No. 12 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1880.
49 Vic. No. 9 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1885.
49 Vic. No. 10 ...	The Beer Duty Act of 1885.
50 Vic. No. 11 ...	The Customs Duties Act of 1886."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that raised the question of the repeal of the Beer Duty Act of 1885. He maintained that the repeal of that duty was entirely unjustifiable. No sound reason could be given for it. The Government no doubt were indebted very much to what he had called at the elections "the whisky party," or "the beer party," for their return to power, but that was not a sufficient reason for the repeal of the duty. Beer was the only kind of intoxicating liquor which was not taxed in this colony. There was scarcely a civilised country in the world where there was not an excise duty on beer. It was a duty that fell entirely upon the wealthy brewer, and not in the slightest degree on the consumer. That was a well-known fact which had been proved by the experience of the colony. Since the duty had been imposed, the number of breweries had largely increased; their profits had increased also, and actually at the present time the sale of beer by wholesale was cheaper than it was before the duty was imposed upon it. The repeal of the duty would not have the effect of putting a single farthing in the pockets of the working man or the ordinary consumer. It was simply a tax upon an extremely wealthy and profitable business. That fact could not be controverted; and he said it was monstrous that at a time when they were imposing burdens upon every class of the community, that they should remove a duty which fell upon an especially favoured class in the colony, who could well afford to bear it. Such a course was absolutely unjustifiable. He was sorry there was a thin House; he should like to have seen a full House to decide the question, because he was satisfied that a majority of hon. members did not approve of the repeal of that duty. At the same time he was quite sure of this: That if the duty was taken off it would remain off just as long as the party now in power could secure a majority in that House, because he maintained that, whether it was wanted for

revenue purposes or not, it was a duty that ought to be imposed. Surely they were not so rich that they could afford to make a present of £30,000 to a few wealthy firms. That was what it meant. If they did not want the money—if the new tariff was going to provide all that was necessary for the purposes of government—let them spend that money on some other useful purpose. They had been told that the estimates of expenditure had been framed on the most economical principle possible. He believed they were. Then let them spend that £30,000 on other things which were now stunted. Let them expend it, if necessary, in the formation of a public library, or the establishment of an art gallery, or in paying some of the cost of that rabbit-proof fence about which some hon. members were so anxious. There were plenty of purposes to which they could apply £30,000, or £100,000, if they could get it; and there was no source from which it could more properly come than from the almost inordinate profits of that particular enterprise. He hoped sincerely that the duty would not be taken off. This was certain, that it could not be taken off without the votes of gentlemen interested in breweries. Probably the rules of the House would not allow the votes of those gentlemen to be challenged, yet they ought not to vote on a matter of that kind. There were a number of members present who had large interests in breweries; he had procured a list of them yesterday at the Supreme Court as a matter of curiosity.

Mr. ARCHER: I am sorry I have no shares in any brewery.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: If the hon. gentleman had, I do not believe he would vote on this question.

Mr. ARCHER: I won't say that.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. member had been in very bad company for a good many years. There was really no sound reason that could be urged in favour of the repeal. As to doubly taxing the brewers, he did not want to do that. The duty might be taken off hops or any other article in the schedule which would press unduly upon them compared with other people. But to take off the excise duty on an article which was simply a luxury was entirely unjustifiable. And it would be an extremely inconvenient thing that there should be any item of the revenue which could be bandied about like a shuttlecock—for one party to say to the electors, "Put us in, and we will take the duty off," and for the other party to say, "As soon as we are in we will put it on again." That was a duty imposed in every civilised country, and no reason whatever could be given for taking it off. He therefore moved—

That the schedule be amended by the omission of the words "49 Vic. No. 10. The Beer Duty Act of 1885."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. gentleman had been a little bit inconsistent in the speech he had just made. He commenced by insinuating that the Government were put in office by the aid of the publicans.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I said the brewers.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: He said the whisky party.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he could assure the hon. gentleman that he had not the slightest notion as to what effect the brewers' vote had on the election. He was inclined to think that it had not the slightest effect whatever. Neither did he know how far the publican interest voted in his favour.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Then you are the only man in the colony who is ignorant of it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had found, on consulting members on both sides of the House, that the publican vote was pretty equally divided in a great part of the colony; but he had not the slightest doubt that the publican interest went for him in Brisbane. But that was simply because the teetotallers, long before they saw his policy or anything connected with it, had made up their minds to vote—to vote straight in a body—for the hon. member opposite. If there was any truth in the officials of the blue-ribbon societies, he would quote their words. The secretary, Mr. Clark, called on him and told him that straight, and he told him in reply that he did not expect anything else from them.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I know a great number who voted for the National party.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said those were very sensible men. From what he said in his Financial Statement hon. members could have no doubt as to his motives in trying to repeal the beer duty. He was very anxious to give additional protection to the farmers, and he could not do that without adding to the imposts on the materials out of which beer was made. He therefore adopted the best course according to his principles, by removing the duty from beer and putting it on the other articles. He had not been entirely successful, because he calculated that the amount of the duties he had put on the articles imported for the making of beer would only produce something like £20,000, while the beer duty produced £30,000. He had therefore lost to a certain extent, but he had gained on his principles, because he had reduced the duty on beer from 3d. to 2d. per gallon, and he thought that was a right thing. The hon. gentleman said he did not know of any civilised country that had not an excise duty on beer. Did the hon. member consider Victoria a part of the uncivilised world? In his opinion the Victorians were as civilised as the Queenslanders, yet they had no excise duty on beer. Neither, he believed, had South Australia; and that was about the half of Australia. The hon. member must not forget that the duty was put on in a fit of spleen against the brewers.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Not at all.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was in the House at the time, and he did not think it a noble action, but it failed because the tax did not fall upon the brewer, but on the consumer.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: But the price of beer is lower now than it was before.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that was owing to a very different cause. It was owing to the extraordinary increase in the population of the colony, which enabled the brewers to increase their appliances and make the article cheaper, and also to the inordinate competition that was induced by the good times. There was one matter referred to by the hon. gentleman as to which he (the Colonial Treasurer) ought to put himself clear. The hon. gentleman referred to members of the House who held shares in breweries. Long before he thought of repealing the beer duty—and for very different reasons—he had dissociated himself from breweries. He was at one time a large shareholder in connection with his friend Mr. Perkins; but that was a long time ago, and he had long since ceased to hold any interest in brewing. His name appeared on the list in connection with a trusteeship, but personally he had

got rid of all his own interests long before he contested the general election. He had put the matter very plainly the other day. He held that it was a good thing to remove the duty on beer, because the duty fell on the consumer. He thought it was an inordinate duty to put on beer. He did not look on the consumption of beer in the same strait-laced way that the hon. member for Ipswich did. He would drink a great deal more beer if he was able to do so; and he had never in his life seen a working man who was worse for drinking good beer. He had not strict, strait-laced notions with regard to it, and he looked upon beer just as much in the way of a necessary of life as any of the luxuries mentioned by the hon. member for Toowong—pickles, dried figs, and all those things. He thought it would be better to stick to good beer than to go in for those luxuries. He had acted consistently in accordance with his principles, and he had tried to shift the incidence of taxation so as to encourage native industries, and he thought it would do so. He had managed to encourage the brewing industry, and, although it would be a lamentable fact for the hon. member for Ipswich to hear, it gave an honest living to a very large number of people in the colony. He hoped that would not be excised from the schedule, and he thought he had shown clearly in his Financial Statement—and he claimed he was quite consistent—that if they did not repeal the beer duty, they would have to knock off the increased duties which they had put on the articles out of which beer was made, because he did not think for a moment that it was the desire of the Committee to increase the duty on beer from 2d. to 3d. per gallon, as the excision of that line from the schedule would do.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he had stated the night before, on the second reading, that he did not approve of the principle of removing the excise duty on beer, and putting it on the materials from which beer was made. He thought it would be unseemly if the present Government, seeing the late Government had put that duty on beer, were to remove it, because, as the leader of the Opposition had said, if that tax were repealed, the next Government would assuredly replace it; and, as had been said by the leader of the Opposition, it was not well to be always changing the manner of taxation on any article any more than on beer. Therefore, he hoped the Government, for the sake of uniformity, as well as for the benefit of the people and the good of the Treasury, would pause and seriously consider the matter. The Colonial Treasurer had just said that perhaps the hon. member for Ipswich would be sorry to hear that by encouraging the brewing industry they were giving employment to a considerable number of people, and enabling them to obtain an honest livelihood. He was perfectly aware of that, and it did not make him sorry, as he was always glad to know of men gaining an honest livelihood by the sweat of their brow. He would remind the hon. gentleman, however, that the amount of money spent in the working of breweries, if expended in working foundries, would employ at least six times as many people, and pay them better wages. That could not be controverted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Where would they get their beer?

Mr. MACFARLANE said they could save the money and buy boots with it. He looked at the comfort of people; and while the hon. member and many others might think that a glass of beer would not hurt a working man, it would not do him any good. In fact, the Colonial Treasurer had told them that he would drink a little more than he did if he were able. He (Mr. Macfarlane)

was very glad the hon. gentleman was not able, because he knew that if he considered himself able, instead of the beer doing him good, it would certainly do him a great amount of harm.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: No fear.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he could never agree with the hon. member for Stanley; but a Royal Commission had been held in New South Wales last year on what was called the Drink Bill, and he happened to have the first report in his possession. He would just read the nature of colonial beer as manufactured in New South Wales. The Commission reported as follows to Parliament:—

"We now come to the results of the last analyses of colonial beer, made by Mr. Hamlet. As the quantities previously submitted for examination were nearly always exhausted in the search for the noxious ingredients mentioned in the Licensing Act, larger quantities were now procured. The six samples of beer operated on by Mr. Hamlet were obtained from the principal Sydney breweries by Sub-Inspector Lertball. The results communicated by the analyst have, in one respect, corroborated the testimony of the purity of this liquor—so far as purity is implied by the absence of narcotic, mineral, and other foreign ingredients injurious to health. But, in another aspect, the analysis has furnished results of a startling character.

"We have said that the results of these analyses were of a startling character, and the expression may require explanation. We were perfectly familiar with the fact that immature spirit so largely imported into this colony contained fusel oil, but we were not prepared for the discovery of fusel oil in liquors which had not undergone the process of distillation, but only that of fermentation. It is probable that the condition of the brewing temperature in the fermentation of the beers examined by Mr. Hamlet may have had much to do with the development in that process of this poisonous form of alcohol (fusel oil). But, whether high temperature be the true cause or not, we regard the fact that fusel oil is present in colonial beers to be as serious in one aspect as it is suggestive in another; and although the percentage of fusel oil found in the beer is not, perhaps, more than a fifth or sixth of the percentage in cheap whisky or brandy, yet the result on the beer drinker, who probably consumes more than six times the weight of beer than the whisky or brandy drinker does of spirits, is about the same."

That was what the Royal Commission reported to the Parliament of New South Wales as to the analysis of colonial beer; so that colonial beer did not seem to be that harmless thing that the Colonial Treasurer stated it was, and that being the case, he (Mr. Macfarlane) was anxious that everything should be done to minimise as much as possible the evil effects of the drinking customs of the colony. He knew very well that he was not an authority on the subject of beer-drinking, as the hon. member for Stanley had said. He did not pretend to be an authority, but he did pretend to have a little common sense, and while the hon. gentleman objected to being lectured, he did not lecture, and he did not blame him or any member of society for using his own will and drinking whatever he liked. He had never said a word against any man drinking to him, but his advice to such a man was that he was doing wrong. It was the drink he lectured and to which he was opposed; and if he could do anything inside or outside the Committee to minimise the evil effects of those drinks he should do so, independently of the opinion of any hon. member. His anxiety being so, he thought it would be unwise for the Committee to repeal the excise duty on colonial beer. They had been told to-night that the tax was simply being made in another way—they were taxing the materials from which beer was made instead of taxing the beer itself; and they had been told that the tax on the materials from which beer was made would amount to 2d. per gallon instead of 3d., which was the present duty on beer. He might

be wrong, but from the calculations he had made it amounted to just half the present duty—1½d. per gallon. That being the case, they were simply giving a bonus of 1½d. per gallon to the brewers of the colony. It had also been said by the Colonial Treasurer, in reference to the competition amongst the brewers, that that had been the means of keeping the beer at the same price as before the duty was put on. That might be perfectly correct, but the competition amongst the brewers simply amounted to this—that they must be doing a greater business to sell the beer at the same price. Now, there could be no doubt, as he had said last night, that the amount of beer manufactured in the colony in a short time would be largely in excess of that now manufactured. The colony now manufactured about 2,500,000 gallons, but if they manufactured at the same rate as was done in the other colonies—Victoria and New South Wales—then in the course of a few years the manufacture would amount to 4,000,000 gallons. Well, if they took 4,000,000 gallons at 3d. per gallon, that would give a very handsome revenue to the Treasurer, amounting to £75,000 in the course of the year. That was a great amount of money to throw away. If people would drink beer he would rather see them drink the colonial than the imported article; but looking at it from the revenue rather than the temperance point of view, he thought the Committee would be doing a right thing to retain the duty. It had been said they were taxing the materials as well, but he thought beer could well afford the additional taxation. The Premier had done all he could for the benefit of the farmers by putting a tax on malt, but there would be so very little of that used that he believed beer would stand the tax on the material as well as the excise duty of 3d. per gallon. He hoped hon. members would pause before they repealed the duty. He would appeal to his squatting friends. They were very anxious to have the colony divided from the other colonies so as to keep out the rabbit pest. Now, he did not think the rabbit pest was half as bad as the drink pest, and if the squatting members would keep on the additional tax on beer they would be able to get £75,000 more in the course of a year to help to fence the colony off from the rabbits, of which they were so very much afraid, but which, it appeared to him, were not so very likely to come here at all. By doing that they would be doing two good things. They would keep out the rabbits, and they would fence the drink traffic off to a certain extent, and in that way they would be killing two dogs with one stone. He hoped they on his side of the Committee would have the votes of hon. members on the other side, and that the excise duty would be kept on.

Mr. MURPHY: We want the beer and the rabbit fence as well.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the hon. leader of the Opposition had challenged the accuracy of his statement when he was combating the statement that no civilised country in the world did not have an excise duty on beer. He found now that Victoria had no excise duty on beer.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: When was it repealed?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It was never on.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Oh, yes, it was.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said, at all events, there was no such thing now, and neither South Australia nor Western Australia had an excise duty on beer. The only colony that imposed it besides Queensland was New South

Wales, and they imposed it because New South Wales was a freetrade colony, and went on the idea that every import duty should be balanced by an excise duty.

Mr. STEVENS said the attempt at log-rolling on the part of the hon. member for Ipswich was not on a very sound basis. He said that if they retained the excise duty on beer they would have a very large sum of money with which to help to fence the rabbits out, but he forgot that the Colonial Treasurer had stated distinctly that if the excise duty was still maintained, the duty would be taken off other articles, so that really they would not get the benefit of the large sum of money mentioned by the hon. member. Now, he hoped hon. members would decide to abolish the excise duty. He voted against it when it was first instituted for various reasons, but, amongst others, because he thought that unless it was absolutely impossible to make revenue in any other way, they should not impose duties on their own manufactures. If they produced things in the colony they should produce them as cheaply as possible, and not impose any restriction that they could possibly avoid. There was no doubt that beer was as much a necessity to a large number of persons—especially those who had to work hard—as tea was, and he had no doubt that good beer, to a large number of people, was much more wholesome than the tea which was ordinarily used. He thought a great deal of the opposition to the repeal of the duty was more sentimental than anything else. He had nothing to say against those hon. gentlemen who had strong teetotal predilections. He gave them all honour and credit for their motives; he believed they were really sincere, but it did not follow that other people should be guided by the same views. If they must tax beer let it be on the imported article. Now, one of the arguments used by the hon. member was that they were simply playing into the hands of the brewers. The efforts of all teetotallers were against a large consumption of drink, but he thought they were commencing at the wrong end of the stick. If they wanted to cause less drink to be consumed they should punish the consumer and not punish the man for producing the article which was in large demand. That simply meant persecution against a certain class of the community.

Mr. JORDAN said he was inclined to agree with the leader of the Opposition that the duty on beer should be maintained. Whether the publicans and brewers supported one party more than another he did not know, but he had been a politician for many years, and he knew that the publicans had always opposed him. How was that? Although he had been a teetotaler for many years, he had been very moderate always in his way of advocating the principle; and he had never made a public speech on the subject, except once, and that was a good many years ago. But he was under the impression that because he belonged to the Liberal party the publicans, as a class, had always been opposed to him. Now, he regretted very much that the Premier had shown throughout the discussion a disposition to increase the consumption of intoxicants. "Drinking made easy," in fact, might be said to be one of the principles of his tariff. The hon. gentleman had endeavoured to make intoxicants as inexpensive to the consumer as possible, and he had used this argument: When talking on the proposed increased duty on spirits the hon. gentleman said, why should people in this colony pay something like £458,000 a year as duty on beer, brandy, rum, old tom, geneva, and cordials which he named, and he spoke of those things as if they were the greatest necessities of life. Well, he (Mr. Jordan) thought that that

was a grand mistake. It was asked why should they increase the duty on those things when in the neighbouring colony of South Australia the amount paid per head for those things was 6s. 8d., while the amount per head in Queensland was 24s. per head?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is because they have their wine.

Mr. JORDAN said the Colonial Treasurer stated that those things were necessities of life, and several members on the Government side supported him. He supposed those were gentlemen who voted against the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, to increase the duties upon spirits. What their opinions were he scarcely knew, because they were not made very apparent to the Committee. One gentleman used a very funny argument. His contention was that it was in the interests of the poor man that intoxicants should be cheap. He said the poor man bought spirits by the gallon, one or two gallons at a time, and if they put a tax upon intoxicants of 2s. per gallon, he would not be able to buy them. He (Mr. Jordan) wished he could not obtain them at all, and would spend his money in some other way. They were also told by another hon. member that contractors, who would not think of using intoxicants on their own account, were obliged to keep considerable quantities in their camps in order to dispense them as medicines to men who got wet, for fear they might die; and another hon. member said it was necessary to have them in case men were bitten by centipedes. That was the kind of logic used by hon. members on the Government side. Nearly all the speakers on that side were young members. They scarcely ever heard expressions of opinions upon the subject from the older members—those who were considered leaders upon that side, or supporters of the party in former parliaments. They were entirely dumb upon that question. The way in which the proposed increase of duty upon spirits was argued, and the reasons given for voting against the amendment were very curious indeed, and any one reading *Hansard* would find material to add another chapter to the elder Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature." It was contended that brandy, rum, old tom, geneva, etc., were among the necessities of life, and as people were taxed to the extent of 25s. per head for every man, woman, and child in the colony for the use of those things, it would be an injustice to increase the duty on spirits. They did not hold those opinions on his side of the Committee; some of them, in fact, were so stupid as to believe that those things were not necessities of life—that at the best, and in the most moderate way, they were always luxuries. They were very often inimical to the health and morality of the community, and hon. members would admit that they were the cause of a large proportion of the crime committed in every country in the world. On the same grounds that he was favourable to the amendment of the hon. member for Townsville to increase the duties on spirits, he was opposed to taking off the excise duty upon beer, and the reasons that were given by the leader of the Opposition were unanswerable. The consumer was not likely to receive any of the benefit at all. The Government tried to make out that they were the friends of the poor man on the grounds that they were reducing the price of the necessities of life. His reason for opposing the tariff was that it came down with crushing severity upon that class of men who were least able to bear it—the labouring classes, the carriers, the clerks, and Civil servants of the lower grades. All of those people who were least able to bear the additional burden had to bear it, while the rich

landowner, and the wealthy mortgagee were not called upon to pay anything. Upon that ground he had a very strong objection to the tariff. Both sides of the Committee were decided that some measure of protection would be a good thing for the colony. He believed in a protective duty for the farmers, and he believed in a protective duty upon machinery, although he would rather have seen it 10 per cent. than 15 per cent.; and something should be done for the miners. He was sure that the repeal of the beer duty would be very unpopular. Butchers were already giving them notice of a rise in the price of beef, and bakers were raising the price of bread. That was the way in which the tariff was operating. If a man had a family of five his expenses would be increased by some 6s. or 7s. per week. The monied classes were not touched at all, and the absentees who had made money in the colony and had gone away to spend it, got off scot-free. He hoped the Colonial Treasurer would reconsider the matter, and take the duty off hops and malting barley, and continue the excise duty on beer as before. He was sure that would satisfy the public, and he did not believe there was any necessity for increasing the taxation at all. The Treasurer had made out a very poor case in that respect. All his statements went to show that the conditions of the colony did not demand any increase of taxation. The returns for the quarter ending 30th September showed an increase of £179,000 over the corresponding quarter of the preceding year, which was at the rate of £710,000 per annum. That, perhaps, could not be taken as a guide for the general revenue; but still the revenue had been increasing during the last twelve months at a rate of about £500,000 per annum. Even if they included the accrued interest the revenue would be £300,000 more than the expenditure at the end of the year. He maintained that the returns proved that there was no necessity for increased taxation. At all events, he was sure that the feeling of the community would be in favour of the proposition of the leader of the Opposition that the excise duty on beer should be retained.

Mr. SAYERS said he should vote for the retention of the excise duty on beer. When the duty was first put on there was a great cry that the Government of the day were taxing the poor man's beer. If that had been the effect he would vote for the repeal of the duty; but the fact was that beer was as cheap now as ever it was, and he was sure that, even if the excise duty were taken off, beer would be the same price to the consumer. He had spoken to several publicans in Brisbane who did a large trade in beer, and they said they would rather see the excise duty kept on than see it repealed, because they were able to get a better article than they could before the excise duty was put on. If the Premier could see his way to retain the duty he believed everyone on the Opposition side would assist him in taking off the duty on malt and hops. A large number of hon. members were interested in breweries, and it would not be a nice thing to give people the chance of saying that the duty was taken off for that reason. He did not think any hon. member was going to vote for the repeal of the duty because he had a few hundred shares in breweries; but it was talked about outside. During the discussion on the tariff the Premier stated that he wanted revenue, and had thought fit to raise the duty on most of the common articles of food and clothing; and he did not see how, in the face of that, he could take the duty off what was a luxury. Some hon. members said that beer was a necessity. He could drink beer or spirits as well as anyone, but he maintained that they were not necessities. Men

who lived in the bush away from beer and spirits for months at a time were far more healthy than the men who resided where beer and spirits were drunk daily and hourly, so that the argument in favour of necessity fell to the ground. He should vote for the retention of the duty, but he was very much afraid that the amendment would not be carried, because several hon. members who had stated their intention of voting against the repeal of the excise duty were not present to record their votes.

Mr. COWLEY said that, as he intended to vote against the Government on the question, he wished to give his reasons for doing so. Hon. members knew from the Financial Statement that the revenue at present derived from the excise duty on beer was £30,000; they also knew that it was absolutely necessary to raise funds for the Government of the country and pay off the deficit; and it was a very serious matter to remove the excise duty on beer and lose so much revenue. The Premier stated that he intended to make up for the loss of revenue by taxing the articles used in the manufacture of beer; he also stated that he hoped to encourage the farmers to produce those articles. He (Mr. Cowley) believed the component parts of beer were malt, hops, sugar, and water. The barley grown in the colony was unfit for malting purposes, so the tax on malt would not assist the farmers. Besides, there was very little barley produced in the colony. As far as sugar was concerned, there was no extra duty, so that there was no encouragement to the sugar-growers. Hops could not be grown in the colony, and no benefit would be derived from protecting an article which could not be produced. And as far as water was concerned, that was free to all.

The Hon. P. PERKINS: No!

Mr. COWLEY said that no one had to pay duty on it at any rate. Another thing, hops were used all over the colony, and no one could get a loaf of good bread unless hops were used in its manufacture. Therefore the tax would fall on every householder in the country. He was not going to make a teetotal speech; but if he desired to do so, he could give sound arguments to show that beer was injurious. The most eminent men had stated over and over again—and arguments had never been brought forward to prove that their assertions were false—that intoxicants were injurious to the human system, and not necessary. It was stated by Baron Liebig, that in a gallon of beer there was no more nutriment than would lie on the point of a table-knife, and he thought that showed the groundlessness of the argument that beer was beneficial to man. Another reason why he intended to vote for the retention of the duty was, that the whole of the machinery for collecting the excise was available, and had been found to work easily and smoothly. The duty was one which would yield a large amount for revenue purposes after paying the expenses of collection, and, as had been stated by another hon. member, the amount would be an ever-increasing one so long as the consumption of beer increased. The hon. member for Logan said that one reason why he opposed the duty was because it was a tax on local industry. He (Mr. Cowley) supposed that if the excise duty on beer were removed the hon. member would, in all probability, propose next year to abolish the licenses of publicans on the ground that it was taxing a local industry to make them pay for licenses. It would be said they were taxing people engaged in trade, and thus it would be carried on from one thing to another, until brewers, publicans, and consumers of intoxicating liquor would actually escape taxation. Taking everything into consideration, he thought the removal

of the excise on beer would be a great mistake, and would be fraught with a great loss of revenue. In no way would the country derive any benefit from the removal of the excise duty, and on the grounds he had stated he would vote against the proposal of the Government in that matter.

Mr. ISAMBERT said that, although he approved of the tax on malt and malting barley, he could not congratulate the Government in the proposal to abolish the excise duty on beer. By right hops ought to be free, and if the Colonial Treasurer was determined not to materially alter the revenue from beer he might have reduced the excise duty on beer by 1d. per gallon and let hops in free. That would put the brewer in nearly the same position as before, and it would give encouragement to farmers to grow malting barley, and it could not then be brought against the Government that they were ungrateful to the beer party. It was very much to be regretted that a duty of 6d. per lb. should have been imposed upon hops, as they could not be grown here, and they would be substituted in the manufacture of beer by injurious ingredients; for sanitary reasons alone hops ought to be free. As a further reason for retaining the excise on beer, he might say that they could not keep too close an eye on the manufacture of beer. In every country the manufacture of beer was carefully guarded and watched over by the authorities, and it should be here as well as elsewhere. An objection had been raised to the expense of the supervision necessary for collecting the duty; but he had objected to the method of supervision in force when it was instituted as being absurd, as he held that, if it was properly arranged, one inspector would be sufficient for the whole of the breweries in Brisbane, and, if it was so arranged, the objection on the ground of expense would be taken away. He trusted the Colonial Treasurer would accept his suggestions, to let hops come in free, and reduce the excise on beer to 2d. per gallon.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he intended to vote against the proposed repeal of the excise duty on beer. He thought they could get no better way of raising revenue than a tax upon such an article as beer. He found that the present excise duty brought in a revenue of something like £30,000 at an expense for supervision and collection of some £1,500, and as the amount of revenue derivable from that duty would annually increase he considered it a mistake on the part of the Treasurer to propose its abolition. One of the arguments for the repeal of the duty was that they had increased the duty upon malt and hops; but he considered it a great mistake to increase the duty on hops, as it would bear heavily upon almost every household in the colony. For those reasons he would support the amendment of the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. UNMACK said the Colonial Treasurer had argued that the excise duty on beer would fall upon the consumer. That the hon. gentleman was altogether mistaken in that would appear very clear to the Committee when he pointed out that, before the excise duty was put on, and since, the price of the article to the consumer had not been changed. The consumers were not the merchants and publicans, but those who went to the retail places to purchase beer, and the price charged to them was the same to-day as before the excise duty was put upon the article. He would now show clearly that it was the brewers, and the brewers only, who would be the gainers by the removal of the excise duty. From the day the excise duty was put upon beer, the brewers charged the publicans—and that was a fact well known to all engaged in business—the full amount of the duty in addition to the previous price of beer. Some

time after—he thought some twelve or eighteen months after the imposition of the duty—owing to severe competition and complaints from the publicans, a compromise was effected, and the brewers charged the publicans one-half the duty, and bore the other half themselves.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Competition in business did that.

Mr. UNMACK said that was owing, as he said, to competition. But since that time, again, owing to the starting of other breweries and keener competition, some of the breweries consented to bear the full amount of the duty themselves. That clearly showed that if the duty was removed the brewers, and the brewers only, would be the gainers by its removal.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Would not competition have the same effect if the duty is taken off?

Mr. UNMACK: The price will remain the same.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: You should never stop in the middle of an argument.

Mr. UNMACK said the publicans and brewers would certainly be the gainers, but the consumers would not get any advantage from the removal of the excise duty, as the present price was so low that it could hardly be put lower. One great objection he had to the removal of the duty was that it had been for the last few years a largely-increasing one, and it was still increasing rapidly. Last year the duty upon beer amounted to very nearly £32,000, and, according to the rate of production just now, the duty for this year would be nearer £35,000 than £32,000. But, supposing it was £32,000. As against that, they knew that the Treasurer imposed duties, as he told them he would, when introducing the subject, upon hops, malt, and glucose, which should counterbalance the amount lost by the removal of the excise duty on beer to within £10,000. He had carefully inquired of the hon. gentleman at the time, and had since received an answer, which clearly showed that glucose was chucked in as a "make-believe" blind that they were putting the duty on something; because the hon. gentleman had told them it was not imported into the colony, or he could not find that it was. That reduced the number of taxed articles to two—malt and hops—and he found, from a calculation made, that with the duties imposed now upon malt and hops, the revenue derivable would amount to £22,000. It was not to be supposed that that £22,000 would stand as an equivalent against the excise duty which it was proposed to repeal, because according to his knowledge, as far as he could estimate the thing, about one-third of those two ingredients were used for other purposes than brewing. But for the sake of keeping himself within the mark, he would say 25 per cent. of those ingredients were used for domestic and other purposes. That would reduce the £22,000 estimated to be received from the brewers by £5,500. Say £5,000, which would leave the increased duty to be paid by brewers on those two ingredients at £17,000, and that sum deducted from £32,000 would make the loss £15,000 per annum instead of £10,000 as estimated by the Treasurer. But that £15,000 would naturally be increased if the tax imposed on those articles had the effect intended by the Treasurer of encouraging local industry, because the more there was produced in the colony the less there would be imported, so that the £15,000 would be reduced from year to year, and the whole of that reduction would go into the pockets of the brewers. Therefore it was clear that they were called upon to abolish

an increasing duty which probably within twelve or eighteen months would amount to £40,000 or £45,000 for a presumed duty which would in the course of time almost entirely be wiped out. He thought that, considering luxuries had been taxed, and not only taxed but heavily and severely taxed, there was no reason why beer should be the only article that should escape scot free. He quite agreed with the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition, and contended that when they had so many calls for money they should allow that increasing duty to remain. If the Treasurer did not require that amount, other uses could be found for the money, which would benefit the public at large, and it might probably assist in reducing the public debt. He certainly should vote against the repeal of the tax, for the reasons he had given, and trusted that the amendment would also receive the support of other members of the Committee.

Mr. SALKELD said he regretted very much that the Treasurer had taken the course he had with regard to the remission of the excise duty on beer. The matter was of far more importance than one might imagine, from the attention it had received. When they saw that the Treasurer was increasing the duties on a large number of articles used in everyday life by the great mass of working people in the colony, it seemed a very inopportune time to take off the duty on an article like beer. The Treasurer had given the Committee to understand that he did not think the use of beer was objectionable or deleterious to health. He (Mr. Salkeld) need not enlarge as to the effects generally of alcoholic drinks, but hon. members must be allowed to use their common sense respecting what they saw going on round about them. He was afraid that what was seen every day in the police courts, in the accidents that occurred, in cases of sickness, and in various other matters resulting from the use of intoxicating liquors, had almost blunted the public conscience as to the magnitude of the evil. They became so accustomed to those things that they looked upon them as matters of ordinary occurrence, just as they did on the sun rising every morning. But, when a proposal of that kind came before the Committee they should look at the matter in another light; they should consider the expenditure rendered necessary, not only indirectly but directly, by the use of intoxicating drinks. They had to keep up a large staff of policemen, police courts, lunatic asylums, gaols, and benevolent asylums. It was too late in the day now to gainsay the fact that a great amount of destitution and crime was caused by the use of intoxicating liquors. That had been shown to be the case in almost every civilised country. He was not going into the arguments which had been advanced by various speakers in favour of the retention of the excise duty on beer, although he agreed with most of them. On the grounds he had stated, he thought it was a wrong policy to take off the duty on beer. He would far rather have seen it increased. And when they saw an increased tax imposed on hops—which he thought it was a good line of policy to encourage the use of—and when they bore in mind that hops were used in preparing the necessities of life, it really seemed a cruel thing to remit the duty on beer. It had been suggested that the Treasurer did not want the money raised by the beer duty, but he would point out that it could be well spent in various ways. If, however, the hon. gentleman did not wish to spend more money, the retention of the duty on beer would enable them to reduce the duty on some other articles included in the schedule. For instance, they might take off the tax on bran and pollard, which would

tell very heavily on the milk supply of the colony, and that affected the health of the people very closely indeed. If the Treasurer had determined to keep all the duties as they were, then there was another way in which the revenue from the beer excise might be applied. A deputation waited on the hon. gentleman the other day with regard to the introduction of a measure for the establishment of an inebriate asylum. Should that be done by the Government the cost would come out of the pockets of the ratepayers. Why not establish an inebriate asylum on a sufficiently large basis, and give it a fair trial, paying the cost of maintenance out of the receipts from the beer duty? Such an institution properly worked would be very beneficial to the colony. There were many persons who, by taking a glass or two, had become slaves to alcohol and would give almost anything to become free from it; they would even voluntarily give up their liberty to be able to overcome their weakness. He threw that suggestion out for the consideration of the Treasurer. It was not too late now to adopt it. There were many hon. members who would gladly assist in taking off the duty on hops and malt or reducing other duties, if the beer excise was retained. He (Mr. Salkeld) was sure that when the proposal for the remission of the excise came to be understood, and the people had time to reflect, they would see that the Treasurer had made a great mistake indeed. Reference had been made by the hon. the leader of the Opposition to what might be called a political question—a burning question. That was that the party at present in power had derived very great assistance from the brewing interest. If the hon. the leader of the Government did not know that he (Mr. Salkeld) was very much mistaken; he did not know as much as it was thought he did. Everybody else in the colony knew it. As far as he (Mr. Salkeld) was concerned, he was not going to be deterred from doing what he considered to be right; and in the interests of the public he objected to the excise duty being taken off beer. It was a well-known fact that the great majority of the publicans and brewers gave their influence to the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government during the late elections. It was well known that the influence of "the trade," as it was called, was given in a certain direction, not only here but in other countries. In England, they gave their influence to an almost overwhelming extent to the party in power; but he believed the day had gone by when Queensland or the other colonies were going to be ruled by those who controlled the drink traffic. He would rather be put out of political life altogether than owe his election to the influence of those engaged in the liquor traffic—a traffic which was demoralising a great number of people. They heard a great deal about people making an honest living and all that sort of thing, but when he saw the effects of the liquor traffic—when he saw immense fortunes being made by brewers and distillers, and the enormous amount of distress that arose from that traffic—he did not care what the consequences were, he would denounce it wherever he could find a fitting opportunity. It was time that the conscience and the reason of the public were aroused on that question. He believed the Colonial Treasurer was making a very great mistake, and he hoped that the hon. gentleman would realise it before long, and find that the publican interest was not going to dominate in Queensland. As far as he was concerned, he should always do his best to counteract and withstand that influence.

Mr. LITTLE said he thought the remarks of the hon. member for Fassifern were an insult to members on that side of the Committee. He



had actually insinuated that they had been returned by the licensed victuallers of the colony. So far from that being the case he knew that many members who were supporting the party now in power were bitterly opposed by the licensed victuallers. He knew that in his electorate—Woothakata—they left no stone unturned to oppose him, and he owed his return to the working miners. It was very unbecoming on the part of the hon. member to insult members on that side of the Chamber in the way he had done. He (Mr. Little) was sent there to support the party now in power; he intended to fulfil that mission, and should support the Treasurer on the beer question.

Mr. GRIMES said he spoke against the repeal of the excise duty on beer when speaking on the general financial question, and he had heard no arguments since that had led him to change his mind. All through the tariff they had been increasing the cost of the necessities of life, and they would certainly not be carrying out what would be acceptable to the majority of the people of Queensland if they adopted the course proposed by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer. He was sure that it was not a popular step. They had increased the cost of living to a large extent, and to reduce the cost of a luxury would be legislating in the wrong direction. If they had no need for the £30,000 derived from the beer duty for revenue purposes, they could easily employ it in some other direction, and he very much liked the idea thrown out by his hon. friend the member for Fassifern—that it should be made use of to support an inebriate asylum. They should then have the very article that supplied the subjects for the inebriate asylums furnishing a revenue for the support of those institutions. He certainly thought they should not throw away the opportunity they had of raising £30,000 without it being felt by the public. They knew that large profits were being made by the brewers—very large profits indeed—and those persons could very well afford to contribute to the revenue to that extent. The hon. the Treasurer had stated that what had led him to remove the excise duty on beer and place it on other articles was his desire to help the farmers. But it would not help the farmers one bit. He had never yet seen a sample of barley grown in Queensland that was fit for malting. He did not think they would be able to grow barley that had sufficient body in it for that purpose. They knew that barley came quickly to maturity when it had got so far advanced as to be in the milky form; then it ripened so rapidly that there was very little strength in the grain, and it was deficient in those qualities which made a good malting barley. Besides that, they knew that sugar and glucose would take the place of malt to a very large extent in brewing. He was sure, from what he knew, that the Treasurer would be disappointed in the amount of revenue he expected to get from malting barley, and he objected to the increased duty put upon hops to make up the deficiency. They were shifting the incidence of taxation. At the present time the contributors to the revenue through the excise duty were principally brewers, and by putting the duty on hops, they were putting it on every man, woman, and child in the colony. It meant simply so much extra per head, and for that reason he should certainly vote for the amendment of the hon. the leader of the Opposition. He very much regretted that the hon. the junior member for Charters Towers had referred to the fact of members of that House being shareholders in the breweries. He thought it was unfair for him to do so in such general terms, because it might be taken to mean that members on the Opposition side were interested in breweries.

To enable the public to discriminate, and hon. members to know who were referred to, he would take the opportunity of mentioning the names and the number of shares of those members of both Houses who were shareholders in breweries. In connection with the Castlemaine Brewery, there were—F. H. Hart, 1,000 shares; E. B. Forrest, 1,500 shares; R. Philp, 4,000 shares; W. Allan, 1,000 shares; and W. Graham, 3,000 shares. In connection with Perkins and Co. there were—P. Perkins, 2,630 shares; Sir T. McIlwraith, 800 shares—the hon. gentleman had explained for what reason his name appeared on the list—and B. D. Morehead, 300 shares. He sincerely trusted that those hon. members would not vote on the question, because they could not be disinterested in it, and he hoped the Committee would pause before removing that duty and increasing the burden that rested on the general taxpayer.

Mr. BARLOW said he should have preferred to give a silent vote, and not take up the time of the Committee on the question; but he thought the question was one of such importance that every member on his side of the Committee, at least, should say something upon it, because the result of the debate might form an important factor in the political programme of the future. He did not approach the question from a teetotal point of view at all. Whether they increased or decreased the duty on beer, it would not produce the slightest effect on beer drinking. He regarded the drinking propensities of the people as being an inexhaustible source of revenue, and whether they put an extra 3d. or 6d. a gallon on beer, or an extra 2s. on spirits, it would not make the slightest difference in the consumption. Society would have to undergo a change reaching to its very foundations before the increased price of liquor would make the slightest difference in its consumption. That had been proved by experience in all the countries of the world. Hon. members had, no doubt, heard of a book called "Historic Doubts," which showed that by certain rules of evidence, events of comparatively modern occurrence could be proved to have never happened. One event taken was the Battle of Waterloo, and the existence of the Duke of Wellington, and it was shown by certain rules of evidence that were often applied to other things, that that event never took place, and that that personage never lived. Historic doubts had been thrown over the recent general election in that colony. He did not know what went on in the wilds of Woothakata, where the hon. member who spoke a few minutes ago said he was returned by the miners to do their bidding, or who pulled the strings that filled the ballot-boxes which sent that hon. member to the House. But he did know in all the constituencies with which he had anything to do, either personally or acting for friends who were also candidates for election, that, with comparatively trifling exceptions, the whole interest of the drink traffic was thrown into the scale against the then Government. Of course, men had a right to vote as they pleased, but, as an absolute historic fact, the influence of the drink traffic was thrown into the scale in favour of the party at present in power.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Is that one of your "historic doubts"?

Mr. BARLOW said that was one of the historic facts. The "historic doubt" was that with regard to events of only three months ago a very important historic fact had become so much a matter of doubt that it had been contradicted and traversed there. He would join issue with the Colonial Treasurer on the question



that the duty on beer was paid by the consumer. He understood the hon. gentleman to say that the duty on beer was paid by the consumers of that article. Undoubtedly, as a general principle, the duty on any article was paid by the consumer; but he submitted that drink was a matter which stood on a totally different foundation. Hon. members might laugh, but he intended to have his say, so that it might be recorded in *Hansard*. He heard an hon. member remark across the table just now that he wished *Hansard* was abolished. He (Mr. Barlow) thought that *Hansard* was one of the best means by which the people of the colony could know what their representatives were doing and saying; and that any deliberative assembly which attempted to exclude the press, or to conduct its proceedings in a hole-and-corner fashion, admitted by that very act its own weakness and incompetency. He was very glad there was a *Hansard*. To resume: the majority of persons who took drink, he maintained, did not inquire as to the quantity or the quality of what they were getting. The liquor traffic might be divided into four parts. Three of them were the traffic of absolute drunkards—what was called the bar trade. The other part was what might be called the rational part of the traffic, and related to persons who bought wine, spirits, and beer, who were judges of those commodities, and who exercised a discrimination as to the quantity and quality which they got. But it was very apparent that the bulk of the consumers of those articles did not know what they were getting, or how much or how little. There could, therefore, be but one opinion on the question—that if the duty on beer was taken off, it would be an absolute bonus and gift to the brewers of the colony. The hon. member for Toowong had very clearly shown that the loss to the revenue would be about £15,000 a year,—taking it for granted that they got the anticipated revenue from the articles it was proposed to tax. That, he considered, was far too large a sum to be given up. With regard to the constituents of beer, what guarantee was there even now that beer was always brewed from wholesome materials? There would be still less now that it was proposed to increase the cost of those materials by placing an impost upon them. He said they had no guarantee whatever. That tariff, as had been pointed out over and over again, was a tariff which would press hardly upon the wage-earner; it was a tariff which would press hardly upon the men of small means, and instead of facing the taxation of property and of the estates of absentees, the whole of it, under colour of protection—and a very ineffective protection it was in most cases—was a tax upon those who were least able to pay it. He considered that it increased the cost of living by about 3s. or 4s. in the £, and that was a thing which the people of the colony should know if they had not already found it out. With regard to the argument about the excise duties on their own productions, that argument would exactly apply to rum. Those were taxes upon articles in general consumption, but they were articles which must be taxed if there were to be any revenue—anything like a capitation revenue. As was pointed out during the general debate on the Financial Statement, something must be taxed, and for that purpose excise duties should be put on those articles. Now, he knew what the hon. Treasurer would do in June next. He would bring up a surplus, and he would do it in this way. The large additional taxation he would have to the good, and he would get a great deal more from that taxation than the people of the colony expected; and by withholding or drawing back

from the expenditure on public works he would have a surplus on the 30th of June next. There was no doubt that by the 30th June 1889, he would be able to make a large hole in the deficit of £602,000, and then he would say to the people of the colony, "See what I have done." He (Mr. Barlow), for one, was not prepared to take the duty off beer. He was not prepared to make such a certain and sure source of revenue a present to the brewers of the colony, and he, for one, would record his vote against anything of the sort.

Mr. DRAKE said the Colonial Treasurer was correct in saying that at the present time there was no excise duty on beer in Victoria; but he wished the hon. gentleman had gone a little into the history of that excise duty on beer in Victoria. He found that the duty was imposed in the year 1880-1 by Mr. Berry, the leader of the then Liberal Government—the last Liberal Government in Victoria; and it was removed by the present coalition Government, he believed, when they came into power—at all events by some Government which succeeded the last Liberal Government in Victoria; and he found that in the year 1880-1 the excise duty realised £32,557; in the next year, 1881-2—the only year in which, apparently, the duty was collected during the whole year—the return was £98,955. The next year, 1882-3, only a small amount—£11,256—was collected, the duty having been abolished in that year. He thought that they should learn from that that the Liberal Government in Victoria imposed that duty on beer—in spite of the fact that they were told now that it was a tax largely falling upon the working man—and that it was abolished as soon as the place of the Liberal Government was taken by a Government representing more particularly property. He thought there was no reason to suppose that that beer duty, which was imposed in 1885 by the late Liberal Government in this colony, was imposed from any feeling of vindictiveness or spite against the brewers. He thought that what the Liberal Government considered was that beer was an article which could fairly stand a share of taxation, and that it could bear taxation a great deal better than some of the articles upon which increased taxation had been imposed at the present time. He supposed the present Government would carry the repeal of that duty, but he had no doubt that when the next Liberal Government took office in Queensland the duty would be re-imposed. He might draw another parallel between this colony and Victoria with regard to Liberal legislation. That was with regard to the land-tax. The same Government that imposed the excise duty on beer had also introduced a land-tax in Victoria, and in the year 1885, which was the only year for which he had got the returns, that tax had brought in £127,000. Now, that would be a very useful contribution to the revenue. As the land-tax in Victoria had produced £127,000, it would probably produce a very large amount here, in proportion to the size and wealth of the colony. He also noticed that in Victoria at the present time there was some talk about trying to get that land-tax removed, but he did not think the parties who were interested in the removal of that tax would have sufficient power to get the present Government of Victoria to remove it; and he thought it was very likely that when the next Liberal Government succeeded the present Government, they would not only continue the land-tax, but would make it a good deal heavier than it was at present. He would just give one reason why he thought the remission of the excise duty on beer would not have the effect of reducing the cost to the consumer, for the reason that the Colonial Treasurer was imposing counterbalancing duties, as he had said in the

Committee of Ways and Means. The hon. gentleman had stated that he reckoned the duties he proposed to impose would be about equal to the duty he proposed to remit; but it had since been shown that the duties they were imposing would not be equal to the amount to be remitted by about £10,000. The reason why he thought the remission of that duty would not reduce the cost to the consumer was because the brewers would have a very good excuse for not reducing the price below the present figure. They would say that, although the duty was being taken off the beer itself, they would have to pay extra duty on the ingredients they used, and therefore they could not legitimately be asked to reduce the price; and though the duty on malt and hops would have a protective effect, so that eventually the ingredients could be produced in the colony at a cheaper rate, the reduction to the brewers in that way would be so gradual that there would never be any particular time when the public could say that the brewers were making the beer at a less cost, and therefore they ought to sell it at a lower cost to the consumer. When another Liberal Government came into power, and that duty was reimposed, that was a duty of 3d. per gallon on the article all at once, an excuse would be at once made for raising the price, so that he thought the public would eventually find that they gained no benefit from the remission. He supposed it was not of much use talking that night on that subject, because he did not think anything that could possibly be said would alter the votes that would be given. He desired to put on record his opinion that the remission of the duty as proposed would be a great mistake—a mistake which the country had regretted already, and which he thought a great many of the hon. gentlemen who were voting for the remission would regret.

Mr. MURPHY said he wished to put the hon. member right with regard to the repeal of the duty on beer in Victoria. He had said it was repealed by the coalition Government.

Mr. DRAKE: I said by some Government that succeeded the Berry Government.

Mr. MURPHY: By the O'Loughlen Government.

Mr. DRAKE said he had stated by the coalition Government, and then added "or by some other Government that succeeded the Berry Government—by a Government representing property."

Mr. GLASSEY said he had not have spoken but for the remarks of the hon. member for Logan. He said that one reason why he should vote for the repeal of the duty was that it would encourage to some extent native industry. Well, he (Mr. Glassey) found that since the duty had been put on beer, notwithstanding the duty, the industry had increased, and therefore the argument of the hon. member fell flat. In 1885 there were eighteen breweries in the colony that produced 1,165,000 gallons of beer; in 1886, twenty-two breweries, producing 2,161,000 gallons; and in 1887, twenty-five breweries, producing 2,469,000 gallons. Therefore, notwithstanding the duty which the late Government imposed on that particular industry—an industry which in his judgment did not conduce to the general happiness and welfare of the community as a whole—it had increased to a considerable extent. So far as the arguments advanced from the other side were concerned, there was not the slightest justification for taking off the duty, unless, as had been hinted by the leader of the Opposition, it was for the purpose of encouraging and recompensing the persons who returned the present Government to power. So far as he was concerned he should certainly vote against the

remission of the duty, and, if opportunity offered, would willingly vote for an increased duty on beer.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the schedule—put, and the Committee divided.

And the Committee being in division—

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Jessop,—I would call your attention to the fact that several hon. members who are interested in breweries are voting in this division. I find that the 120th Standing Order says:—

"No member shall be entitled to vote upon any question in which he has a direct pecuniary interest, and the vote of any member so interested shall be disallowed."

I ask whether, under that Standing Order, hon. members who are shareholders in breweries can vote. I refer to the hon. member for Cambooya, Mr. Perkins; the hon. member for North Brisbane, Sir T. McIlwraith; the hon. member for Balonne, Mr. Morehead; the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, and the hon. member for Cunningham, Mr. Allan.

Mr. ALLAN: I have not a share in the world.

Mr. GRIMES: Of course, Mr. Jessop, if hon. members deny that they are shareholders they are not pecuniarily interested, and, therefore, will have the privilege of voting, but if they have shares in breweries they cannot vote.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Jessop,—In the case when the Payment of Members Bill passed through the House we, when we sat on the other side, tried to argue that we could not vote on the question for the time that Parliament was sitting; but the other side were in power and overruled that, and voted money into their own pockets. I should say that they had a direct pecuniary interest in that question. We contended that we had a perfect right to vote money for the payment of members, so long as the payment was deferred until after the next election. Surely if the hon. member voted money direct into his own pocket, he can see no objection to shareholders in breweries voting on this question.

Mr. MURPHY: That is a different case altogether.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I shall sit here as a shareholder of a joint stock company.

Mr. ALLAN: I should like to know where the hon. member for Oxley got the information that I am a shareholder in a brewery.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Jessop,—I trust the majority of members on this side will not support the hon. member in his attempt to invalidate the votes of any hon. members of the Committee. It is casting a stigma upon gentlemen whose honour is just as dear to us as it is to themselves, and they are under the protection of the Committee. If I thought the Opposition would carry the vote by such a course I would, even at the hazard of changing my opinion, hesitate to snatch a victory in such a manner.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: You have called upon the tellers, Mr. Chairman, why not make them do their duty?

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Jessop,—Before the division is taken I wish for a ruling as to whether those hon. members are entitled to vote. If you rule against me I will have to leave it to the good taste of the hon. members I have referred to, whether they retain their votes or not.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Jessop,—I believe the rule is that in matters

of public policy the Standing Order alluded to does not apply. In the present case it is a matter of good taste and propriety, and not a matter of breach of the Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member asks for a ruling I must give it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: If it is a matter of public policy the Standing Order does not apply. You are not entitled, Mr. Jessop, to ask a member whether he is a shareholder unless the rule applies. You cannot ask him out of idle curiosity. You are asked if that rule does apply.

Mr. GRIMES: I ask for your ruling, sir; I have reason to believe certain members are peculiarly interested in the vote about to be taken, and I ask your ruling whether, under the circumstances, they should not go out.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Mr. Jessop.—The hon. member has no right to state that certain hon. members are peculiarly interested. I would vote if I had 10,000 shares in a company upon a matter of public policy—not for the benefit of the brewers, as some hon. members on the other side seem to think.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. members are entitled to vote.

AYES, 34.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Morehead, Nelson, Black, Macrossan, Pattison, Donaldson, Murphy, Stevenson, Dunsmure, Crombie, Rees R. Jones, Watson, Hamilton, O'Connell, Adams, Agnew, Plunkett, Perkins, Campbell, Lissner, Murray, Battersby, Little, Allan, E. J. Stevens, North, Archer, Smith, Dalrymple, Palmer, O'Sullivan, Paul, and Casey.

NOES, 22.

Sir S. W. Griffith, Messrs. Rutledge, Hodgkinson, Jordan, Glassey, Barlow, Drake, Grimes, Salkeld, Sayers, Foxton, Macfarlane, Stephens, Powers, Cowley, Morgan, Annear, Buckland, Umnack, Wimble, Isambert, and Luya.

PAIR.

For the retention of the beer duty, Mr. Groom.

Against the retention of the beer duty, Mr. Corfield.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Schedule put and passed.

On the second schedule, the COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the words "or smaller" be inserted after the words "in the same proportion for larger," in the 13th line, page 7.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, a similar amendment was made in line 22.

Mr. MACFARLANE said he wished to call the attention of the Colonial Treasurer to the item of boots and shoes. As he had said before, nothing in the whole tariff would cause more confusion than the system adopted in reference to boots and shoes. So far as the importers and the general public were concerned, a 15 per cent. duty all round on boots and shoes would be more satisfactory than the system adopted. The average price in England of women's boots imported into the colony was 7s. 6d., and the proposed duty on them at 13s. per dozen would be 1s. 1d. per pair, whereas the duty at 15 per cent. would be 1s. 1½d. per pair, so that there would be very little difference. It would be better for the trade, better for the revenue, and better for the consumer, to have a 15 per cent. *ad valorem* duty all round; and it would give less trouble to the Custom-house than the fixed duties.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there was not a single word said by the hon. member that had not been said a great deal more than once during the debate on the tariff. He had

given his reasons for proposing the duties set down in the schedule, and they were not met by any new argument from the hon. member. He knew plenty of importers who wanted the duty as the hon. member proposed; but the arguments were entirely the other way.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was not present when the item was discussed in Committee of Ways and Means, and he wished to say a word or two now. He had received a letter from a consumer who knew something about the boot business; and he said it would be better to make boots pay *ad valorem* duty. He pointed out that under the proposed tariff the duty on a pair of boots costing 25s. would be no more than the duty on a pair of bluchers costing 6s. 6d.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That is exactly the same argument as the hon. member for Ipswich used.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the letter he was quoting from did not come from an importer, but from a consumer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I know those letters.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the writer gave various other facts showing the absurdity of the duties proposed, particularly that on boot uppers, which came under the 15 per cent. list.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I believe I have read the same letter.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he did not think so. It was likely enough, however, that the same idea struck a good many people who knew anything about the matter. With respect to boot uppers, the writer said they were nearly all imported, that there were only three manufacturers in the place who made them, and that they did not do as much work now as they did some years ago.

Mr. ISAMBERT asked whether it was the intention of the Treasurer to put a duty of 15 per cent. on caustic soda, which could not be manufactured in the colony? He thought the duty ought not to be more than 5 per cent.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he did not propose to alter it.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

On the 3rd schedule—"Articles exempted from duty."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he proposed to omit from the list the item "Paper for printing purposes only." When it was omitted it would come in the 5 per cent. list. The reason for the change, as he had stated before, was that it would be impossible to distinguish between paper for printing purposes and the paper included in the 5 per cent. list, and it would be better to make them all pay alike.

Mr. SALKELD said that before that amendment was put he had to propose the omission of the words "and wines and spirits for the use of His Excellency the Governor, or for naval and military officers employed on actual naval or military service and on full pay." He did not see why they should be exempted when the rest of the citizens had to pay.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that the proposed amendment included two questions, which it would be better to separate.

Mr. SALKELD said he had no objection to taking them separately, and, with the consent of the Committee, he would move the omission of the words "and wines and spirits for the use of His Excellency the Governor."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he thought it would not matter whether the hon.

member carried his amendment or not, as he believed the Constitution Act covered the clause, and the Governor was Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Forces.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That argument will not answer.

The COLONIAL TREASURER asked if the hon. gentleman would like to hear the opinion of the late Attorney-General on the matter. That gentleman had given an opinion on the subject for the information of the late Treasurer, and his opinion was that the Constitution Act not only covered his Excellency the Governor in the matter—

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: Read it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do not think it is worth reading myself.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: I would rather you read it, and let it speak for itself.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said: Very well, he would read it.

*"Opinion of the Attorney-General on the question submitted to him by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, as to whether naval and military officers in the pay of Colonial Governments are entitled to import or take out of bond wines and spirits duty free."*

"The exemptions from duty particularised in the last paragraph of the 3rd schedule of the Customs Duties Act of 1870 are of the four classes following:—

"1. Naval and military stores—imported for the service of the colonial Governments.

"2. Naval and military stores—imported for the use of Her Majesty's land or sea forces.

"3. Wines and spirits for the use of his Excellency the Governor.

"4. Wines and spirits for the use of naval and military officers employed on actual naval or military service and on full pay.

"Clauses 1 and 2 evidently point to the existence of two branches of naval and military service; the first to a service under the control and in the pay of a colonial Government, and the second to the Imperial service, 'Stores' (which of course include wines and spirits; for the purpose and use of both these branches are exempt, and in addition thereto there is a special exemption in clause 4 of wines and spirits for the use of naval and military officers employed on actual naval or military service and in full pay.' Since, therefore, there is (as I have indicated) a recognition of the existence of a colonial as well as of the Imperial naval and military services, it seems clear that the words 'naval and military officers' are intended to include *all* naval and military officers whether in the service and in pay of the colonial Governments or in the service and in the pay of the Imperial Government, and whether holding Imperial rank or not, the one essential in either case being that such officers must be in actual service and on full pay. If this view be correct, it follows that the fourth class of exemptions must certainly apply to the case of naval and military officers who hold Imperial commissions, and are employed in actual naval or military service in this colony irrespective of the source whence they derive this pay.

"I am of opinion that all such wines and spirits are exempt from duty, whether imported by the officers themselves or not.

"A. RUTLEDGE,

"Attorney-General."

On that the Colonial Treasurer wrote:—

"Notwithstanding the opinion of the Honourable Attorney-General, I think that each case wherein remission of duty is applied for should be submitted to the Treasurer for consideration."

On account of that opinion the ridiculous result came about that three of their citizens, who were as much entitled to pay duty as he was himself—Colonel French, Major De Vœux, and Major Grieve—got their stuff in free.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is the law.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that if he had been Attorney-General they would  
1 t.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that, if his memory served him right, the point was that other persons wanted to get liquor in free and said it was for those officers.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said that for himself he did not believe a bit in the whole of the words in the clause, and it was simply because he understood it was provided in the Constitution Act that it was put in. He thought it was a very bad thing that any persons in the community should be exempt from the payment of duty. He did not care who they were; he did not see any reason for it. Why should any of the military officers be exempt? They were just as much citizens of Brisbane as he was. Those exemptions came in at a time when Her Majesty had land and sea forces here paid by the Imperial Government, and they were no longer applicable in the colony. For his part he was willing that the whole of the words first mentioned by the hon. member should be struck out.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he had only to add to that that it would be to a certain extent a diminution of the emoluments of office of the Governor. So far as officers were concerned the exemptions arose through their being paid by the Imperial Government and not by the colony, and so were not supposed to contribute to the revenue of the colony.

Mr. SALKELD said that after what had passed, he would adhere to the amendment as he had at first proposed it, and move that the words "and wines and spirits for the use of His Excellency the Governor, or for naval and military officers employed on actual naval or military service and on full pay," be omitted.

Amendment agreed to.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the words "paper for printing purposes only" be omitted.

Amendment put and passed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the words "ticks" and "sateens" be omitted.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he would suggest that comb foundation machines, which were universally used in bee culture, should be included in the free list, as they were a patent, and could not be made in the colony.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

On the 4th schedule—"Ad valorem duties of 5 per cent."—

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he proposed to add to that two other items—"sulphur and nitrate of soda."

Mr. ISAMBERT: Include saltpetre, which is used for the same purposes as nitrate of soda.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he had no objection to include saltpetre.

Mr. MACFARLANE said that before that amendment was moved he wished to propose an amendment in the line "flannel, in the piece," by inserting the word "crimean" before "flannel," so as to place white flannel on the 15 per cent. list. His reason for that was, that at the present moment the Queensland Woollen Company were getting out machinery for making white flannel, and the inclusion of that article in the 15 per cent. list would be a great advantage to the company. He hoped that, as the hon. gentleman had encouraged other industries, he would agree to that small amendment. He moved that the word "crimean" be inserted before the word "flannel."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would only ask whether the hon. member for Ipswich, being interested in the woollen factory, was entitled to vote on that question?

Mr. MACFARLANE said he was quite willing not to vote on the question, although he had a perfect right to do so.

Mr. BARLOW said he did not know whether the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government wished to speak on the question.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No; I am quite willing to accept the amendment, if the Committee are agreeable.

Mr. BARLOW said he was not a shareholder in the Queensland Woollen Company, but he thought the amendment would be a concession which would carry out the principle of protection consistently advocated by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government. He did not wish to take up the time of the Committee, but merely rose to confirm the statement of his colleague that the Queensland Woollen Company had ordered expensive machinery for the manufacture of white flannel. He sincerely trusted that the Committee would be favourable to the amendment.

Mr. UNMACK said he hoped the Treasurer would not consent to the amendment. He (Mr. Unmack) was a shareholder in the Queensland Woollen Factory, and therefore he was speaking against his own interest in that matter. The woollen factory had already been sufficiently protected in their industry, while a very extensive manufacturing branch employing, as he had stated on a previous occasion, from 1,500 to 2,000 persons was not protected. That company was allowed 15 per cent. protection on their woollen tweeds, and apparel and slops were admitted at the same duty. He thought the company was protected quite enough without putting a further duty on flannels, but they seemed, like some others, to display a feeling of extreme greed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said he was a shareholder in the company, but that did not debar him from speaking on the question. Had he known that the company were likely to manufacture white flannels he would have considered it his duty on every principle he had advocated right through the discussion on the tariff to increase the duty on flannel, and he would, therefore, support the amendment.

Mr. UNMACK: What about the tailors?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They are protected to the extent of 15 per cent.

Mr. UNMACK said they were not protected, as slops were allowed to come in at 15 per cent., while tweeds also paid 15 per cent. All piece goods such as moleskins, linen piece goods, ducks, diapers, which were manufacturing lines, were introduced at 5 per cent. to enable the manufacture to be carried on here, and he thought flannels should be admitted at the same rate. There was a most unfair difference drawn in favour of the Ipswich Woollen Company in the way he had pointed out.

Mr. BARLOW said white flannel was a totally different thing from crimean flannel, which was used to a certain extent by clothing factories in making up outside garments and under garments. White flannel was used more for domestic purposes, and was not likely to interfere with the clothing factories which had been mentioned by the hon. member for Toowong.

Mr. UNMACK: Yes, it does.

Mr. BARLOW said that was a matter of opinion. He had given his opinion to the best of his ability and knowledge, and in the interests of his constituents; and he hoped

that pursuing the protective policy that had guided their deliberations all through the tariff discussion, hon. members would support the proposition, consented to by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, to insert the words that had been moved.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put and passed.

Mr. UNMACK moved that the words "flannel in piece" be inserted. By the amendment that had been carried they had altered "flannel" into "crimean flannel."

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the line having been altered into "crimean flannel," the hon. member could not reverse the decision of the Committee.

Mr. UNMACK said he simply wished to have "flannel in piece" inserted. He did not wish it to be excluded from the 5 per cent. duty, because it was extensively used in the manufacturing branch of the industry.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put and negatived.

Mr. ISAMBERT suggested that all vessels and instruments made of platinum should be placed on the free list.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Why?

Mr. ISAMBERT said they were simply used for scientific purposes. For instance, the firm who were about to establish a sulphuric acid factory had ordered a retort from home, which would cost about £500 or £600. It was a specialty that could not be made in the colony, and he therefore, thought that articles of that kind should be placed on the free list.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said surely they were not going to run the whole concern in favour of the sulphuric acid people. They had put a big duty on sulphuric acid; they had taken the raw material from which that acid was made out of the 15 per cent. list, and now the hon. member wanted some ingenious machine, for use in the same industry, admitted duty free. He had never heard of such extraordinary greed on the part of an hon. member in favour of one particular industry. Let them take the burdens of taxation on their shoulders all round. The sulphuric acid people had been trying to run the whole show.

Mr. ISAMBERT said instruments made from platinum were used in every chemical laboratory.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved that the words "sulphur and nitrate of soda" be added to the schedule.

Question put and passed.

Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

On the fifth schedule, as follows:—

"AD VALOREM DUTIES.

"Upon all goods, wares, and merchandise imported into Queensland, other than those mentioned in the foregoing schedules, for every one hundred pounds of the value thereof, a duty of fifteen pounds."

Mr. DRAKE said he did not intend to oppose the schedule in any way, but he would like to point out to the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government that the duty of 15 per cent. on furniture would not have a beneficial effect so far as the cabinetmaking trade was concerned, unless some restriction was put upon the manufacture of Chinese furniture within the colony. He took it that that duty, amongst others, was intended to be protective, and to encourage native industries; therefore, it had his warm approval. But he would point out to the hon. gentleman that unless he took some means to restrict the

manufacture of Chinese furniture in the colony, that impost of 15 per cent. would simply be a tax for the benefit of Chinese industry.

Schedule put and passed.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the Bill to the House with amendments.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Monday.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER moved the adjournment of the House, and stated that on Monday, after the Customs Duties Bill had been disposed of, Supply would be gone on with.

Question put and passed.

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