

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1888

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will not be in his place to-day. He is getting better, but I am afraid he will not be here this week, although he has improved very much.

ASSENT TO BILL.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that I presented to the Administrator of the Government the Customs Duties Bill, for the Royal assent, and that His Excellency was pleased in my presence to subscribe his assent thereto, in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, intimating that he had assented to this Bill, in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty.

FORMAL MOTION.

The following formal motion was agreed to:—

By Mr. GROOM—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, copies of all the papers and correspondence connected with the adoption by the Government of Mr. Phillips's steel sleepers, and their use on the Normanton railway.

BONUS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF CALICO.

Mr. STEVENS, in moving—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider of an address to the Administrator of the Government, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to direct that a reward of £5,000 be offered to the person who first manufactures 5,000 yards of calico in the colony—

said: Mr. Speaker,—before I deal with the arguments in favour of the motion which I have tabled, I may explain that in 1869 a Bill was passed by the House entitled "A Bill for the Encouragement of Manufacturing Industries." Under the provisions of that Bill it was allowable for any person producing £1,500 worth of cotton goods to claim £1,500 reward, and also, if the manufactories continued in force for two years, the manufacturers were entitled to 1,000 acres of land in not less than three portions. That did not prove sufficient inducement to any persons to erect manufactories for the manufacture of cotton. Large areas of cotton were planted in the Moreton district with considerable success for a certain time, although the farmers were very inexperienced in the growth of cotton, and so long as the price of cotton kept up, a large quantity was exported annually. As far as we have any statistics to gather information from, cotton-growing was continued for twenty-six years, and although, of course, it commenced in a very small way, the exports amounted to—

In 1868	...	...	1,890,628 lbs.
" 1869	...	...	1,118,899 "
" 1870	...	...	1,630,755 "
" 1871	...	...	2,602,100 "

and in 1872—1,486,987. At that time cotton was at its highest price. As the price gradually declined, so the growth of cotton gradually declined, and there was no further rise until 1883, and that can only be considered temporary as the cultivators did not follow it up. The cultivation of cotton declined gradually until in 1886 only 1,548 lbs. of cotton were exported. I quote these statistics to show that, although the farmers were at that time very inexperienced in the cultivation of cotton, yet large quantities were grown. At the present time the farmers consider they have a much better chance of

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 25 October, 1888.

Absence of the Premier.—Assent to Bill—Customs Duties Bill.—Message from the Administrator of the Government—Customs Duties Bill.—Formal Motion.—Bonus for the Production of Calico.—Duty on Chinese Furniture.—Day Dawn Block and Wyndham Gold-Mining Company's Railway Line—committee.—Election of Local Authorities Bill—committee.—Order of Business.—Supply—resumption of committee.—Adjournment.

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

ABSENCE OF THE PREMIER.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan) said: Mr. Speaker,—I have to announce that the Premier

growing cotton, as they have gained from past experience, and they know now the best kind of soil on which to grow the cotton, and the best kind of seed to employ. This motion proposes to offer a reward of £5,000 to the person who first manufactures 5,000 yards of calico in the colony from cotton grown in the colony, and it does not propose that there should be any bonus in the shape of a grant of land. Many persons think that a grant of land should be offered as a reward, but, in common with many others, I think it would be better to offer simply a money reward. I think there would be more objection taken to a promise of land than to a money grant. I may state that although America produces such an enormous quantity of cotton annually, still the growth of cotton there in the early days was attended with many great failures, and it was a considerable time before cotton was grown there successfully. So that we need not by any means be disheartened in this colony, and I think with the experience our farmers now have, and with the knowledge of the soil to work and the seed to be used, there is every prospect of success for us in the future. I have spoken to many farmers on the subject and have taken a great deal of trouble to gain something more than a mere theoretical knowledge of the subject, and I find that the farmers firmly believe that they can grow cotton at a price that will pay them to grow it and will pay the manufacturer to buy it. The only difficulty is to induce some person or persons to start a factory. Many of these farmers are so confident in the success of the thing that they are prepared to take shares in a company for the manufacture of cotton goods. We know that the farmers are in a very reduced state at present from various causes, and are unable to find a sufficiently large sum of money to establish a factory large enough to give any prospect of success. There is one great reason in favour of this motion, and that is that a great deal of land which has been more or less worked out by heavy crops of sugar and corn could be used successfully for the growth of cotton. Not only that, but there are thousands of acres of inferior soil, not good enough to grow sugar or corn, that will grow cotton well, and, in fact, much better than rich, heavy land. One reason why cotton failed in the past in some parts of the colony was because the farmers tried to grow it in rich, heavy soil, which is not suitable for its cultivation. The erection of a factory of this kind will also lead to the growth of castor oil, for the same factory which manufactures cotton can also deal with castor oil. Another of the benefits to be derived from the manufacture of cotton would be the manufacture of cotton seed oil, which has a considerable commercial value, and also the manufacture of oilcake, for which there would be a very large demand from owners of studs and flocks, and then the manure from it is as valuable as the cake itself. Within a few months' time a company could be formed and the crops could be planted, and the seed ready for work as soon as the factory was erected. I do not intend to make a long speech on this subject, but I think I have shown many good reasons why this money should be granted for this purpose, and as we have only a limited time for private business, and other members besides myself have private business on the paper, out of deference to them I shall make my remarks as short as possible. I urge hon. members to take this matter into their favourable consideration. Unfortunately the farmers are now reduced to a very low ebb indeed, and some of the crops on which they have always relied to pull them through have failed them, and £5,000 is a very small sum indeed to grant if it will lead to the opening up of an industry which will give them

relief. Although it cannot be said that the growth of cotton here in the past was successful, still it had the effect of settling large numbers of persons on the soil, and had it not been for the cultivation of cotton at that time we should never have had the farmers of the Rosewood Scrub settled in this portion of the colony. If this motion is agreed to, I feel confident that in a very short time a factory will be established, and many thousands of acres now reckoned worked out and almost useless, and many thousands of acres which have never been tilled at all, will be speedily put under crop. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—After the remarks of the hon. member for Logan, there is comparatively little to be added on a subject which so deeply interests the district of which Ipswich is the centre. The hon. gentleman has referred to the decline in the cotton industry in the past, which arose from the lapse of the high prices owing to the American war, and the stoppage of the bonus granted by the Government; but it was clearly proved that we were able to grow cotton well. I have here, Sir, a printed return in which it appears that in the year 1871, when the maximum height of the industry was attained, there were 10,920 acres under cultivation in the district of Ipswich alone, and 12,962 acres in the whole colony. The produce was 2,602,000 lbs. of cotton, and the value was £79,302. I trust this matter will receive the support of the Government and of the House, and I will venture to add that, no doubt, proper securities will be put in the resolution in order that the machinery may be of a permanent character, as I was informed by a practical man, that for about £1,000 he could put up machinery and make 5,000 yards of calico and claim the bonus. Now, the cotton proprietors have not asked for a protective duty on calico—probably that would require a great deal of consideration, as calico occupies the same place in the world of clothing that bread does in the world of food. With this guarantee I hope the House will assent to the motion, as it will open up a large extent of cultivation, and cotton-growing is, besides, a domestic industry, in which the children of the farmers could contribute to the support of their homes. I trust one matter will be carefully considered, and that is, that the very best seed will be obtained, so that the industry may be started upon a strong basis. I believe there is in cotton seed greater variety than we think, and it is necessary that the very best seed, and that most suited to this climate, should be obtained, as upon that will depend the success of the industry. I need hardly say that, as one of the members for Ipswich, the motion has my most cordial support, and I feel indebted to the hon. member for Logan for the manner in which he has worked the question up and laid it before the House.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. B. D. Morehead) said: Mr. Speaker,—I certainly have no objection to this motion going into committee, but I think that there will be a great deal more discussion upon the subject than the proposer expects. I am not altogether in favour of it. I do not know that any good effect would come from the manufacture of cotton in our midst. The bonus proposed is also far too large, and if it were to be given to this particular industry, I do not know where bonuses would end; and if the bonus ended, in all probability, the industry would end too. We know that so long as the bonus of 4d. per lb. existed in the colony, cotton growing existed, and when the bonus ceased, the cotton growing also ceased. I do not intend to oppose the motion, but I do not bind myself to it.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry to hear the remarks of the Colonial Secretary, because I think the establishment of a cotton manufactory would be of immense good to the colony; and if we grow enough cotton to keep a manufactory of this kind going I think we will be establishing a new industry for the farmers, and everyone must admit that we should induce the farmers to grow more crops of a commercial value than they are now growing. I believe, in most of the colonies where bonuses have been tried, they have accomplished good results; and we know that in Queensland we have an illustration of it. I can assure hon. members that but for the bonus given by this House, that excellent establishment—the woollen factory at Ipswich—would not be in full operation, as it is now, although the bonus given was comparatively small. The Manufacturing Industries Act of 1869 provided that when the manufacture of woollen goods had reached the value of £2,000, the Colonial Treasurer should pay the sum of £2,000 to the manufacturer; and if the factory were maintained in working order for two years, there should be a grant made of 1,000 acres of land. The Ipswich woollen factory had great difficulties to contend with before it got over the absurd prejudice that nothing good could be manufactured in the colony; but that prejudice has been overcome, and the manufactory is now established on a permanent basis. I am glad to say that it has just declared a dividend of 10 per cent., and the shares are at a premium. If a bonus did good so far as the woollen manufactory was concerned, why should it not do the same with regard to cotton? The Colonial Secretary says the bonus asked is too large. I have no doubt the hon. member knows that the machinery required for the establishment of a cotton factory is far more expensive than the machinery for a woollen factory, and, therefore, the bonus should be proportionately higher. A few weeks ago there was a meeting of the farmers of West Moreton held—and some were present from the Logan and East Moreton—to discuss this question, and it was pointed out by a very practical man, who knows thoroughly the routine of the cotton manufacture, that it was useless for the farmers to grow cotton to export to England, and that unless they grew it with the view of being manufactured into cloth in the colony, it would be time and money thrown away. He spoke from large and mature experience of the question, and his speech is a valuable contribution to the question under consideration. I am sorry I have not the paper containing that speech with me, as I am sure the House would like to hear the practical views of that gentleman. It would be no use for the farmers to grow cotton for exportation to England, where it is now bringing only 6d. per lb., but if we can induce them to grow enough to supply a local manufactory it would be a step in the right direction. The only difficulty would be to make the industry permanent and not started merely for the purpose of securing the bonus. As in the Manufacturing Industries Act of 1869, it might be provided that, in addition to the manufacture of 5,000 yards of calico, the factory should be maintained in full working operation for two years, before becoming entitled to the bonus of £5,000. In South Australia they have offered a bonus of £10,000 for the discovery of the first iron mine, and the production of the first 500 tons of iron ore there; and if it is not considered that £10,000 is too much to offer for the manufacture of iron in South Australia, surely £5,000 should not be considered too much to offer for the establishment of the manufacture of cotton in our midst. I approve of the motion; and I think

every effort should be made to establish manufacturing industries in the colony, so as not only to encourage farmers to produce the raw material, but also to give employment to young men and young girls. I shall assist the hon. member in every way to carry the motion into effect.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—As I have been interested in cotton-growing for many years, I think I shall only be doing my duty in referring to what has been attempted in the past. About nineteen years ago, shortly after the conditions of the bonus in reference to cotton and woollen manufacture were published, we attempted to start a company in Ipswich. The company was formed; but, as the introducer of the motion has mentioned, it failed, because the bonus offered was not sufficient to start a cotton-mill. While the bonus lasted, cotton-growing was continued to a very considerable extent, but when the bonus came to an end, it did not pay to grow cotton to send to England. We are all aware that it will not pay to grow cotton, even with the best seed, at the price to be obtained in England; and, that being the case, the only hope for the farmers is to have a cotton factory in the locality. There is no place better adapted for cotton-growing than Queensland, and I do not see why we should not make an attempt to grow it and manufacture it as well. The hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, has referred to the fact that the Ipswich Woollen Company succeeded because the bonus was sufficient for the production of woollen cloth; but that company would not have been started if we had been able to establish a cotton factory, as was attempted four or five years earlier. It was because that attempt failed that the woollen company was started. I would point out that if this company is not started the bonus will not be required; and if the company is started it will pay the country over and over again for the bonus, because it will not be a local affair, but will benefit the whole colony. If the company is started, the number of hands employed in the mill will in a short time pay back to the colony the amount of the bonus in their contributions to the revenue through the Customs. Therefore the House need have no hesitation in granting the bonus. There is no such thing as a cotton mill in the whole of Australasia; and the amount of cotton goods required is something enormous. If a cotton mill is started it will not supply one-tenth of the calico required in Queensland alone; so that in the course of years there might be a dozen mills supplying the wants of the whole of Australasia. These things should be kept in mind, and I hope the motion will be allowed to pass, because it will do a great deal of good to the colony.

Mr. COWLEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I hope the motion will not be allowed to pass. It has been stated that if a factory is established it will give a large amount of employment to the farmers; but I think that if the machinery is once erected the people will find that the company can import cotton much cheaper than it can be grown in the colony, and that they will go to the cheapest market. Therefore the farmers will not benefit. Even supposing the farmers do grow cotton, they will very soon swamp the market. It has been stated—and no doubt correctly—that it is impossible to grow cotton in Queensland and send it to England at a profit; therefore, the market will be limited. It has been proved that it will not pay to export cotton; and it follows, as a matter of course, that it would not pay to export calico, either to the Southern colonies or to any other part of the world; therefore, I fail to see how the establishment of the manufacture can benefit very many. It was stated

by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, that one great boon would be the employment it would give to our girls; but I should be sorry to see a race of girls growing up and devoting their time and energies to factory work. It is a well-known fact that at the present time it is almost impossible to get good domestic servants, and I think that girls trained to domestic service are much more beneficial to the community than girls employed in factories. It will come to this: that more girls than men will be employed in factories, and kept away from domestic service and other better classes of employment. As the Colonial Secretary said, if we once establish these bonuses, we do not know where they will stop. We have just imposed heavy duties on all articles of consumption, and if the bonus is granted it will be an increased burden on the taxpayers, for the benefit of a privileged few who are manufacturers; because it follows, that if a factory is established the company will get their cotton in the cheapest market, and no more cotton will be grown in the colony than at present. It is folly to think that a manufacturer here will pay 15d. or 18d. per lb. for locally-grown cotton when he can import it from abroad for 8d. or 10d. per lb. I fail, therefore, to see how it will benefit the farming community. We can grow so many other things more congenial to our soil, that if we are going to assist the agricultural industry in any way, we ought to assist them to grow the products which are more natural to the country, which will thrive better, and which will come into full consumption without requiring large and expensive machinery to manufacture it. It is well known that we cannot grow sufficient agricultural produce for the people who are in the colony; we have to send to all parts of the world for it; and it would be much better, as I said, to encourage the growth of produce more congenial to our soil, and which will go into direct consumption. Therefore, I sincerely trust the House will not pass this motion to go into committee, and thereby needlessly occupy the very little time that private members have left at their disposal.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—I have not, as a rule, been in favour of a policy of protection by means of bonuses in countries where manufacturing industries are not protected by means of a tariff. In those cases it generally happens that as soon as the manufacture is established by the help of bonuses, competition from highly-developed countries steps in and crushes the industry in its infancy. But there is a great deal to be said in favour of the encouragement of industries by means of a bonus in countries where there is a protective system, because when the manufacture is once established there is some guarantee that it will have the means of being kept going. As in this colony we have made a start in the direction of protection, and as it seems likely we shall continue in the same path, I think the proposal of the hon. member is one that should receive the favourable consideration of the House. On that ground I shall vote for it. If a calico manufactory were established here it would be the means of stimulating the production of cotton, and that is a crop which would be one of the most useful in the colony, as it would furnish employment for the various members of a selector's family. I certainly do not believe in the growing of cotton on the plantation system. The colony will never derive any benefit from that; but from the introduction of cotton-growing for supplying our own mills great benefit will result to the colony. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall follow the example of the hon. member who

introduced this motion, and occupy only a very brief portion of the time allotted to private members with what I have to say upon it. This motion, even if carried, will not have the slightest effect in bringing about the local production of cotton. It does not say where the cotton is to be grown from which the 5,000 yards of calico are to be made, although I suppose it is intended to be grown here. At the same time I do not think it will result in a single acre of cotton being grown in the colony. The manufacturers will import the cotton if they want to make the calico. Even with a 15 per cent. duty on cotton they can import it cheaper than they could buy the home-grown article. Many years ago, when cotton was protected far more heavily than it is ever likely to be again, the industry may be said to have prospered, but as soon as the bounty was withdrawn the whole thing collapsed. The hon. member, Mr. Macfarlane, said the colony was specially adapted for cotton-growing. I hardly think that is the case, for if it was cotton would have been grown in the colony long ago. But we have no seasonable rains that will enable us to calculate with anything like certainty on such a crop as cotton. Cotton-growing will not pay the farmers unless they are especially protected, and there is no likelihood, as far as I can see, of that being done—at all events, to an extent without which it would be ruinous to enter upon the industry. I could say a great deal more on this subject, but I do not wish to take up the time of the House. I believe Queensland will yet see, when most of us here have gone to our rest, that in entering into a policy of protection she has gone on an entirely wrong course, and that she is, by so doing, stimulating the production of things which the colony is really not well fitted to produce.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—Judging from the remarks of the hon. member who moved this motion, his idea appears to be that in placing this sum on the Estimates, as a bonus for the manufacture of calico in Queensland, he is doing something to foster the local growth of cotton. I am not so sanguine on that point as the hon. member. The resolution is too vague. As the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Macfarlane, said it will not pay to grow cotton here and send it home. The only difference there is between sending it home to England and bringing it out in a ship from England is the freight, and that is only a small matter compared with the extra cost it would take to manufacture the cotton in this country. For that reason I do not think it would be at all likely to encourage the growth of cotton in Queensland. It is only natural that the manufacturer will go to the cheapest market for his raw material; and to make the local production of cotton pay, it would be necessary to put an exceedingly heavy duty on the imported article. This, it seems to me, is the thin end of the wedge. If we do not follow it up by protecting both the producer and the manufacturer it will be said that we have induced people to invest their money in this manufacture, and have allowed the manufacture to fall through. Under those circumstances it would be cruel to induce any individual to invest his capital in the colony, on the terms set forth in the motion—unless we are going to continue to support it afterwards. I cannot see the good that this is to accomplish. Even if it does induce capitalists to come to the colony and start this industry, I am persuaded that unless there is a much larger price given to the farmers for the growth of cotton than was paid when it was grown formerly in West Moreton, it will not pay them; it will not induce them to leave other occupations and go in for it.

Mr. HYNE said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to say a few words on this question, and I may preface them by saying that I know nothing at all about cotton-growing. But the principle of bonuses is tantamount to protection, and as I declare myself to be a protectionist, I have therefore great pleasure in supporting this motion. The hon. members who have spoken against it are pronounced free-traders, and I have heard no argument brought forward to prove that this scheme is not going to benefit a great number of persons as well as the privileged few referred to by some hon. members. I maintain that if we can induce any new industry to be started we are benefiting the country. All new industries require a helping hand, therefore I cannot see why we should not encourage the granting of these bonuses, and I trust the hon. gentleman who has moved this motion will depend upon the protective tendencies of members of this House, and not allow it to be disposed of without going to a vote. I shall support it heartily.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said: Mr. Speaker,—I sincerely hope that hon. members who I have heard speak in favour of bonuses will be consistent. They say that they are protectionists. It has been pointed out that in growing this cotton about 5,000 acres would probably be used. Well, I can tell hon. members that over 50,000 acres have been employed in sugar-growing, and if those hon. gentlemen consider it advisable to grant a bonus to bring another industry into existence, I think it is only a reasonable thing to expect that they will be sufficiently consistent to support a bonus upon an industry which is of five times as much consequence to the colony as the cotton industry ever was—that is, the sugar industry. This is only a protection in another form, and hon. members who believe in protection may consistently advocate bonuses, because it is of no consequence whether the increased cost to the consumer is paid directly or indirectly. Whatever may have been the experience of those who have grown cotton, ten times as many difficulties have had to be encountered by those who are growing sugar, because in the first place there is a protective duty on manufactured cotton, while the sugar-growers have to seek a foreign market in which they are compelled, whether they like it or not, to compete against Asiatic labour. I shall not object to the motion in any way. I shall support it, but I shall support it distinctly on the understanding that those hon. members who say they are in favour of protection will not limit their protection to a comparatively small industry, but that they will extend it to an industry which is of vastly more importance—which is the third industry in the colony, and which last year produced something like £1,000,000 worth of sugar. As long as hon. members who are protectionists admit that this is simply another view of protection—or rather that while they are endeavouring to create another industry, they will also see that industries which have been created, not by artificial means, but which have sprung up from the energy of those engaged in them and who have overcome almost insuperable difficulties—men who when they commenced the industry were almost ignorant of it, but who are now able to compete with countries which have been devoted to it for, perhaps, half-a-century—I say under those circumstances I hope the motion will be carried. If it be admitted that it is a desirable thing to establish native industries, it follows, as a necessary corollary, that industries already established, and especially an industry which supplies one-third of the exports of the colony, is at any rate deserving of some degree

of protection. Therefore, hoping that those members will be consistent, I shall support this motion.

Mr. ADAMS said: Mr. Speaker,—As a protectionist, and after what has fallen from hon. members on the other side of the House, I shall support this motion for going into committee. I believe in protection to a certain extent. I believe the cotton industry has had a certain amount of protection, and if an industry like cotton-growing is to be protected, I quite agree with the hon. member for Mackay, that if we do not actually protect the sugar industry, at any rate we should do nothing to retard that industry. The hon. member who introduced the motion distinctly declared that cotton has been grown in Queensland for over twenty-six years, and so far it had proved a failure. I find, from "Votes and Proceedings for 1861," that the following motion was passed in that year, and ratified in the other House:—

"1. That considering the importance of promoting and establishing another export staple from Queensland, it is desirable that land be granted to any person or company undertaking the cultivation of cotton on an extended scale.

"2. That the Government be, therefore, empowered to grant lands in fee simple, in blocks of not less than 320, nor more than 1,280 acres, if, within two years, capital in the proportion of £5,000 to each 640 acres shall have been expended in preparing for and in carrying on the cultivation of cotton."

Therefore, even in those days, when there were larger areas of land to be selected from than there are at the present time, anyone expending £5,000 on the industry was entitled to 320 acres. I have not been able to look up the matter, but I believe that even then there was a bonus of so much a bale on cotton, which stimulated its cultivation, but as soon as that bonus ceased, as the hon. the Colonial Secretary has said, so did cotton growing. I was rather surprised to hear the hon. gentleman who brought forward this motion say that people had grown cotton on poor land, and that was the reason they failed.

Mr. STEVENS: You misunderstood me.

Mr. ADAMS: I have had the misfortune to plant cotton in some of the richest land about Maryborough. I had a first-class crop; it took about three months to gather, employing a woman, two children, and also a good deal of the time of the husband. It cost me altogether, for cultivation and preparing for market, something like £9 15s., and I got a return of £7 10s.; so that I think cotton-growing, even with a bonus, will not pay in Queensland. If it could be, and this industry could be established in connection with it, I do not think £5,000 would be too much; but I would ask hon. members who have been advocating this as a sort of protection to cotton-growers, not to forget the other industry. As I have already stated, the hon. gentleman who introduced the motion distinctly stated that cotton had been grown here for twenty-six years, and then he says we have had no experience in it. If, after growing cotton for twenty-six years, they have not got sufficient experience, it will take them a lifetime to get it. Sugar has only been manufactured in the colony for about twenty-four years, as I think it was first manufactured here in 1864, but without any protection at all the sugar industry has held its own, though I am sorry to say it is languishing at present. I have great hopes that it will come to the fore again, and I trust we shall have the assistance of hon. members who advocate this protection to see that we get equal fair play.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I would support this motion at once if I thought it would give the farmers an outlet for any crop which could be profitably grown at present. I would do anything I could that would lead to the benefit of the agricultural community, or the *bonâ*

vide settlement of the people on the soil, but I am very much afraid this £5,000 bonus would be a misdirected benefit. It might be quite possible that cotton would be grown and machinery erected for its treatment simply for the purpose of getting this bonus. I do not know anything about cotton-growing, but I am informed that two looms might be erected at a cost of about £1,200, which, working for two months, could produce 5,000 yards of cotton goods. The Government could then be called upon to pay this bonus, and the looms might be closed immediately. That would be of no advantage whatever to the farmers. I am very much afraid that if cotton could not be grown at a profit in early years when the price was very much greater than it is now, it cannot be grown at a profit now. The arguments brought forward in favour of the protection of the sugar industry, which I am sorry is in a languishing state, might be fairly used in support of several other industries. If there are to be bonuses for the production of cotton and sugar, why not have bonuses for the production of wool and frozen meat? We know that these industries, in which there is a very large amount of capital locked up, are at present suffering great depression. Why should we be called upon to vote this money for the establishment of an imaginary industry which it is supposed will be established by the erection of a few cotton looms? I will not oppose this motion, because when we go into committee other facts may be brought forward by members who have a more intimate knowledge of the manufacture of cotton than I pretend to have; but I draw the attention of this House to the fact that members who call upon us, as protectionists, to pay a bonus for the production of cotton, should bear in mind that they may just as fairly be called upon to give a bonus for the frozen meat, wool, and other industries which are not in a paying condition at the present time.

Mr. MURRAY said: Mr. Speaker,—It is my intention to oppose this motion. We have already spent large sums of money in the endeavour to establish the cotton industry, and the attempt ended in total failure. One reason for my objection to the motion is that the sugar industry is languishing at the present time mainly for the want of cheap labour, and if cheap labour is necessary for sugar-growing, it is infinitely more necessary for cotton-growing. I think we should look for more elevating employment for the boys and girls rising up amongst us than to encourage them to go to work on the cotton-fields, and reduce them almost to the level of the coolies on the plantations in other countries.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I cannot help sharing in the opinion expressed by the hon. member for Toowoomba, with regard to what has fallen from the Colonial Secretary. I think that if the Colonial Secretary had any experience in the manufacturing districts of the old country, he would not have made the speech he has made this evening.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have had experience in the old country, and that is what made me speak as I did.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have had some experience of the manufacturing districts in the old country. I was a factory boy from eight to thirteen years of age. I can say that there is no industry with which I am acquainted that would give employment to a greater number of people than the industry for the manufacture of cotton and linen goods. Reference has been made to the failure of the cotton industry here many years ago, and it is argued from that, that the growth of cotton would fail now, but I would draw the

attention of hon. members who made use of that argument to the great difference in the state of affairs in the colony now—the great difference in the population and the facilities for growing cotton profitably, and in addition the proposal now made to the House. The population has immensely increased, and those who have settled down in the colony, and have sons and daughters, naturally look forward to the time when there must be greater facilities afforded for the employment of those children. I can speak with some degree of authority upon this matter, because I have a large mixed family myself, and having had experience of the work, I would place any of my children in a cotton factory, believing that they would be employed in an industry neither degrading nor deteriorating to their physical or mental energies. It would be in no way degrading to them, and they would be assisting in their own maintenance and the maintenance of those with whom they are connected, and would be rendering profitable service to the community of which they form a part. I mean to give my vote in favour of the proposal of the hon. member for the Logan; and I may add that if the gentlemen connected with the sugar industry in Queensland can make out a case that it is absolutely necessary something should be done to assist them, I will not shrink from doing my duty in this House, and will render them all the assistance I can to secure a bonus.

Mr. SMYTH said: Mr. Speaker,—I intend to support the hon. member for Logan, and the first reason I give is that that hon. member would not bring any matter before this House without first having given the subject a great deal of thought. I can recollect when, a few years ago, the hon. member spoke of the rabbit pest, and told us that it would bring destruction upon the colony unless some means were adopted to check it, he was looked upon as an alarmist, and was ridiculed and caricatured in the Press of the colony. What the hon. member then said has since been amply proved, and when he brings any motion of this sort forward, I know he must have studied the subject thoroughly, and knows what he is talking about. When the question of growing cotton was first taken up here many years ago, it was at the time of the American war, and what was called "The Lancashire Distress," the stoppage of the supply of cotton from America causing great distress in Lancashire. I was in the Lancashire cotton districts not long ago, and I found the people of Manchester at the present time are spending eight millions of money in cutting a canal from Liverpool to Manchester for the purpose of benefiting the cotton trade. We know well that the people sent to this colony from Lancashire to grow cotton were not possessed of the knowledge necessary—they were manufacturers and not growers of cotton. How could we expect people of that kind to be anything but a failure? We know that cotton grew well here, and it can be grown again. In Victoria and New South Wales a large industry has sprung up—the cultivation of the vine and the manufacture of wine. During the grape season a great many people get employment, especially children, in pulling the fruit, and persons who can spare the time are weeks and months at that business, and the same thing could be done here. There would be the cotton harvest, and when that season came round there would be any amount of cheap labour—by that I mean chiefly the labour of children—to pick the cotton. The hon. member for Ipswich spoke about the woollen industry. Many articles are made of a mixture of cotton and wool, and the two industries could be worked together. This £5,000 will be well spent. A certain amount of machinery will have to be erected, and a certain amount of labour will be required. I am

told by persons who tried to grow cotton that land that has been exhausted by the growth of sugar will do to grow cotton. The sugar exhausts certain chemical substances in the soil, and sugar will not grow there, but cotton will. I do not think, therefore, that we would be doing any harm by spending this £5,000. If it is lost we have at least tried the experiment, and decided whether cotton can be profitably grown in the colony. If it is a success the £5,000 will be repaid a thousand fold. We have the climate and the soil, and let us make the experiment, as the sum asked for is only a small item in the revenue. The people will take up land on the co-operative system, and they will work the mill on the same system. The labourers will be shareholders in this cotton-growing business, and labour is a great item in the matter. I shall have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. PAUL said: Mr. Speaker,—I think I am speaking correctly when I say that years ago, during the American war, some cotton companies were established in England for the purpose of growing cotton in Queensland, and it is on record that at Harrisville there were several farms where cotton was grown and sold at a high price; but directly the war ceased those establishments burst up, and that shows that we cannot grow cotton successfully. In regard to the manufacture of calico, that depends upon climatic influences. It is a curious thing that they cannot manufacture calico in Glasgow, and they cannot make Scotch lawns and twills in Manchester. All the calico is manufactured in Manchester, and Scotch twills and lawns are made in Glasgow. It depends upon climate, and I am certain that in this climate we cannot manufacture calico. It has been proved beyond a doubt that we cannot grow cotton successfully, and why then should we give a bonus of this sort to force an industry which previous experience has proved to be an utter failure?

Mr. JORDAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry that I shall not be able to say much upon this subject, as I am afraid, owing to a severe cold, I shall not be able to make myself heard; but I cannot allow the remarks of the last speaker to pass. He states that we cannot grow cotton in Queensland successfully. The hon. member said that when the American war broke out we experimented in the growth of cotton, and that during the continuance of that war we continued to grow it on a small scale, but that as soon as the war was over the whole thing burst up. Now, it had been grown successfully for several years before that war broke out. In the early part of the year 1861 I lectured at the Polytechnic in London, and Mr. Thos. Bazlay, the member for Manchester, a large cotton-spinner, took the chair. It must be remembered that the war broke out at the end of 1860, or the beginning of 1861. Mr. Bazlay stated on that occasion that he had been receiving cotton regularly from Queensland—or, as he called it, Moreton Bay—for a number of years—only a few bales. It was the variety known as Sea Island cotton; and he said that, without exception, it was the best cotton that had ever been imported into England, or that had ever been grown in the world. That was before the war broke out. He had paid for that cotton 2s. 3d. per lb. at a time when the bulk of the cotton used in Manchester was fetching about 6½ per lb. This was, as I have said, the Sea Island variety, which was grown in comparatively small quantities in the Southern States, chiefly in Georgia, and this cotton was superior to any that had ever been received from America. It was so fine that he could not spin it in his looms,

although they were constructed for the purpose of manufacturing Sea Island cotton, as he made the finer cloths, called lawns, in large quantities. He sent some of this cotton to Paris, and, for the same reason, they could not spin it in Paris, and he then sent it to India, and there, in their wonderful Indian looms, they did spin that Queensland cotton. They produced a fabric so fine in texture that it was regarded as a curiosity, and was exhibited alongside the great Victorian nugget at the Paris Exhibition. Mr. Bazlay paid for that cotton an average of 2s. 3d. per lb. The consumption of that particular kind of cotton in England before the war broke out was about 18,000,000 lbs. avoirdupois—that was of the Sea Island sort. I put this question to Mr. Cheetham, the vice-president of the Cotton Supply Association of Manchester: "Supposing we were able in Queensland to grow a very large quantity of this Sea Island cotton, do you think that the consumption, which is now 18,000,000 lbs. in England, would greatly increase?" He said, "Yes, certainly, almost to an unlimited extent. Although the consumption is now about 18,000,000 lbs. of this Sea Island cotton, it is so largely used in the production of the finer kinds of cloth that we could use it in large quantities if we could get it at an average of about 18d. per lb." This Sea Island cotton was first grown in Queensland by Mr. Sloman, of Gladstone, near the sea coast. He had been successful in getting the real Sea Island seed; and I saw a gentleman in Gladstone in the year 1860—the harbour master—who told me that he had seen Mr. Sloman's account-sales for several years, and that they showed a very large profit. I have no doubt that if we had confined ourselves to the cultivation of Sea Island cotton, the industry would not only have been a success then, but would have been a success at the present time. It is unfortunate that some of those companies formed in 1861 and 1862 for the cultivation of cotton in Queensland went to work without proper information, and brought out Egyptian and Orleans seed and other varieties of seed. They found that the Orleans seed produced a larger quantity of cotton per acre than the finer varieties; and without taking into account the great difference in the value—the Orleans cotton being worth 6½d. per lb., and the Sea Island cotton worth from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 6d.—they set themselves to the cultivation of Orleans cotton. The result was that when the American war was over and the price of Orleans cotton subsided to its original figure—namely, 6d. or 7d. per lb.—it no longer paid the farmers in Queensland to grow that cotton. But if they had confined their attention to the growth of Sea Island cotton they would not have been affected by the fall in price of the Orleans cotton after the war. We had no agricultural department at that time, however, and if a farmer wanted information he could not get it; but when we commence cotton-growing again—as I am certain we shall—that department will, I hope, be able to supply the best Sea Island seed, and give all the information necessary to make cotton-growing a success. The question before the House is, not only whether we can grow cotton so that it will pay to export it, but also whether it will be profitable to grow cotton here and manufacture it ourselves. I am satisfied that before long we shall be able to grow cotton—Sea Island cotton—and export it at a profit; but if the House grants this £5,000, and mills are established in the colony, that will be much more profitable than sending the cotton to England to be manufactured there. I shall give my hearty support to the resolution, and I hope it will be carried. We want to establish industries in our midst. We have already been successful in establishing a

woollen manufacture at Ipswich, by means of a bonus, and I hope the House will not refuse to grant £5,000 for the establishment of the cotton industry here, because there is no part of the world where cotton can be grown superior to the cotton that can be produced in Queensland.

Mr. LYONS said: Mr. Speaker,—I intend to support the motion; but I simply rose to say that I was pleased to hear it admitted by the hon. member who last spoke that the first Sea Island cotton grown in Queensland was grown by Mr. Sloman, of Gladstone.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to take the opportunity of correcting the hon. member for Leichhardt with regard to his statement that Glasgow is not a cotton-manufacturing district. According to the *Imperial Gazetteer*, the most recent authority, Glasgow is one of the chief seats of the cotton manufacture in Great Britain. Of course I shall support the motion, and I shall do so on the condition that the gentlemen who are so energetic in supporting the encouragement of agriculture in this portion of the colony will be equally anxious to foster the agricultural industry in the North. I shall want a very large bonus, in conjunction with the members for the sugar-growing districts, for the sugar industry; I shall want another bonus for the development of spice-growing, and the production of cinchona and other semi-tropical products; because there are districts in the North as suitable for the growth of such products as districts in other parts of the colony are for the production of cotton. The failure of cotton-growing in Queensland is simply due to one fact—a fact which people who have engaged in the industry here will not acknowledge—that cotton can be grown in other parts of the world under more profitable conditions as to labour. This colony has rejected—and very properly so—the principle of coloured labour; and that being so, it will be useless for this colony to compete with countries possessing equally good soil and equally good climate, and a cheaper class of labour. It should not be forgotten that the cotton industry in America was developed in certain States by the assistance of imported coloured labour, and that from the commencement of cotton-growing there until a recent period the whole of the cotton produced was exported to the United Kingdom for manufacture.

Mr. BATTERSBY said: Mr. Speaker,—It does not seem to me that this motion, if carried, is going to encourage the growth of cotton in the colony. There is not a word in it touching on that point. It simply provides that a bonus of £5,000 shall be given to the man who manufactures the first 5,000 yards of calico in the colony. What is to prevent any capitalist, either within or without the colony, coming here, erecting machinery, importing cotton from abroad, manufacturing 5,000 yards of calico and receiving the £5,000? Nothing whatever. I sympathise with the resolution to this extent: that if the hon. member will so alter it that the calico shall be manufactured from cotton grown in Queensland, I shall support it. If he does not, I shall feel bound to give it my opposition. We all know what a failure bonuses have been in the colony. An hon. member said there was never a bonus given for sugar-growing. It is well known that a whole island in Moreton Bay was given to the Hon. Louis Hope as a bonus for growing sugar. In all cases, directly the bonus was withdrawn the industry collapsed. It will be the same with this unless it is insisted upon that the cotton shall be grown in the colony. The other day we put a 15 per cent. duty on calico. If that is not enough to induce capitalists to come here and manufacture calico in

the colony, I will help the House to increase it; but I cannot see my way to vote for this bonus of £5,000, unless the cotton from which the calico is to be made is grown in the colony.

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—There is no material of greater importance to this colony, nor will there be for many years, than the raw material from which steel rails and sleepers are made. This motion will have my sympathy if it can be extended to the manufacture of steel rails and sleepers. There is a mountain called the Black Mountain, on the Cloncurry River, which contains ore enough to supply iron for the whole of Australia. If we were to give a bonus for the production of the first 5,000 tons of steel rails, it would do a deal of good. I put this forward to show that the weak spot in the motion is that the principle may be extended to any other industry as well as to calico. Steel rails will be required here for all time, and if a bonus would establish the manufacture of them in the colony it would confer a much greater material benefit than the manufacture mentioned in the motion before the House.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—Hon. members who seem so afraid of the bonus system forget that the establishment of any new industry is a valuable asset to the colony far outweighing the cost of the bonus, besides giving constant employment to a large number of people. There is no reason why the bonus system should not be extended to other industries, such as the one mentioned by the hon. member for Carpentaria. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. STEVENS, in reply, said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall not attempt to traverse the speeches that have been made against the motion; for one reason, because it would take up too much time, and for another, that I do not think a really good argument has been adduced against it. A great deal that has been said against the motion only serves to show the amount of ignorance there is on the subject. With regard to this establishing a precedent, it makes no absolute rule. Every article for which a bonus may be asked will be brought forward and treated on its merits. With respect to labour, anyone who knows anything at all about cotton-growing knows that the farmer's children take part in it. It is not like sugar-growing, which white men say they cannot work at in various parts of the colony. The smallest children can take part in it, and it would provide employment for women, young girls, lads, to say nothing about persons in towns who are at present too lazy to do anything. They would be quite content with this kind of work. Again, persons at Dunwich would be able to assist their friends to support them by earning a few pounds at this easy labour. If the motion is allowed to go into Committee—and I judge from the tone of the debate that it will not be seriously opposed—I shall be only too glad to introduce an amendment into it providing that the cotton of which the calico is made shall be grown in the colony. It was an oversight on my part. It was always my intention that that should be a part of the bargain. Hon. members who know me may be quite sure that I should be the last person in the world to do anything that would enable anyone to obtain the bonus by what would be nothing more nor less than a fraud. If I thought that could possibly be done, I would never have brought the motion forward. I hope hon. members will accept my promise to amend the motion in committee, and allow it to pass. I am confident that the establishment of that new industry on a sound basis will be a boon to the country.

Question put and passed.

DUTY ON CHINESE FURNITURE.

Mr. DRAKE, in moving—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that an excise duty, equal in amount to the import duty payable upon foreign-made furniture, be levied upon all furniture made within the colony by Chinese or other Asiatic labour—

said : Mr. Speaker,—In moving this motion I must express my regret that it is not in the hands of some older member of the House, whose opinions would have more weight with hon. members than mine; but when I explain the circumstances under which the motion appears on the paper in my name, I think hon. members will allow that the matter is to some extent urgent, and that urgency is my reason for bringing it forward. On the debate on the Financial Statement, I mentioned the desirability of imposing an excise duty upon Chinese-made furniture, corresponding in amount to the import duty proposed to be imposed upon foreign-made furniture. On that occasion I received no reply from the Government; therefore, I took the next opportunity—when the Tariff Bill was under discussion on the second reading—of bringing the same matter forward. I again brought it forward when the House was in committee on that Bill, and as I have not succeeded in eliciting any reply, I have put this motion on the paper, in order that I may have an opportunity of inducing members of the House to take this matter into consideration. At the risk of repeating myself, I must state, as briefly as I can, the reasons which caused me to think that a great deal of danger will arise unless some motion of this kind is passed. The operation of the increased duty upon imported furniture will necessarily have the effect of diminishing the import, and incidentally it should be advantageous to the cabinet-makers of this city; but, unless some duty is put upon Chinese-made furniture, the increased import duty will have the effect of stimulating the production of furniture by Chinese, and put the European furniture trade and the cabinet-makers in a worse position than they were in before. We are going on a new path now, and we can take as an example what has occurred in other countries under similar conditions. We have heard a good deal from time to time about Victoria. In that colony the operation of the protective tariff has been exactly what I fear will be here, if something is not done to check that operation. I have some figures here, but as I wish to take up as little of the time of the House as possible, I will not quote more than I can help. At the time the protective tariff was introduced in Victoria—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Are you not aware that such a tax would be contrary to treaty?

Mr. DRAKE: I am not aware of that. I know that some arguments to that effect have been brought forward in this House, time and again—that it is contrary to some treaty—but that argument was pretty well thrashed out over the first Act that was passed imposing a poll-tax. Mr. Walsh then told the House that it was absolutely absurd for the Government to think of bringing in such a Bill, because it would never receive the Governor's assent. But we know that it did receive the Governor's assent, and so did other poll-tax Bills passed since. Therefore that argument about the Tien-Tsin treaty is entirely and wholly fallacious, and I think the House will have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that we have the power to do this.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have not.

Mr. DRAKE: I think we have. In Victoria, at the time the protective tariff first came into operation there were comparatively few Chinese cabinet-makers there, but with the operation of the protective principle Chinese cabinet-makers increased until they got such a hold of the trade that cabinet-makers were driven into about as bad a position as any trade could possibly be in. When I was in Melbourne eight or nine years ago the cabinet-makers were continually holding meetings, and putting their grievances before the Government and the public, because they were driven into the most miserable position owing to the competition of cheap imported furniture and furniture made by Chinese. As far as I have been able to ascertain there are in Brisbane at the present time about 120 Chinese cabinet-makers and about 60 European cabinet-makers, and in the whole of Queensland there are probably about 300 Chinese engaged in this industry. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is extremely undesirable that anything should be done that would stimulate the increase of that trade. It is not only the injury it does to the European cabinet-maker in reducing his wages that we have to consider, but this House should not forget the slums—the dirt and filth—which is always the necessary concomitant of the presence of a Chinese industry in any town. It is so in Victoria. Hon. members who know Melbourne are aware that Little Bourke street is one of the filthiest slums it is possible to conceive, and that condition is almost entirely due to the presence of Chinese engaged in cabinet-making. I think it is desirable that some steps should be taken to prevent the Chinese getting any greater hold upon the furniture trade here than they now have. Hon. members will notice that what I propose is an excise duty equal in amount to the import duty on furniture. I am aware that some gentlemen in the trade think that is not sufficient, and are in favour of a duty of 25 per cent. Perhaps 25 per cent. would be a better tax; still I have thought it more desirable to bring before the House a resolution which would meet with the largest amount of support in the House, rather than to aim at something more and run the risk of the resolution not passing at all. I have not stated that it should be an *ad valorem* duty, because I think there would be very great difficulty in getting at the value of Chinese-made furniture—a great deal more difficulty than there is in arriving at the value of imported furniture; and I have suggested to a number of gentlemen, who have generally agreed with me, that it would be desirable that the duty should be levied according to the superficial measurement of the timber used in the furniture. I am informed by those acquainted with the trade that no difficulty would arise in levying the duty in that way. I have gone pretty carefully into figures, and am assured by gentlemen connected with the trade, who ought to know, that by collecting the duty in that way it will be no tax upon the Treasury, but, on the contrary, it will be revenue-producing. With regard to the way in which the payment of duty should be denoted, I have on several occasions before expressed my opinion that it should be done by an impressed stamp. I think that proposal would meet with very considerable favour from those engaged in the European trade, and that it is one this House might very fairly pass. Some hon. members may have an idea that this is new, and that there would be great difficulty in doing what I have pointed out. But there is no difficulty, nor is there anything entirely novel about the idea. Some hon. members may not be aware that at the present time there is a law in England which compels importers of foreign goods to have on their goods a distinguishing stamp, with the

name of the place where they were made. In order that hon. members may see that I am correct in this statement, I have brought a watch with me, and in connection with it I may state that it was a practice until lately for watchmakers to send over to Geneva, get watches made up there in large quantities after the English type, and pass them off as English-made. But they are prevented from doing that now. If hon. members will look at this watch they will see that in two places—on the face and also on the movement—there is the name of the firm by whom it has been imported, and underneath the words “Swiss-made.” Boots also are branded now with the name of the place where they are made, on the sole—“French make,” or “Austrian make,” as the case may be. I am informed that legislation in that direction is going still further in England, and Lord Salisbury has expressed himself in favour of a Bill to compel brewers to declare whether their beer is bittered with hops or quassia. I mention these matters to show there is nothing new and no particular grievance in impressing a brand upon Chinese-made furniture. It will really be a protection against fraud upon the public, because at the present time much of the furniture sold to the public as European-made furniture is made by Chinese, and as the European-made furniture is in every respect better made and more substantial, that practice is surely a fraud, and the Government would be quite right in stepping in to prevent such a fraud by impressing a brand on furniture made by Chinese. In case it may be argued that there would be difficulty in the way of the collection of a tax of that kind, I would point out that as the excise beer duty has been repealed, the men who were engaged in its collection must be to a certain extent thrown out of employment, and those men could do this work. I submit it would be no more difficult to levy a duty of this kind than to levy a beer duty; if anything it would be easier, as there would be no chance of evasion. Beer might be made on the sly, as spirits are often, but furniture cannot be made without noise and shavings. It will be well known where furniture is made, and it would be easy for the collectors to keep their eyes on the few furniture-making places established and see that the tax is collected. I will not keep the House any longer as there is very little time. I hope hon. members will take the matter into consideration, and that its urgency may be accepted as my excuse for persisting in bringing it forward.

After a pause,

Mr. PALMER said: Mr. Speaker,—As we have only just passed a protective tariff to some extent, it is scarcely right that this motion should be allowed to go as it were by default. I suppose the hon. member being a barrister is a protectionist, because he belongs to the most highly protected profession engaged in by Europeans. I would like to call to his mind a legal phrase or expression, in common use by lawyers, and it is “*Caveat emptor*”: “Let the buyer beware.” It is always supposed that a person buying an article understands the value of it, and I think no one could be taken in by Chinese furniture. I have seen the stuff, and I would never dream of buying such an article. It is a mere veneer of wood, glued together and varnished, and you can hear it cracking at all hours of the night like pistol shots. The hon. member stated that there were 160 Chinese employed in Brisbane in the furniture trade, and only 60 Europeans. That is information to me, but I suppose it would take the 160 Chinese to make as much furniture as the 60 Europeans could make in the same time, and the furniture, when made, is not

to be compared at all. With regard to the slums, dirt, filth, and other concomitants of the manufacture of furniture by Chinese, I would like to ask whose fault is that? We have laws dealing with those things, and it is the duty of municipal councils and divisional boards to put them in force. The remedy for these evils in connection with Chinese habitations is to enforce those laws. As a freetrader I compromised my opinions greatly to allow the tariff to go through for revenue purposes in the present financial condition of the country, but now this is brought forward, and one would think from the terror some hon. members exhibit of the Chinese that the Chinese is a sort of deadly upas-tree, and we are under the shade of it. I do not think we are in any danger from this Chinese furniture, when it is known to be rubbish. It might be possible to brand Chinese furniture, but this is a proposal to levy a protective duty upon it as well, and I do not think that it is advisable, or that there is any good in it at all.

Mr. WATSON said: Mr. Speaker,—With regard to the remarks that fell from the hon. member for Carpentaria, there is no doubt he is a good judge of furniture, but it is not always a fact that men go to purchase furniture. I have known females go to purchase furniture, and they have been taken in by Chinese-made furniture, because they did not understand the difference between it and that made by white men. We should, no doubt, have imposed an excise duty upon this furniture the other night, as we put an *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent. upon imported furniture. If we made an error then, I do not see that we should not correct it now. There will not be the least harm done by the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera—that is, to stamp this Chinese furniture so that we may know it. That would in a great measure counterbalance the evil we did the other night, by giving the Chinese the benefit of that duty of 15 per cent. which we imposed. There are a great many Chinese working in Brisbane in this trade, and in many cases they supply certain houses in Brisbane, to the detriment of the other cabinet-makers who would not take in nor sell Chinese furniture as European. For that reason I shall certainly uphold this motion, and if we cannot revise the tariff, at least force them to stamp the furniture. I may state that at half-past 2 this afternoon I introduced a deputation to the Colonial Secretary, and he stated then distinctly that the tariff had been passed and could not be altered, but that he was in favour of sending home to the Imperial authorities to get some measure from the home Government to remedy this matter. The Colonial Secretary, if he were in his place now, would, no doubt, be able to explain this matter; but the deputation went away satisfied in our own minds that we had not got all we expected. I may state, at the same time, that the hon. member for Enoggera was expected to be present at that deputation.

Mr. DRAKE: You went at the wrong time—you went too soon.

Mr. WATSON: We went at the time I was told. The Colonial Secretary likewise stated that he had seen the Premier, and that he had mentioned the matter to him, and he intended giving it his earliest consideration.

Mr. GANNON said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall support the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera. I think it a good one, and that it will do good to the manufacturers of furniture if this tax is imposed on Chinese furniture. A large number of Chinese are employed in Brisbane, and a large amount of furniture is sold here—European-made furniture—and sent all over the colony. I shall support the hon. member's motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—This would be a very useful motion if it could be carried into effect, but unfortunately I do not think it can, because the Governor will not assent to a differential duty. This is an excise duty to be imposed upon Chinese-made furniture, while at the same time furniture made by Europeans will not be subject to the same duty.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: There is no difficulty about that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: The motion has the full sympathy of the Government, so far as they possibly can extend that sympathy to it; but at the same time, I believe, and the Government believe, that it could not be carried into effect, for the reason I have stated—that the instructions to His Excellency are not to agree to any differential duty; and in the face of that he could not agree to a Bill which would be passed of this sort.

Mr. ISAMBERT: Try it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: It is too late to pass a Bill this session. I have not the slightest doubt that if it is at all possible for the Government to deal with the question, they will do so at the earliest opportunity; but they certainly cannot do it this session. The motion is very good as far as it goes, but as far as Chinese furniture is concerned, I say it is the fault of the people who buy it. The Chinese are not so much to blame as the Europeans, and the Europeans are to blame entirely for the infliction of the Chinese upon the colony at all. If people who talk so much about the Chinese really did their duty, there would be very few Chinese left in the colony; but they talk about them in one way, and they act in the opposite way. I have known hon. members talk one way in this House about the Chinese, who have acted very differently outside, and the same with regard to kanakas.

Mr. TOZER: Working men do the same.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Yes, the working men do the same. They are the class most interested in keeping the Chinese out of the colony, and they are really the people who induce them to remain. There is no question about that. Any hon. member who knows anything about goldfields knows the antipathy of the miners to the Chinese, and yet if they carried their antipathy into practice there would be no Chinese on the goldfields at all. I say it is not the 120 Chinese cabinet-makers in Brisbane who are to blame, but the middle men who employ them and then palm their furniture upon the public as their own. My sympathy is strongly with the motion as it stands, but I do not believe that we can give any practical effect to it this session.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—I am sorry that the Government are labouring under the delusion that we cannot legislate upon this subject. We can legislate upon this or any other subject if we consider it desirable, and for the good of the colony. I know there are difficulties in the way, but it can be done. The Governor's instructions name the Bills which he is not to assent to. He may assent to any Bill except those mentioned, one of which is any Bill imposing differential duties, other than those allowed by the Australasian Colonies Duties Act of 1873. That only refers to Customs duties, and it was never supposed to refer to anything else. It remained for the Government to discover that those instructions prevent them from dealing with the question. I certainly never heard

that objection made before, and I am sure it is not right. Suppose it were so, we could still pass a Bill and send it home for the Royal assent. And the Royal assent would not be refused. The old stories we were told in 1873 and 1877, about the treaty of Tien-Tsin and the convention of Peking, are exploded now. The English Government would not give way then, but since then the members of the Imperial Government have changed their views. Lately they have even been using in England the very arguments which we used in this House in 1877.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Which I used personally.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I said "we." I think I was the first to use them; and I think we all used them. I remember the contest I had with the Governor of that time; and in a memorandum I wrote at that time those views were put forth pretty plainly. Lord Carnarvon was Secretary of State for the Colonies at that time; but the members of the Imperial Government now admit that the treaty of Tien-Tsin relates entirely to the obligations of the Emperor of China, and that there are no treaty obligations interfering with the freedom of our action. As to the law of nations and international comity, that is a matter upon which opinions may differ. Some people think it is a violation of international comity to treat the Chinese as we do. No doubt it may be very rude, but that is a matter on which we must consider whether the circumstances justify our acting in that way. This motion embodies a proposal I made at the general election; I see no difficulty in it except getting it through Parliament. There is no legal or technical difficulty. This is really a very important matter; but it is only one part of a much larger subject; it is exactly analogous to the sweating system in England, a system by which wages are systematically reduced by undue competition below the point at which European labourers can live in decency and health; and by whomsoever that competition is carried on, those people are the enemies of the public. The subject has been attracting a great deal of attention during the last few years, and it is becoming more and more important. It is a question that Governments and Parliaments will have to grapple with before very long—not only here, but also in Europe. There has been a Royal Commission in England on the sweating system, which is a branch of the question involved in the reduction of wages by undue competition, the result being that the labourer does not get his due share of the product of his labour. The value of the product is made up by the labour and the raw material on which he exercises his labour; the profit is divided by no means in proportion to the two factors of the product; and that is really, in a few words, the cause of much of the great misery now afflicting the world. This is one phase of this question, and it may be dealt with in many ways. There is no difficulty in putting an excise duty on furniture made by Chinese or by anybody else, and it would be very easy to begin by having a brand put on all furniture, whoever makes it. Then let people take credit for what they do well, and get blamed for what they do ill. There is nothing in the practice of nations against imposing license fees on foreigners carrying on a particular business in their midst, and there are plenty of precedents in civilised nations for the adoption of that principle. We might impose a license fee on all Chinese carrying on any particular business here; and it might be done at so much a head, or so much on the articles they turn out, or on the timber used in making

them. That is a matter of detail; but the principle has been accepted by the most civilised European nations.

Mr. SAYERS said: Mr. Speaker,—It has been stated by the Minister for Mines and Works that the miners support the Chinamen; and there may be some miners who support them. I know that furniture is made by Chinese in Townsville and sent to certain individuals in Charters Towers and sold there as European-made furniture; and unless a man is a cabinet-maker he cannot tell the difference. The people who buy the furniture do not know what sort of furniture it is till they have it for some time, and then they find out that it is of inferior make. I think the public should be protected against that sort of thing. But, unfortunately, as well as a few workmen supporting the Chinese, I could name high officials in the Government service who buy all their necessaries of life from the Chinaman's store, and refuse to deal with Europeans simply because they think they can save a shilling or two. And I have known others occupying high positions in local institutions do the same. Shops have been pointed out to me, in Brisbane, where they sell Chinese-made furniture as the European-made article, and I think such a thing ought to be prevented if possible. I think the resolution is a very useful one, and I shall give it my support.

Mr. McMASTER said: Mr. Speaker,—Though I am a freetrader I shall support the motion, because I consider that by the tariff which has recently been passed, the Chinaman is placed in a much better position than before. We may succeed in keeping some Chinamen out of the colony by means of the Chinese Restriction Bill, but those who are here are protected to the extent of the 15 per cent. duty on furniture; and we should have some law to protect the European cabinet-makers who are elbowed out of the trade by Chinamen. I believe the hon. member for Enoggera was below the mark when he stated that there were 160 Chinese cabinet-makers in Brisbane. There are very few Englishmen in the trade. They cannot make a living at it, because the Chinese-made furniture is sold as European-made furniture, and people will always buy an article which they think is cheap. A differential duty will not only be a protection to the cabinet-makers, but will also enable people to see what they are really buying.

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it is absolutely necessary to pass the motion, because the Chinese are now placed in a far better position than they were in before. The argument of the Minister for Mines and Works, that we have no power to impose such legislation, falls to the ground. Even supposing we have not the power, there are other means of dealing with the question. We can pass a law that cabinet-makers, not being British subjects, shall obtain a license before being allowed to ply their trade in the colony, and we could put the cost of the license at so high a figure that it would amount to almost the same thing. There is another reason why such a law is necessary. Anyone who passes the Chinese furniture shops on a Sunday may notice that the Chinese cabinet-makers are working just the same on Sundays as on week days. Considering that there are fifty-two Sundays in the year, and allowing also for the holidays which Europeans take in the course of the year, it will be seen that the Chinese cabinet-maker gets an advantage of two months in every twelve, which is equal to about 20 per cent. With these few remarks I beg to support the motion.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson) said: Mr. Speaker,—I was glad to hear the leader of the Opposition express his

legal opinion on this question. It was a question on which I had considerable doubts. I doubted whether it was possible for the Government, with the possibility of not having their action assented to, to pass a differential rate; but I have such a high estimation of the legal opinions of the hon. gentleman that I believe he is perfectly right in the opinion he has just given to the House. That doubt being removed, the next thing would be to pass a Bill dealing with the question through Parliament. I do not think there would be any difficulty in that. Speaking for myself, I would heartily support anything of the kind, because I have no sympathy whatever with the Chinese coming into competition with our own labour. I am only expressing my own opinions now, as the Government have not yet had an opportunity of considering it as a Government; but I do not think there is a member of the Government who has the slightest sympathy with Chinese cheap labour. Therefore, when the matter does come before them I am certain the resolution of the hon. member will receive full and favourable consideration. But we must look at the matter in another light. This happens to be a very great question. It is not one that can be dealt with in a day, or in a week. It requires serious consideration, not only by the Government, but by the Parliament. It is taking a new departure, one that has never yet, I believe, been taken in any of the British colonies; and a measure to deal with it would require a great deal of consideration both by the Government and by Parliament. The hon. member who has introduced this motion knows that it is absolutely impossible, at the tail-end of the session, to have it taken up in such a way as to bring in a Bill and get it passed through both Houses.

Mr. DRAKE: I introduced it on the 19th September, while the tariff discussion was going on.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The leader of the Opposition mentioned it about the 19th May.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: The 19th March, more likely.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: And he has not brought it forward. I do not think it originated with the hon. member for Enoggera.

Mr. DRAKE: I advocated it long before that, at a bye election last year.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The first time I saw it mentioned was in the address of the leader of the Opposition. But I have heard the same thing in Victoria many years ago, and I never heard of any practical solution of the difficulty. There will be some difficulty in drafting a Bill. The "heathen Chinese" is very cunning in all his little tricks, and if there is not the closest supervision, he would manage to evade the excise duty. I regret I was not in the House when the hon. member for Enoggera introduced this resolution, so that I could have heard his arguments; but, judging from the short time he spoke, I do not suppose he has enlightened the House as to how this measure can be passed into law immediately. I may be doing the hon. member an injustice; if I am I am doing it unintentionally. As I have already remarked, it is not a matter to be taken up hastily. The resolution itself, I dare say, will have the sympathy of every hon. member; and, speaking personally, a Bill founded upon it would have my strongest support. But let us go a little further. Some years ago, not only in this but in other colonies, a law was made to prevent Chinese from working on goldfields until they were proclaimed. That was a practical measure—

Mr. DRAKE: This is speaking against time.

The POSTMASTER - GENERAL: I am sorry to hear that interjection from the hon. member, as there is no one who speaks less against time than I do.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The time for private business expires in two minutes.

Mr. DRAKE: If you sympathise with the motion, why not let it pass?

The POSTMASTER - GENERAL: I am giving my reasons for sympathising with it. Many years ago it was thought desirable to prevent Chinese from working on goldfields. That was a reasonable objection; but things are entirely different with regard to a trade. It is entirely the white people who support the Chinese. In mining townships the Chinese traders are almost entirely supported by the miners, not by their own countrymen, as I dare say the hon. member for Bundamba can bear me out. It is the same in Brisbane; they are supported almost entirely by the working men, and on Saturday nights you will find their shops nearly always full of working men and their wives. I have no sympathy with people who say they are anxious to keep out the Chinese, and yet do all they can to support them. Reference has been made to Chinamen's vegetables. At present nearly all the vegetables grown in the colony, are grown by Chinamen. It was the same in Victoria some years ago; all the market gardens were owned by Chinese. But ultimately the English gardeners brought their intelligence to bear, and now the Chinese only hawk the vegetables grown by the white man. I hope we shall soon see the same thing here. It is absurd to think we can be beaten out of the market by Chinese, even in market gardening. This resolution is one which will bear very good fruit in the future. The leader of the Opposition, I am certain, will give every assistance in drafting a Bill to give effect to it. But it is a matter that cannot be taken up lightly; it will require the serious consideration of the Government, and the serious consideration of the House.

At 7 o'clock,

The SPEAKER said: In accordance with the Sessional Order, the House will now proceed with Government business.

DAY DAWN BLOCK AND WYNDHAM GOLD-MINING COMPANY'S RAILWAY LINE.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section and book of reference of the Day Dawn Block and Wyndham Gold-Mining Company's branch line at Charters Towers, in length 64 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, the 24th October instant.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the Day Dawn and Wyndham Gold-Mining Company's branch line at Charters Towers, in length 64 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, the 24th October instant.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

—said the plan, section, and book of reference, which were then on the table, were the sequel to the Bill which passed the House last week authorising the construction of the line. He might say that the line commenced at a few chains from the Charters Towers railway station, and went into Melville street; continuing along that street, and crossing several streets on the way towards the Day Dawn Block and Wyndham Gold-mining Company's property. Its length was 64 chains. The streets through which the line passed were well provided with level crossings. There were one or two sharp curves, the sharpest being 4 chains radius. Some of the gradients were steep, there being one of 1 in 28, and two of 1 in 30. The survey had been made under the supervision of the Engineer of Northern Railways, and the route had been approved by the local authorities—namely, the Municipal Council of Charters Towers, the Dalrymple Divisional Board and the goldfields warden. The land required to make the line would cost nothing. It went along Melville street, and two or three private leases for which no compensation would be required. A slight deviation has been made to suit the requirements of one of the leases. He need not go into the details that had been gone into when the Bill passed through the House, showing the necessity for the line. Most hon. members, he believed, were agreed as to the necessity for it. It would be largely taken advantage of by other gold-mining companies besides the one constructing it. The whole of the money for its construction had been deposited or guaranteed by the company, who had another line running to their mill on the Burdekin. The traffic would follow the main line for 10 or 11 miles—for which the department would be paid—and would then be taken along the other branch line to the company's mill. This mill was a very large one, of 60 stampers, and would crush a great deal more quartz than could be produced by the company who were making the line. Therefore it was almost a certainty that it and the line would be largely used by other companies.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said there was not likely to be any objection to the approval of the plans and sections, although the gradients were rather steep. He thought, however, that the hon. gentleman was rather premature with the motion. The Bill authorising the construction of the line had not yet been finally passed, the line did not come under the Railway Act, and there was, therefore, no authority for passing the motion. There was no objection to the line, but it would be more regular to wait until the Bill became law.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: There is no doubt about the Bill passing.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that might be so, but still there was no law in force authorising the passing of the motion, and the resolution would be simply an idle resolution. If anybody took the objection the results might be very inconvenient. He hoped nobody would do so. The hon. gentleman would have been safer if he had waited until there was a law in force under which the action he was now taking could be properly taken.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the CHAIRMAN reported the resolution to the House, and the report was adopted.

ELECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES
BILL.
COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the SPEAKER left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider this Bill in detail.

Preamble postponed.

Clause 1—"Short title"—put and passed.

On clause 2—"Interpretation"—

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that on the second reading of the Bill, he had taken great exception to the provisions of it. He did not see any reason why an alien should be excluded from voting at municipal elections. What was the evil the Bill was proposed to remedy? He had not been certain on the point when he spoke on the second reading, but he found that in England recently they had prohibited aliens from voting at municipal elections. They were not now allowed to vote at municipal elections, though he confessed he did not see the reason. They had many aliens here holding leasehold property, though they were debarred from holding freehold property, but they were qualified to vote at the elections of local authorities, and he could see no reason why they should not vote when they had as much interest in property as others who were qualified to vote. No injury that he was aware of had accrued from their being allowed to vote.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had explained when introducing the Bill that it was directed chiefly against the Chinese who had got on to divisional board roll in various parts of the colony, and more especially at Charters Towers, through what he supposed to be an inadvertence in the Divisional Boards Act passed by the hon. gentleman opposite in 1887. He had already fully explained that. If the Bill did apply to other aliens he did not see that any injustice was done them. He did not see why aliens should come to the colony and have the advantage of its laws and the right to vote at municipal or any other elections the same as a British subject. It was all very well to say they had leaseholds, and were interested in property in that way, and they were entitled to the protection of their laws; no doubt, but so long as they remained aliens they were not entitled to perform the same duties which British subjects were compelled to perform when the necessity arose. If a war arose between England and Germany, or England and France, or any other country to which the aliens here belonged, they could not be called upon to defend the country the same as the hon. gentleman or any member of the Committee could be. They could also be driven out of the country in the event of a war. The law of civilised nations permitted that, and it had been done within the present generation in Europe. Therefore, if they had inadvertently given the right to aliens to vote at municipal elections, there was no reason why they should continue it. If they deprived them of that right it would probably have the effect of making them become naturalised citizens, and then they would become entitled and bound to perform all the duties which the rest of the people might be called upon to perform. He did not know a single English-speaking community in which aliens were allowed the right to vote. They were not allowed the right to vote in America. America opened her arms to all the aliens of Europe, and they went there in millions; still, after all the liberality of America to aliens, she did not permit them to vote at municipal or other elections. Under the

law of 1870 in England aliens were allowed many privileges, but they were not allowed to vote. The Act was very plain on that point. The 2nd clause read:—

"Real and personal property of every description may be taken, acquired, held, and disposed of by an alien in the same manner in all respects as by a natural-born British subject; and a title to real and personal property of every description may be derived through, from, or in succession to an alien in the same manner in all respects as through, from, or in succession to a natural-born British subject: Provided that this section shall not confer any right on an alien to hold real property situate out of the United Kingdom, and shall not qualify an alien for any office, or for any municipal, parliamentary, or other franchise."

That was plain enough. The American laws gave the same liberality to aliens in the acquisition of property, but they were not allowed to vote. The Bill would induce them to take out naturalisation papers, and become fellow-citizens of the people.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was not convinced. They had had the same law in force always in the colony, and he had never heard any objection whatever to it, except in the case of one or two Chinese who had been elected aldermen. That had not often happened, but even that objection had been removed. The provisions of that Bill—the 6th clause, for instance—would be absurd. By the Divisional Boards Act it was provided, in the case of voting by post, that the returning officer should send a voting paper to every man on the list of voters, and if he happened not to have been naturalised, by that 6th clause he would if he voted be liable to twelve months' imprisonment. That was actually providing by law that an officer of the country was to set a trap for a man which rendered him liable to twelve months' imprisonment.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: We shall discuss that when we come to that clause.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it was impossible to work such a system as was proposed in the Bill with the system in the Divisional Boards Act. By the Divisional Boards Act it was provided that a voting paper was to be sent to every ratepayer. Either they should allow aliens to vote, or they should make some provision which would prevent voting papers being sent to them; and how was that to be done? The returning officer would not know whether a man was an alien or not, the rate-book simply showed who paid rates, and if they made aliens pay rates, then they should be allowed to vote. A provision of that sort was monstrous. A public officer sent an invitation to a man to vote, and when he did vote he was liable to imprisonment for twelve months.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. gentleman was making a mistake when he said it had always been the law. When the Divisional Boards Act had been passed in 1879, it had crept in through some inadvertence, as had occurred in 1881, and it had been in force for the two years during which the principal Act had been in operation. The Mellwraith Government, however, in 1881, amended that, and voting by post had been then the law, as it was now; so that there was nothing so monstrous in doing what had been done for several years before. As to what the hon. gentleman had called a trap, that could only be a trap at the first election or two—if it were a trap at all—because no man who was an alien would leave his name on the roll after that.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: But if he is put on and made to pay his rates?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said they could very easily put an intimation in the paper that was sent by post to the voter, warning him that if he were not naturalised or a natural-born subject, he had not the right to vote, and that if he did he would be subject to a penalty. That was a matter easily done, and, after the first election or two which took place under the Bill, there would be no necessity for that.

Mr. GROOM: Suppose he cannot read it, what then?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said then someone would read it for him. The principle of the Bill could not be gainsaid. It was perfectly correct, and that was merely a matter of detail, and calling it monstrous or anything else did not alter the principle of the Bill. He did not suppose he would be able to convince the hon. gentleman, but the law which he wished to pass had been the law of Queensland for several years.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman had said that it had become law inadvertently in 1879. He was quite certain that in 1882 it had become law inadvertently for the first time to prevent an alien from voting.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: No, indeed it did not.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he happened to know better than that, because he had taken great interest in the passing of that Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: I mean the Amending Act of 1882.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was speaking of the Act of 1882, when for the first time the prohibition had been inserted, by which aliens were not allowed to vote. The hon. gentleman had not indicated how he proposed to get over the difficulty of sending aliens voting-papers, and unless some provision to that effect was inserted, the Bill would be a disgrace to the statute-book.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 3, as follows:—

“No person who is not a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty shall be entitled to vote as a ratepayer at any election in any municipality or division.”

Mr. MELLOR said he hoped the Minister for Mines and Works would make some alteration in that clause, so that it would not affect aliens who had been resident in the colony for many years past—men who would be trapped if that Bill were passed. They would be imprisoned, although they were quite innocent of doing anything wrong. There were a great many Germans and Danes in the colony who were good settlers, and who did not know anything about voting. He did not think the hon. member wished to entrap those people, and he hoped that clause would be altered so that there would be no danger of those people being prosecuted for doing what, ever since the Divisional Boards Act had been in operation, had been allowed. Most hon. members would like to see the Chinese prohibited from voting at municipal and other elections. They were restricting the Chinese in every way, and they did not want them to have any say in any of the institutions of the country; and although they were allowed to hold property, he would go so far as to prevent them having votes. They, however, should not do anything which would do an injury and an injustice to other aliens who were good settlers in the country.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that any individual who was not a

natural-born subject could be naturalised very easily. The naturalisation laws of the colony were more liberal than those of any other country in the world. All a man had to do was to go before a magistrate and pay 2s. 6d., and he could be naturalised, and if the inducement were not sufficient to make him pay half-a-crown, then he was not worthy of a vote. He would be the last to entrap anyone, or to injure anyone, if he could help it; but they had the right to demand that those men, whoever they might be—whether Germans, French, Danes, or whatever they might be—should be naturalised, and liable to perform the same duties as they themselves. If he could alter that so as to give them a third of a vote, or a fourth of a vote, he might satisfy the hon. gentleman, but he did not see how it could be altered. They must either give those people a vote or they must not. He thought a man was not entitled to vote if he did not become naturalised. If the hon. member had anything to propose by which a man who voted inadvertently would not be punished, he was quite willing to adopt it. All he wanted was to prevent men from voting who had not the right to do so.

Mr. STEVENS said the contention of the hon. member for Wide Bay seemed to be that the Bill should not become law until a sufficient length of time had elapsed to allow aliens to be naturalised. That would prevent many hardships, as if the Bill became law immediately a great many persons in the colony would suffer in the event of a municipal election taking place. Sufficient length of time should be allowed to elapse until the provisions of the Bill became publicly known throughout the colony.

Mr. SMITH said he was sure the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill had no desire to prevent persons from voting who might become naturalised. It was quite reasonable to expect that if they became naturalised they should have all the rights and privileges of Englishmen. But he saw a difficulty in regard to the matter, especially in regard to divisional board elections. Under the Local Government Act and the Divisional Boards Act, the principle of voting was that any man who paid his rates should be entitled to the privilege of voting. In a municipality, where the voting was done in the ordinary way by the ballot box, there was no hardship, because if the men were not naturalised they could be challenged, and if not qualified, would not be allowed to vote. But in a divisional board it was different. There the list of voters was made up from the rate-book, and the persons who had paid their rates, as shown by the rate-book, were entitled to vote. The returning officer issued the ballot papers. He posted one paper to every person whose name appeared on the rate-book as having paid the rates. If the hon. gentleman would make a proviso that, instead of taking the names of the voters on the rate-book, promiscuously, and sending ballot papers, an electoral roll should be prepared, leaving out those who had not shown that they were qualified to vote, as was done under the Local Government Act, there would be no danger of any person who was not a natural-born or naturalised subject being brought into trouble by voting. If the ballot paper were sent by the returning officer by post, there was no doubt the people would not be able to understand the provisions of the Bill, and would exercise their right of voting. In one case the returning officer would send papers to people who lived in the bush, on farms or selections, and who would know nothing of the existence of the present Bill, or of its provisions. The hon. gentleman said he would provide for that by making some addition to the ballot papers; but that would necessitate altering the

form of the ballot paper, as at present nothing was allowed to appear on the ballot papers except the names of the candidates. It would be a very great hardship to the owner of property if that property should be deprived of the benefits of a vote, because it was leased to an alien. Although a man holding property in a division might be an alien he was still interested in having the roads repaired, or other improvements made in a locality. The interest which he would possess in having improvements made in that part of the division was apparent and identical with that of his neighbour; the property should, therefore, have the benefit of the vote. He hoped the objection he had raised would receive consideration.

Mr. DRAKE said he thought there was a good deal in the contention of the hon. Minister for Mines and Works. It was a very easy thing for European or American aliens to become naturalised, and he did not think it was desirable to offer any inducement to aliens to remain aliens. They were not subject to the Defence Act, and it was hardly right that men should come to the colony and enjoy the advantages of their laws and civilisation, and still shirk the obligation of assisting in the defence of the colony if necessary. The hon. gentleman said his object was to exclude Chinese aliens from voting. If that were his object he did not see why it should be interfered with. If that had been the main object of the hon. member he would suggest that the best plan would have been to have said so in the Bill, and make the clause applicable to Asiatics and Africans. That distinction had been already made in the Aliens Act, and he did not see why the same distinction should not be made again.

Mr. SMYTH said, if he had the opportunity, he should like to see the clause altered by making it read—

“No person who is a native of Africa or of Asia shall be entitled to vote as a ratepayer at any election in any municipality or division.”

Even if an Asiatic or an African took out naturalisation papers they should decline their votes, and say they did not want them to take part in politics or divisional board matters. If the clause were passed in its present form a number of Germans, Swedes, Danes, and Americans could not vote. There were a number of Americans by birth, and Americans who had been naturalised from Great Britain, in the colony, and they might not wish to transfer their allegiance. They would rather remain Americans. Germans, Swedes, and Danes also had a sort of national pride, and would not like to say, “I was once a German” (or a Swede, or a Dane, as the case might be); “but I am now an Englishman.” But there were many persons whom they might not think it desirable to allow to take part in their public affairs. Why should they debar good, useful citizens from taking part in elections because they would not become naturalised? During the last electioneering contest at Gympie one of the most prominent men who took part in it was an American, and he was too proud of his nationality to turn his coat.

Mr. GROOM said there was another point to be considered. There was nothing in the Land Act to prevent an alien from selecting land; and many aliens were holders of land. It was the custom of divisional board clerks to apply to the land courts for the names of all persons who had selected land; and the question of naturalisation was never raised so far as divisional boards or municipalities were concerned. With regard to the argument that time should be given in order that aliens of certain nationalities might become naturalised, he would point out that the 1st November was the day on which the voters’

lists for elections in municipalities were made up for the ensuing year, and that on the 31st December the divisional board clerks would proceed to make up their lists, so that if time were given for the provisions of the Act to become known, they would not be able to prevent aliens from voting for another year. He agreed with the member for Gympie (Mr. Smyth), that the clause should be made to apply only to Asiatic and African aliens. He knew that great irritation was felt by a considerable number of Germans just now, because they thought they were being classed with Chinamen in the 3rd section. Of course, the object was to prevent Chinese from voting, but the clause applied also to Germans who were not naturalised, and he could quite understand the irritation they felt. He was sure that the Minister for Mines and Works did not want to put the Germans on the same footing as the Chinese, and he thought it would be sufficient to pass a simple clause, saying that an Asiatic or African alien should not be entitled to vote in any municipal or divisional board election.

Mr. SAYERS said the matter seemed to have cropped up at Charters Towers, where, at the last divisional board election in February, certain individuals took advantage of the fact that Asiatic aliens were not debarred from voting under the Divisional Boards Act. There were hundreds of Germans and Danes in that electorate who were just as well able to vote at elections as any Englishman, but the Chinese neither understood the ways nor the language of Europeans. They were run in by one or two individuals like a flock of sheep, and had to vote openly the way they were told. There were scores of European foreigners who paid heavy rents and taxes, and it would be unjust to prevent them from voting at elections. He did not hold with the Minister for Mines and Works when he said, that if foreigners were compelled to become naturalised they would be part and parcel of the population of the colony. He would like all foreigners to become naturalised; and if they did it spontaneously they would take a pride in the country; but if they did it under compulsion that would not make them better citizens in any way. He would like to see the Minister for Mines and Works accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Gympie.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he did not think the suggested amendments cut deep enough. Why should they hold out to the world all the privileges of British citizenship, and not make those who took advantage of those privileges fulfil the duties of citizens? If they did not think it worth while to become naturalised, let them remain outside. If it was fair to except Asiatic aliens, he thought it was equally fair to except all other aliens.

Mr. LITTLE said he endorsed the remarks of the hon. member for Burke, Mr. Hodgkinson. British subjects could not enjoy the privileges of citizens in any other European State unless they were naturalised; and he thought it was only fair to apply the same rule to foreigners coming to Queensland. If they thought it worth their while to come to the colony, it was their duty to become naturalised if they wanted to have all the privileges of citizens. He did not think it was fair. He sincerely hoped the hon. Minister in charge of the Bill would carry the clause providing that all aliens in the colony should become naturalised British subjects before they were entitled to enjoy the privilege of voting at the ballot-box.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said some hon. members seemed to think that there was a sentimental feeling in the minds of Germans against giving up their

country and becoming British citizens. He did not see what degradation there was in becoming a British citizen. He could quite understand a man being naturally proud of his country; but all those men had left their country because their country was not good enough for them to live in. They had come to the colony to better their position, and they had succeeded in doing so. When they came here and enjoyed all the privileges that were conferred upon them they should also accept the responsibilities which the natural-born British subject had to accept. It was nonsense talking about that sentiment, because it did not exist. No people in America ran so fast to become naturalised as the Germans did when they went there, and they could not be naturalised there nearly so easily as in Queensland. He hoped they would pass the clause, and he was willing to accept any amendment in any of the other clauses, so long as it agreed with the principle of the Bill. He did not want to injure anyone. He was willing to accept the amendment which had been suggested—that the Bill should not come into operation within a certain time, even if that time was twelve months.

Mr. UNMACK said it appeared to him that every man in the colony had come there because his own country was not good enough for him; everyone of them had come there for the purpose of bettering his position. It had been said that some foreigners came there who were too proud to change their nationality. If they did, all he could say was that the sooner they quitted the country the better. They were not desirable colonists; they were mere birds of passage who would take whatever they could out of the colony and return to their own country to spend it. There was no excuse for any foreigner who desired to take up his permanent residence in the colony, and who enjoyed all the liberal privileges offered him, not at the same time taking up the responsibilities of a British citizen. On the other hand, they ought to be very careful not to inflict an injustice upon those who had already taken up their residence in the colony. He did not think any one of them would object to take the oath of allegiance and become naturalised British subjects, but time ought to be given them to acquire those rights—to get acquainted with them. It had been stated that the lists had to be made up on the 1st November. Would the hon. gentleman agree that the Act should not come into operation until the 1st January, 1890? That would give a fair time to those foreigners now living at a distance to get acquainted with the law. Those men had proved very valuable colonists, especially as agriculturists; they were steady, sober, and industrious, and should be encouraged. He hoped the Minister would see his way to insert such a provision in the Bill as would give sufficient notice to enable those men to become acquainted with the law.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had already expressed his willingness to accept an amendment of that kind. He was perfectly willing to insert a clause at the end of the Bill which would prevent the Act from coming into force until the 1st January, 1890, a period of fourteen months.

Mr. LITTLE said that in 1862 he saw a Chinaman elected at Maryborough, and who subsequently became mayor. That might happen again. The Chinese ought to be kept in their proper place.

Mr. SMYTH said he had intended to move an amendment to exclude Africans, Chinese, and Polynesians, but as the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba, which had been

approved of by the Minister, would meet the case effectually, he did not intend to proceed further with it.

Mr. McMASTER said another difficulty presented itself. They passed an Act last year providing that the person who paid the rates should be the person who was entitled to vote. As a matter of fact, the assessor went round, and finding a tenant in the property his name was taken down as the person entitled to be put on the rate-book. The hon. the Minister for Mines and Works had said that if they were not entitled to vote they ought not to have their names on the roll, but there were many people in divisional boards who would very much prefer that their names were not on the roll. They could not vote, not having paid their rates, their names still appeared on the rate books, and probably the next intimation they would get would be a visit from the bailiff. In fact, they were disfranchised through not having paid their rates before a certain time, and yet they were compelled to pay. He thought it very hard that a man who paid his rates was not allowed to vote. Therefore, he thought an amendment should be made so as not to class foreigners as Chinamen. The object of the Minister in charge of the Bill was aimed at Chinamen, and in that he was quite prepared to help him; but he did not like to see other foreigners, who were good colonists, but had failed to become naturalised, deprived of their right to vote when election time came round. Although the hon. member for Toowoong wanted to turn them all out if they were not naturalised, he (Mr. McMaster) would point out that they might be very good citizens and colonists, even though they were not naturalised, and it would be very hard if they were compelled to contribute to the revenue and yet were barred from having any voice in the election of representatives.

Mr. REES R. JONES said there was a great difference between a Chinese alien and the alien of a European country. A European alien had only to go to the nearest police court, pay 2s. 6d., and become naturalised, whereas a Chinaman could not be naturalised at all without the consent of the Government—and under the new restrictions he could not be naturalised under any circumstances. They were glad to welcome people from all European countries, and they should let them become naturalised and be placed on an equal footing with their fellow-colonists. He thought no invidious distinctions ought to be drawn between them.

Mr. MELLOR said the arguments of hon. members had been directed chiefly to municipal elections, but the difficulty he foresaw was as to divisional board elections. He could not see how they were to provide for voting by post in those elections, because the usual questions could not be put to a voter. The Bill did not provide for such cases, and he did not know how the hon. gentleman in charge of it was going to meet the difficulty.

Mr. GRIMES said, in reference to that matter, it seemed to him that clause 5 would not touch voting by post at all. There was no voters' list made out in that case; it was simply taken from the ratepayers' book. Clause 5 only applied where a voters' roll was used.

Mr. POWERS said he thought the amendment which the Minister for Mines and Works had already said he would agree to covered the whole ground, because everyone would then have a chance of knowing what the law was. No one would be liable to a penalty for voting when he had no right to vote until 1890. The only argument used in favour of those parties having a right to vote was that they paid rates. But every man in the colony paid taxes, and yet

those who were not naturalised were precluded from voting at parliamentary elections. He quite agreed that every man should be naturalised, to entitle him to vote at a municipal or divisional board election, as well as at a parliamentary election. As to clause 6, when the second reading of the Bill was before the House he suggested an amendment, which he hoped the Minister would agree to. He did not think any man should be liable to a penalty for committing an offence unwittingly. There should be guilty knowledge. A man who voted should know that he had no right to vote before a penalty should be imposed. He hoped an amendment to that effect would be introduced. With reference to the statement of ancient history, about the residents of Maryborough having elected a Chinaman, he would like to explain that no Chinaman was ever mayor of Maryborough, but one of the candidates was so unpopular that a Chinaman was put up against him. The joke was carried to such an extent that the Chinaman was elected a member of the municipal council, and he was actually proposed as mayor of the town, but he was not elected, he (Mr. Powers) was proud to say. The council, at last, got so disorganised that it lapsed altogether, and they started with a clean sheet afterwards.

Mr. UNMACK said the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, had said it was very hard to prevent any one who paid rates from recording his vote, but it was a well-known fact that foreigners who came here and acquired property could easily become naturalised, and if they did so, there need be no fear that they would be deprived of their charter.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he was glad the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill had promised to introduce an amendment to the effect that the Bill, if it became law, should take effect in 1890, because he was certain it might otherwise be a source of great injustice to ratepayers in divisions and municipalities who had at present the right to vote, although they were aliens. He would suggest that much of that difficulty could be got over by allowing the chairmen of divisional boards throughout the colony to be supplied with the necessary papers and to take the declaration of allegiance to Her Majesty from any alien who might be willing to be sworn. That would get over the difficulty in a very easy and simple manner.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill had not thought it out thoroughly, he was sure. How were they going to find out whether a man was an alien or not? It was all very well in England where there were very few aliens ratepayers. He was not very familiar with the law in England, as he had said, and did not know exactly how it dealt with that part of the subject. There was a provision there for the trial of disputed municipal elections, before an elections tribunal, constituted by a barrister appointed for the purpose. Suppose there was a dispute here at a municipal election, and it was said that several people who voted were aliens, how were they going to prove it? He did not know. Suppose fifty Germans voted, how were they to prove they were not naturalised? They might prove that they appeared to be Germans and talked German, but they could not prove they were not aliens?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: They have to prove it themselves.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he presumed the hon. gentleman intended to put in a clause rendering them liable to a penalty for giving a false answer, as that was left out; but

they could get no evidence to convict a man of making a false answer in that respect, unless they could bring somebody who knew him in the town he came from. In such a case as he had stated, the election could not be upset, because there would be no way of proving that the persons whose votes were objected to were aliens. It was usual in such cases to make some provision for what should be considered *prima facie* proof, but it was impossible to do anything with the Bill before them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the Local Government Act and Divisional Boards Act would still remain in force if the Bill became law, and the penalty for voting where there was no right to vote was provided there. As to the question as to how they were to find out whether a man was an alien or not, the questions were there the same as in parliamentary elections. If they asked a man the question and he said he was entitled to vote, there was an end of the matter—unless his answer was false, when he was liable to a penalty.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: How are you going to prove it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: How did they prove a man had voted wrongly at a parliamentary election? If he took the name of John Smith and his name was John Brown, how were they to prove that his name was not John Smith?

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: You have the electoral roll there.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he knew the hon. member did not like to see the clause carried, because it was against the principle in the Bill he had himself passed altering the law from what it was previously. By that alteration the hon. gentleman admitted the Chinese to the municipal franchise, which they had not previously, and he did not think the hon. gentleman intended that; at all events, he would like to hear from himself that he did, before he believed it.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. gentleman was singularly unfortunate in his narrative. Chinese had always been entitled to vote at municipal elections in this colony, and they were now. Under the Act of 1882 aliens were prohibited from voting at divisional board elections, but not at municipal elections.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: The hon. gentleman admits what I say.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: No; the hon. gentleman was speaking of municipal elections, and with respect to those elections Chinese had always the right to vote. The hon. gentleman had not followed what he had said just now. Suppose a man gave a false answer to a question put to him under the provisions of clause 5, how were they to prove that his answer was false. The hon. member had spoken of parliamentary elections but the roll was the test there, that a man was entitled to vote. That was not the case under the Bill before them, for a man might have his name on the roll and still not be entitled to vote. If the roll was made the test the objection would have to be raised beforehand, and if a man got on the roll he would have the right to vote. The proper way to deal with the question, if the principle of refusing aliens the right to vote was adopted, was to prevent aliens from getting on the roll. But under the Bill, if a man gave a false answer, innocently or otherwise, it would be impossible to convict him, because the evidence necessary was not procurable. So much for a case where there was open voting, but in the case of a

divisional board election, where the voting papers must be sent round to every ratepayer whether he was an alien or not, how were they to reject the votes? Was the returning officer to say in his own mind, "That man has got a foreign name," and reject the vote on that account? He might reject thirty votes in that way, and the candidate who was defeated by their rejection might claim the votes. That might be followed up by an application to the Supreme Court, which might be very expensive, and it would have to be proved that the thirty persons whose votes were rejected were aliens—a thing that was almost impossible of proof. A provision of that kind would simply give rise to interminable confusion. They were dealing with the matter at the wrong end, as it should be dealt with on the voters' list. He was not going to oppose his wish to that of the Committee if they desired that aliens should not be allowed to vote, but the right way to deal with the matter was to prevent the men being in a position where they could vote, or where the returning officer would be able to ask the questions.

Mr. TOZER said he trusted the Minister for Mines and Works would not lose the value of the Bill by inserting a provision which would be unworkable. His sympathies were with the Bill, and he desired to see that no aliens should have a vote. He would like to assimilate the practice to that of voting at elections. He appreciated the fact that most of the arguments had been of a sentimental character. The persons who had mostly been mentioned as likely to be affected were the principal aliens—Germans. In his constituency there were a great many Germans, but it would be insulting to their intelligence to say that they were not naturalised. At the instance of the various political parties they were now pretty well all naturalised, and had votes for parliamentary elections. If they were to go through the colony he did not think that they would now find fifty Germans who had not the right to vote. There might be a few about Brisbane, but in the country districts they had looked well after themselves. They thoroughly studied the history and customs of the country they were coming to, as they were well educated. He did not apprehend the slightest probability that any German or other alien in his electorate would be injured by being called upon to be naturalised. He hoped the Minister for Mines and Works would not allow, for one objection, the benefits of the Bill to be lost, as it was a good Bill. So far as regarded Asiatic and African aliens, it was mostly on goldfields that those persons voted, and he would not allow one of them to have a vote. He knew full well that not one of them understood how to vote, and they simply did what they were told. It would be wise, if possible, to make the provisions of the Bill applicable to them without one moment's delay; and with regard to European aliens the injury that would be done to them was more than counterbalanced by the benefit people on the goldfields would derive if the operations of the Bill were to be hastened. Some hon. members had spoken of the difficulties European aliens laboured under here. He had travelled a good deal in European countries, and he had found they were not so liberal as the people in this colony were. Everyone had to be provided with a passport, and he could get no rights at all. Even in America they had a law which not only kept out people, but foreign capital as well. Europeans could not hold mining property in America unless there were a large number of Americans associated with them in that property; and they excluded the names of persons from companies owning freehold property, if they were not resident in America. He trusted the hon. member in charge of the Bill would try to avoid any

difficulty arising from the voting of European aliens by amending the Divisional Boards Act. A short clause could be introduced next session providing that European aliens, before they got their names on the rolls, should be naturalised. That would answer all purposes, and he thought the hon. gentleman would do well to accept the suggestions to omit any reference to European aliens.

Mr. McMASTER said that unfortunately those aliens, if they were ratepayers, were placed on the rolls, whether they liked it or not. It was not at their option at all. Not a single ratepayer in Brisbane went to the Town Hall to get his name on the roll. The rate-book contained all the names of the ratepayers, and on the 1st of November the names of those who had not paid their rates on or before that date were struck off the rolls. Those whose names were struck off had to pay their rates all the same, or they would soon hear from the council's bailiff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said, admitting what the hon. gentleman had said, they were not bound to vote because their names were on the roll; and if by that Bill they were prohibited from voting, they would not vote.

Mr. MORGAN said there was an omission in the Bill, as there was no penalty provided. The 103rd clause of the Local Government Act of 1878 imposed a penalty.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: The Divisional Boards Act will remain in force.

Mr. MORGAN said there were certain questions to be asked of any person. Certain of those questions had to be answered in the affirmative and others in the negative, and if those questions were not properly answered the person should not be allowed to vote. Supposing he answered them wrongly there was no penalty inflicted.

The HON. SIR. S. W. GRIFFITH said he wished to know whether the hon. gentleman really intended to persist in putting upon the statute-book a law which would be an absurdity. Of course, he could if the Committee chose to do so. The hon. gentleman had not attempted to answer the arguments and the objections he (Hon. Sir. S. W. Griffith) had pointed out. The passing of that Bill would only give rise to confusion. He should certainly not take the trouble to repeat his arguments, and if the hon. gentleman liked to pass a Bill of that sort he could do so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did not think there was anything in the Bill unfit to appear on the statute-book. If he thought there was he would not attempt to pass it.

Mr. SMYTH said he wished to know whether the Minister for Mines and Works intended to amend the clause in accordance with the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowoomba—that was, not to allow that clause to come into operation until the year 1890?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: That comes in a later part of the Bill.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he would ask the Minister for Mines and Works to take some suggestions from that side of the Committee. The compiler of the roll should see, before he put anyone's name on the roll, whether he was naturalised or not. The suggestion of the hon. member for Bulimba was a good one. If a chairman of a divisional board were empowered to give the oath of allegiance, there would be no

difficulty at all. They could make it incumbent upon any alien who came to vote to prove that he was naturalised; if he could not prove that he had been naturalised, he could become naturalised at once by paying the necessary fees. A good many were not naturalised because they were too diffident about going to a court to get it done. They did not like being told to go to a police court. If the chairman of a divisional board had the power to administer the oath of allegiance, all the difficulty would vanish. Although that particular clause was not now under discussion, still it was relative to the matter. It was provided that a naturalised British subject should have a vote, but supposing he died, was his widow entitled to the vote? Was she to be allowed to vote? If a man arrived in the colony with young children, who grew up, many of them might not be naturalised, but they would be like natural-born British subjects, and would consider they were entitled to all the privileges of such. There ought to be provision made for them, and a clause might be inserted to the effect that when there was any doubt as to a voter being able to prove that he was a naturalised British subject, he should be made to pay a fee to some officer who would administer the oath of allegiance. That would really do foreigners a service, and the Treasurer would obtain a little revenue.

Mr. GLASSEY said that before the clause was passed he would like to know how the suspensory clause would work when the next elections came on. As the Minister in charge of the Bill had stated, the object of the measure was to prevent a number of Chinese from recording their votes, as they did at Charters Towers last February. If the Bill did not come into operation at once, how would it affect the elections which would come on in February next? Those who were on the roll would unquestionably vote, and there would be the same difficulty that there was last year. He would like that point to be considered.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the leader of the Opposition had said that Chinese should not be put on the lists. He intended to move the addition of the words "or be entitled to have his name inserted on any voters' list or voters' roll."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the object of the hon. gentleman was all right; but he would point out that the 5th clause of the Bill would not prevent Chinamen from voting at all, if that was what it was intended to do. The questions put would be—"Are you a British-born subject?" "Yes." "Where were you born?" "Hongkong," or "Singapore." They would all say they were born in such places, and who could prove they were not? Of course they would all vote. The Bill had been prepared with a good object, but without any consideration of the means of carrying out that object. The Bill would be utterly futile so far as the Chinese were concerned. If a man had his name upon a roll no penalty could be enforced upon him for voting. What was wanted was a provision to prevent the names of aliens from being inserted on the lists. It should be made the duty of the returning officers to leave out the names of persons whom they supposed to be aliens, and there might be a provision that notice should be given of the omission of their names, and requiring them, in sending in their claims as provided for by clause 53 of the Local Government Act, to state when and how they became British subjects. That would deal with municipal elections. In respect to divisional boards, a different state of things existed. They were not compelled to compile their rolls annually, as all that was to be done was to make the lists out

from the roll books. Then there should be a similar provision requiring divisional board authorities to give notice to ratepayers whom they supposed to be aliens, that, unless they satisfied the board by a certain time that they were natural-born British subjects, they would not be entitled to vote. With such provisions the Bill could be made workable. In the one case their names would not be on the voters' roll, and in the other they would not be on the voters' lists. They would not be entitled to vote unless they proved they had become naturalised British subjects in Queensland, and that could be proved by a reference to the records of the colony. In parliamentary elections it had not been found practicable to prevent a man from voting whose name was on the roll; it had been tried many times. The difficulty in regard to divisional board elections would be so much greater, because there were so many boards, and the means of correcting the result of elections were more difficult and costly.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the words, "or be entitled to have his name inserted on any voters' list or voters' roll," be added at the end of the clause.

Mr. GRIMES said to carry out the suggestions that had been made, it would be necessary to make some alteration in the Divisional Boards Act. The rolls could not be made up to within seven days of the taking of the poll, as was required, and there would not be time to follow out the course proposed by the leader of the Opposition. The point raised by the hon. member for Rosewood was also worthy of consideration, and that was in reference to women who were voters. The Divisional Boards Act allowed women to vote as ratepayers, and some of those women were foreigners. He should like to know from the legal adviser of the Government whether it was necessary for such women to be naturalised, or whether all women should be considered British subjects. The point was worthy of consideration.

Mr. MELLOR said he thought that some amendment like the one suggested by his hon. colleague was necessary to get over the difficulty. If a Chinaman was on the roll, and said he was born in Hongkong or in Singapore, the returning officer could not prevent him from voting. But he did not think the Committee wanted the Chinese from Hongkong or Singapore to exercise the franchise, because, though they might be natural-born subjects of Her Majesty, they were Chinamen all the same.

Mr. McMASTER said he wished to know what was going to be done with a man whose name was placed on the roll against his will. He thought the amendment would not meet such a case as that. Another thing: There were only seven days between the time when rates had to be paid and the time when the roll was compiled in the case of divisional boards; and it would be impossible in a large division to get the necessary information as to aliens within that time. If the clause passed, even with the amendment proposed by the Minister for Mines and Works, there would be so much confusion that it would be unworkable. As to the argument that a chairman of a divisional board need not send a voting-paper to those he thought were aliens, that might be made very handy; in fact, the chairman might carry the election in his pocket.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. member asked what would be done to a man whose name was placed on the roll against his will. It would be the duty of councils and divisional boards to see that men who were not entitled should not be placed on the roll. The arguments of the leader of the

Opposition about Chinese coming under the "natural-born" section were very forcible. A man born in Hongkong or Singapore was a natural-born subject of Her Majesty; so that in order to meet the objection it would be better to make the clause read thus: "No person of Chinese race, or who is not a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty." He thought that would meet the difficulty, and, with the permission of the Committee, he would withdraw his amendment.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said it would be better to say—"No person who is a native of Asia or Africa not born of British parents."

Mr. BARLOW said that if the object was to exclude the Chinese from voting at divisional board and municipal elections it would be better to say so at once, and not try by a side-wind to exclude the Germans and Danes who, for reasons best known to themselves, had not seen fit to become naturalised. It appeared to him that there was a wide difference between the franchise attaching to municipalities and divisional boards and the political franchise. It was to the interest of every man to have a good road to his farm, and if he paid his money he was entitled to take part in the election of those who had the spending of that money; and it seemed rather hard, when a man had paid for a certain right, that he should be deprived of such a simple right as that of voting for councillors or divisional boardsmen. There was a much wider question involved in the political franchise, because that affected interests which were not merely local; and for many reasons the State had always excluded from the political franchise those persons who were not citizens of the State. The Defence Act made provision for a Defence Force consisting of all the male inhabitants of Queensland, between the ages of eighteen and sixty years, who were not exempted or disqualified by the Act, and who were either natural-born or naturalised British subjects. Aliens, of course, would not be eligible for the Defence Force, and if they were not eligible, it would be an exceedingly unwise thing to admit them to a share in the defence of a country of which they were not citizens, and in the defence of which they could not take part cordially. He could not agree with the argument of the hon. member for Toowong, which he understood to be that those persons who had made such excellent colonists should be expelled from the colony, or that the colony should be made uncomfortable for them because they did not feel at liberty to take the oath of allegiance and become citizens of the country. But it might happen that the most worthy people might not be disposed to give up their nationality. They might have a certain feeling of pride in their country, in the same way that every hon. member present had a feeling of pride in his respective nationality. The Bill might be described as an Act to compel certain aliens in Queensland to become naturalised under the penalty of not being allowed to vote at municipal elections. If he were living in a foreign country—say, Germany or France—he would not, for the privilege of voting at a municipal election, give up his title to the nationality to which he was proud to belong. He admitted that it was very easy and very cheap to get naturalised. It was not a very difficult thing to go before a justice of the peace, take an oath, and sign a book; although perhaps the most difficult part to some would be the payment of the fee. At the same time, he did not think they should compel any alien to become naturalised, on pain of his being deprived of his right to vote at municipal elections, if he had paid his rates, and entitled him-

self thereby to a share in providing easy access to his farm. The leader of the Opposition had pointed out several weak points in the Bill. He trusted that nothing offensive would be done to a class of citizens, for whom he had so much respect, as their fellow-colonists of European nationality, who did not feel themselves at liberty to become naturalised British subjects.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he would suggest that the words "not a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty" be omitted, with the view of inserting the words "a native of Asia or Africa not born of British parents."

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he could not accept the amendment, because it would exclude the Chinese of Hongkong, who were natural-born British subjects, and would admit all other aliens. The principle of the Bill was that all aliens should be prevented from voting at municipal and divisional board elections. He proposed, as an amendment, that the words "of Chinese race" be inserted after the words "no person."

Mr. McMASTER asked what was to be done in the case of an alien whose name was on the municipal roll?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had already explained that it would be the duty of the municipal authorities to see that the name was not put on.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he considered it most unfair, when a man was a naturalised subject, and entitled to vote at elections for Parliament, to withdraw from him the municipal franchise. If the hon. gentleman would limit the Bill to the purposes intended in the first instance he would get on much better. If the words were "No person of Chinese race who is not a naturalised subject of Her Majesty, in Queensland," the provisions of the Bill, although incomplete, would be to a certain extent workable. The difficulty would not then arise in connection with a person of the Chinese race. The onus of proof that he was naturalised should be upon him. As he had pointed out, if a number of persons had votes given them, and the question arose whether they were naturalised or not, it would be impossible to prove the negative. As the Bill stood it was quite unworkable, and if passed it would be only to be repealed at the earliest possible moment.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS asked would the words the hon. gentleman had used admit all other aliens?

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That amendment would, of course.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did not wish that, and he was certain a large majority of the Committee were not in favour of admitting aliens of any country to the privilege of the municipal franchise. He certainly was not. He would sooner withdraw the Bill than do that.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he did not see that they would be departing from the principle of the Bill in allowing European aliens to vote. They did not concede to women the right to vote for the election of members of Parliament, but they had the right to vote at municipal and divisional board elections because they were ratepayers. There was a great difference between electing a man to serve in Parliament and electing a man to serve on a divisional board. Why should not a German or a Dane, who was an intelligent man, speaking our language, and in every way so identified with the people as to be hardly distinguishable from a

natural-born British subject—why should he, if he paid his rates, be deprived of the right to vote, simply because he had omitted to become naturalised. That was carrying the idea too far. The hon. gentleman was compromising the prospects of the Bill by insisting upon too much.

Mr. DRAKE said he could not see how the acceptance of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Charters Towers could destroy the principle of the Bill, or even defeat the principal objects of it. The hon. gentleman had said that the object of the Bill was to prevent Chinese aliens from voting, but that that was not the only object—that there was a principle in the Bill apart from that. But he would remind the hon. gentleman of what he said on the second reading of the Bill on the 26th September. He then said :—

“There is no doubt that the Bill as it now stands would disqualify a great many people who are at present entitled to vote at municipal and divisional elections. But my object in introducing the Bill is to prevent Chinese from voting at such elections, not to prevent other aliens, although it would have that effect, and I think the majority of members of this House will agree with me that such a privilege is one that should not be given to Chinese aliens.”

There was not a word there of declaration, that the principle of the Bill consisted in extending its provisions to any except Chinese aliens. On the contrary, there was the expressed declaration of the hon. gentleman, that it was not to prevent other aliens from voting, but simply Chinese aliens. Under those circumstances what objection could there be to accept the amendment?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said if his object was simply to prevent Chinese from voting he would have used the same terms that were used in other Acts of Parliament—Chinese or African or Asiatic aliens not born of British parents. The hon. gentleman had tried to make a catch upon his words. The clause under discussion showed clearly what was the intention of the Bill. There could be no doubt that in the present condition of public opinion any measure against the Chinese would be passed, no matter what it was. He remembered when it was not so—when he was almost the only anti-Chinese member in the House. He could see that hon. members opposite did not intend to pass the Bill, and he did not intend to lose much time over it. They knew very well that at the end of a session it was an easy matter to block any measure, no matter how beneficial it might be to the country. He was certain that there was no intention to pass the Bill, and he, therefore, moved that the Chairman leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he believed the Committee would like to pass the Bill if it were put into workable form. He was going to suggest, just before the hon. gentleman rose, that the clause should be worded in this way, “No person of Chinese race who has not become naturalised in Queensland as a subject of Her Majesty, and no other person who is not a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty,” and so on.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: That is not what you suggested before.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: I was going to do so when the hon. gentleman got up.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he asked the hon. gentleman if the amendment he had previously suggested would allow other aliens to vote, and he said it would. He (Mr. Macrossan) then said that was not the principle of the Bill.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said framing amendments on a Bill of that sort could not be done in a moment. He had made the first suggestion just after coming into the Committee, and on further consideration he thought the words he had just suggested would be better. They would constitute a complete definition, but that would not carry the matter much further. To make the scheme complete they must make provision to keep those people off the list of voters. He had suggested how that might be done, and if the hon. gentleman wanted to get the Bill through, and would get provisions framed to that effect, he was sure there would be no objection to putting it through to-morrow or on Monday.

Mr. TOZER said he hoped the hon. gentleman would not withdraw the Bill, which was one of considerable importance to residents on gold-fields. It should not be given up at a moment's notice. The difficulty seemed to have arisen from the position hon. members were in, inasmuch as they could not give the hon. gentleman the assistance he desired in drawing up amendments at a moment's notice. He was sure a great many members of the Committee were quite as sincere as the hon. gentleman himself in regard to getting the Bill through. The hon. gentleman deserved the thanks of the country for having brought the Bill in, and he hoped he would proceed with it. There were difficulties in the way of dealing with those Bills, and he hoped some provision would be made—if not this session, next session—by which somebody would be engaged to draft Bills who thoroughly understood Acts of Parliament.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: He would have to thoroughly understand members of Parliament as well.

Mr. TOZER said that if the foundation was properly laid hon. members might be able to assist; but at present, to new members at any rate, there was a difficulty in the way in which they were located in that House, in putting down upon paper the assistance they desired to give the Government, and which the Government might desire to accept. In the case before them the desire of hon. members really was to exclude the persons whom the Minister for Mines and Works desired to exclude, but they also desired to provide that when once the roll was made up there should be no tinkering with it by the returning officer or anybody else.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was perfectly satisfied that a great many members of the Committee were as strongly in favour of the principles of the Bill as he was himself. He believed a big majority of them thought in that way, but there was a small minority who did not, and that small minority had determined that the Bill should not pass.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Not in this absurd form.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the session was too far gone to begin to fight Bills of that kind, and as he could not afford to lose the time he would go no further with it. He was sorry that was so, and sorry that the objections of some hon. members to the Bill would allow the Chinese the right of voting for the next twelve months, at any rate.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said he regretted the hon. gentleman did not intend to proceed with the measure. He came from an electorate where the effects of the Chinese being allowed to vote was severely felt, and he had every desire to prevent that kind of thing being done in the future. He regretted that the hon. gentleman took the remarks from the Opposition side in the

spirit in which he did. He did not see the danger from other aliens than Chinese in the way the hon. gentleman did, but if a majority of the Committee thought it right to exclude all aliens, he would not attempt to force his views upon them. He was prepared to accept the suggested amendment of the leader of the Opposition, and they might proceed with the Bill and draft the clause in that way. But, if the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill was not willing to accept that amendment, and would not proceed with the measure, he did not desire that the hon. gentleman should say "I tried to pass this Bill to prevent Chinese voting at municipal elections, but the Opposition would not let me." The hon. gentleman must not place the Opposition in that position.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is just the position in which hon. gentlemen opposite have placed themselves.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he would not allow that to pass. The hon. gentleman had brought in the Bill without the slightest consideration. He had got a crude idea into his mind, and had brought in a Bill dealing with it that was totally unworkable, and by which every municipal and divisional board election in the country would be thrown into confusion; and when that was pointed out to the hon. gentleman he got up and said the Opposition desired to allow Chinese to vote at those elections. The hon. gentleman had had a fair offer of every assistance they could possibly give him to make the Bill workable. For two hours he had refused to take any suggestion whatever, and when at last convinced against his own will, he was too obstinate to admit he had been convinced, and he got up and tried to make an accusation against the Opposition. The hon. gentleman would gain nothing by that sort of tactics. The way the Government should have dealt with the question was to begin at the other end and bring in a Bill that could be worked, and not endeavour to throw the consequences of their own blundering and stupidity upon the Opposition.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had made no accusation against the Opposition.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: The Colonial Secretary did.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that what he had stated was, that the consequences would be that the Chinese would have the right to vote at municipal elections for another twelve months.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: That is your fault, not ours.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had stated also that that was the result, not of the Opposition, but of a small minority of the Opposition. He had said distinctly that there were members of the Opposition imbued with the principle of the Bill as much as he was himself. The leader of the Opposition had spoken of the Government bringing in unworkable Bills. That hon. gentleman had the reputation of being the best draftsman in Queensland, and had they not seen him, night after night, amending his own Bills? The hon. member spoke of him—a layman—bringing in an unworkable Bill, but the hon. gentleman had brought in a number of Bills, and had himself to amend them time after time in committee, and bring in other Bills in the next session to amend them.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Of course.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE: He accepted the suggestion of the Opposition, which you declined to do.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did not decline to accept amendments, and he was willing to accept the hon. gentleman's amendment. That hon. member had not control over his followers, who would stonewall it just the same as they had intended to do. He did not blame the Opposition, but a very small minority of the Opposition, who had determined that the Bill should not pass unless it applied exclusively to Chinese.

Mr. BARLOW said he hoped the hon. gentleman did not misunderstand the attitude he took up in the matter. He could not consent to any Bill which lumped up their German fellow-colonists with Chinamen under the pretence of excluding Chinese from the municipal vote. When the Bill was before the House on its second reading the Minister for Mines and Works was asked why he did not specify the Chinese, and hon. members would remember the answer that was given. The answer was, "You know why." He presumed the "why" was involved in those restrictions that had been cast round them in dealing with the question of Chinese legislation by the British Government, or by the Sydney Conference, or by some other supposed band, by which they were bound in dealing with the Chinese question. For his part he accepted the challenge of the hon. gentleman, and, with the assistance of a few friends, he was determined that the Bill should not pass. The small minority of the Opposition, which the hon. gentleman had referred to, were determined that their German and Danish fellow-colonists should not be lumped up with Chinese. The effect of the amendment proposed by the leader of the Opposition—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question is, that the Chairman do now leave the chair.

Mr. BARLOW said the question was, that he was in possession of the chair and was going on—

The COLONIAL SECRETARY rose to a point of order. He understood that the question before the Committee was, that the Chairman do now leave the chair and report progress.

Mr. ANNEAR said that, speaking to the point of order, he thought they had arrived at a serious position when the Minister had decided to withdraw the Bill. The hon. gentleman had stated that he was aware that a minority of the Opposition would not agree to pass the Bill. He (Mr. Annear) was one of the minority.

The CHAIRMAN: I was asked by the Colonial Secretary, "What is the question?" The question is, that I do now leave the chair and report progress.

Mr. BARLOW said he would show good reasons why the Chairman should not leave the chair, because they had not fully expressed their opinion upon that Bill. The Minister for Mines and Works had introduced a Bill which had for its object the lumping up of Chinese along with their German fellow-colonists, in order to prevent the Chinese from voting at municipal and divisional boards elections. An endeavour had been made to prevent Germans who had paid their rates, and were good citizens, from having votes at those elections. He would show good reasons why the Chairman should not leave the chair until it had been put on record what the opinions of the Opposition were, or at any rate of a small section of the Opposition, with regard to the action of hon. members on the other side in that matter. He considered the Chinese vote in municipal elections was a very serious matter, because those Asiatic aliens got roped in upon any pretext, and anybody could get hold of them, and the Chinese vote became a block vote, as he understood, in some places,

especially Charters Towers, and it had become a complete nuisance. Until they had thoroughly ventilated the question, he thought the Chairman should not leave the chair, whether he left it on a motion to leave the chair, report progress, and ask leave to sit again, or whether the Chairman absolutely vacated the chair, and thereby frustrated the passing of the Bill which had caused that debate. Their German friends would have to take notice of the manner in which they had been classed along with celestial aliens. An amendment had been introduced, the effect of which would have been that Chinese who had been born in Hongkong, and were British subjects, coming to the colony would not have the right to vote, while Chinese aliens who had come here and had been naturalised would have that right; and their German and Danish friends, who had not taken out naturalisation papers, would also have been excluded. That was the sum and substance of his opposition to the Bill. That the man who had paid his divisional board rates, should not be allowed to have a voice in the selection of the persons who had to spend those rates was monstrous.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That refers to the Chinese as well.

Mr. BARLOW said he was much obliged to the hon. member for his interjection, as that had given him another thread for his discourse. His objection to the Chinese was that they were peculiarly an alien race. He had never heard the case put more forcibly and eloquently than it had been by the brilliant statesman who occupied the position of leader of the Opposition, whose words should be written over the portico of every school in the colony. He had said that anything which tended to degrade the position of labour, or to deprive the labourer of his fair share of the proceeds of his labour, was a hurt and injury to the State; and there was no doubt that was the foundation of their legislation against the Chinese. They had been sometimes charged with inconsistency in their treatment of the Chinese, who were human beings like themselves; but they must remember that self-preservation was the first law, not only of nature and in the individual, but was also the first law of the State. Men when brought together and aggregated in communities were subject to very much the same laws as they were as individuals, and what was a hardship to the individual man was a hardship to the State. He must inflict that, and more truisms upon hon. members, but they would see that it was necessary to carry on the obstruction to which he had been challenged, and which challenge he had taken up. Dangers and hardships to the individual were caused by the introduction of a large number of Chinese who occupied a lower civilisation than they did themselves, and it was therefore a hardship to the body politic. Twenty years ago when he had first come to Brisbane, while going along Petrie's Bight, he had noticed a Chinese furniture shop. There was no furniture for sale in it, but he saw about a dozen Chinese sitting on the floor around a tin dish, such as might be seen in a dairy, and they were dipping their hands into the dish and feeding out of it. He had seen Chinese in a neighbouring colony, but he had never taken any notice of them, but what he had just mentioned had given him a sense of the utter inferiority of the degraded condition of the Chinese race. At that time he had had no particular prejudice against them, but he had long since seen how they had a prejudicial effect upon the country. He was sorry that he had not the history of China, because if he had he would read a few

extracts bearing upon the subject. The Chinese were a very ancient race. He had now got a book written by the special committee appointed to investigate Chinese immigration, printed at Washington Government Printing Office, in 1877, and he would now read to the Committee a dissertation on the Chinese.

Mr. GRIMES said he must take exception to the statement of the Minister for Mines and Works, that they had raised a factious opposition to the Bill. The fact was that there was a large number of members who were well acquainted with the working of the Divisional Boards Act, and they saw the difficulties there would be in carrying out the provisions of the Bill. They saw that the measure would not only affect Chinese and the individuals mentioned by the hon. gentleman, but that it would affect a large portion of the community, and go much further than was admitted by the Minister. There were, therefore, serious objections to it in its present form. The hon. gentleman had absolutely refused to accept any reasonable amendment in the 3rd clause, and had almost refused to listen to arguments. All he wished was to get the question put to the vote depending on the majority at his back to carry it, but they on his (Mr. Grimes's) side were not prepared thus to abandon the rights and privileges of the ratepayers of the colony. If the hon. gentleman was really sincere in his desire to pass the Bill he would certainly accept a reasonable amendment, such as that which had been proposed by the leader of the Opposition. His (Mr. Grimes's) objection to the measure was that it would interfere with German ratepayers, and that the last clause provided a penalty of imprisonment for cases where a man, not being naturalised, voted unwittingly. The Bill certainly placed the liberty of such persons in jeopardy, and he for one was not prepared to support the 3rd clause as it stood.

Mr. LITTLE said he must contradict a statement made by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow. The hon. member made the assertion to the effect that Northern members were connected with the introduction of Chinese on the goldfields of the colony.

Mr. BARLOW: No, no!

Mr. LITTLE said the hon. member stated that he saw Chinese at Petrie's Bight twenty years ago. He (Mr. Little) saw Chinese landed here in 1849 by Mr. R. J. Smith, for his boiling-down establishment. To accuse the mining members of introducing Chinese and supporting them was wrong, false, and dishonest. Whatever was said in that Committee was published in *Hunsard* and read by people in the North, who, when they saw these statements, would naturally ask why their representatives were silent if the remarks were not contradicted. He therefore thought it his duty to contradict the statement to which he referred. He for one liked to deal honestly and justly with all aliens, but a Chinaman he could not stand at all, as the Chinese had injured him and the class to which he belonged. Had the leader of the Opposition in 1874 or 1875 taken proper steps to check the influx of the Chinese there would have been very few of them now on the Palmer Goldfield. The hon. gentleman went into office just at the time there was a great rush of Chinese on the field, and the present Minister for Mines and Works nearly begged and prayed that he would introduce some check on them. If the necessary steps had been taken then there would be thousands of white men profitably employed on the Palmer Goldfield to-day. He repeated that the hon. member for the city of saints was wrong when he stated that the Northern mining members were encouraging Chinese.

Mr. BARLOW said he must really apologise to the hon. member for Woothakata, but that gentleman had made a mistake in supposing that he (Mr. Barlow) had reflected upon him or his constituency, so much as to say that the diggers of the colony had introduced Chinamen. They might as well say that the rats of the colony introduced the cats; that would be just as absurd. He had heard a good deal about the hon. member when he was in the North, and believed he was a very good fellow. He had found him to be a gentleman in every sense of the word, and had heard a good deal of wit at his expense.

Mr. HAMILTON: And that would bring down roars of laughter from the Ipswich debating society.

Mr. BARLOW said the Ipswich Debating Society seemed to be the *bete noir* of the hon. member who had interrupted him. He would translate that phrase for the hon. member; it meant "black beast." What had the Ipswich Debating Society done for him or to him? If the hon. member could get into the Ipswich Debating Society—he did not know that he would be disqualified—he would very soon find his level. He would find that the members of that society were gentlemen who knew how to behave themselves, and the hon. member would derive a very great deal of benefit, and come back to that Committee vastly improved. He trusted the hon. member would make no more allusions to the Ipswich Debating Society. In regard to the hon. member for Woothakata, he was "a gentleman in the ore whom the next generation may perhaps refine." He was a very different stamp of man from the hon. member for Cook; but he was not going to enter into a dissertation as to where they differed. He did not know there was any very great harm in representing a "city of saints," as Ipswich had been termed. He would rather do that than represent, as the hon. member for Cook did, a city of sinners; at least, that was the impression he received from what he saw of the capital of the hon. member's electorate.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You may only have associated with that portion of the population.

Mr. BARLOW said he saw a great deal up there, and had heard a great deal more. The hon. member for Woothakata had said something about turning him (Mr. Barlow) out, or putting him down; but he appeared to forget that he was in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland. There was no doubt that if they were at a public meeting in that hon. member's electorate, a "chucker out" might be found who would very soon put an end to the member for the city of saints.

Mr. LITTLE: I could do it myself.

Mr. BARLOW said he had no doubt the hon. member could; he had no intention of disputing the hon. member's capacity in that direction. He believed he was quite equal to the task, as he (Mr. Barlow) was not in very robust health, and he knew that, in wrestling, a little man very often had an advantage over a big man. He should be very sorry to try a fall with the hon. member. However, it was very possible that, even in the hon. member's district, if he (Mr. Barlow) were to venture to express his opinion in a manner not in accordance with the general run of public opinion, he might find himself outside. But they had not arrived at that pitch of excellence in that Assembly that they should take one another by the scruff of the neck and put one another out. However much he might differ from the hon. member, he had no doubt they had each his

proper place. It was a law of nature that everything had its proper place; the hon. member for Woothakata had his place, and he had his as the hon. member for the city of saints, although he was probably of less use to the country than the hon. member, who represented an important district in the North. That hon. member had his sincere regard, and he hoped he would be long spared to hear his rugged utterances and words of wisdom. They heard words of truth from the hon. member in a straight and ready and witty form, and unmixed with any circumlocution. When the electors of Woothakata sent that gentleman to the House they conferred a favour on the House and the country.

Mr. McMASTER said hon. members on his side were charged with having prevented the Bill from passing. For his part he was as anxious as anybody that Chinamen should be prevented from having the privilege of voting at either parliamentary or any other elections. The Opposition wished the clause to be so amended that it would prevent only Chinamen from voting, and not other aliens who were entitled to do so. It was pointed out that the local authorities should take care to prevent the names of any individuals who were not entitled to vote being on the roll. He should like to know if a local authority had power to prevent a man's name being put upon a roll, whether that man would be allowed to forego his rates? The Act provided that every man who paid his rates was entitled to vote, if the rates were paid within a certain time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question is that the Chairman leave the chair.

Mr. McMASTER said that motion was put so that the Bill might be withdrawn, and he was trying to impress upon the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill that the clause which had been under discussion should be amended, so that they might be able to have the Bill passed. He did not think a local authority had any right to collect rates from a man if they did not allow him to vote. Under such circumstances a man would be paying rates without representation, which was against the principles of any Briton. They had no right to allow a local authority to send a notice to a man saying he was supposed to be an alien and not entitled to vote, and then make him pay rates.

Mr. DRAKE said he must express his regret that the Bill was being discontinued, because it was very necessary and would do a great deal of good; and he did not think the Minister for Mines and Works had shown any good reason for discontinuing it. With regard to the 3rd clause, he was prepared to vote for it as it stood, though he should prefer to vote for it with the amendment suggested by the leader of the Opposition; therefore any reflections cast on members on the Opposition side could not apply to him. The reflections which the hon. member had cast upon some of the members on the Opposition side were really not deserved; and the Minister for Mines and Works would not be in a position to say that the Government were willing to pass the measure, but could not do so on account of the opposition he received.

Question put and passed.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker, —Before the next Order of the Day is called I wish to ask whether the Government propose to go on with the Estimates to-night?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : It is the intention of the Government to go on with the Estimates to-night.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE : I hope that, at this late hour of the night, seeing that the House has got into a condition not conducive to work, and that hitherto the Estimates have gone along smoothly, the hon. gentleman will consider the feelings of members on this side on this occasion, and not proceed with the Estimates to-night. We were here until nearly 2 o'clock a night or two ago ; many of us are not well ; the leader of the Opposition is in an indifferent state of health, and has been obliged to leave the House.

Mr. MURPHY : That is not our fault.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE : I am not saying that it is anybody's fault. I do not think it can be said that there has been anything like an attempt to delay business ; and I am certain that the Opposition members are wearied out—not by reason of any obstructive tactics on our side, but because they have been kept hard at work for several nights this week. We shall have all day to-morrow for the Estimates ; and why not begin fresh to-morrow ? I am certain that the good temper that has hitherto prevailed on this side during the passage of the Estimates is hardly likely to be exhibited to-night if the hon. gentleman persists in forcing fresh business on now. So far as I am personally concerned—and I speak for many of my hon. friends—if the House adjourns now, and we are allowed to come fresh to-morrow, things will go on as hitherto, and a great deal more progress will be made than by forcing the Estimates on to-night. I am in an indifferent state of health, and had to leave last night at an earlier hour than I intended ; the leader of the Opposition has gone away on account of the state of his health ; the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Jordan, has gone away for the same reason ; and I do not think I am asking too much indulgence when I request the Colonial Secretary to consider the high pressure at which we have been working, and let us go home now and return fresh to-morrow.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said : Mr. Speaker,—I would point out that the delay in getting on with the Estimates to-night has certainly not been caused by any action of any member on this side. More than an hour ago the Minister for Mines and Works expressed his intention of moving the Chairman out of the chair.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE : Not an hour ago ; only about half-an-hour ago.

Mr. MURPHY : Fifty-five minutes ago.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Speaking roughly, an hour ago the Minister for Mines and Works expressed his desire that the Chairman should leave the chair and report progress. How was that met by members on the other side ? It was met in a way unprecedented during my experience in this House. I think the performance of the hon. member for Ipswich (Mr. Barlow) to-night cannot be paralleled in the records of this Assembly. I daresay that the hon. gentleman is proud of having occupied that position ; and I do not grudge him any pride he may feel. But it must be borne in mind that the business of the country must be gone on with ; and while I deeply regret the absence of the leader of the Opposition owing to the state of his health, the Government can hardly be asked to postpone the business of the country because of the unfortunate absence of that hon. gentleman, or because of the unfortunate absence of the Premier on account of the state of his health. If there were grave matters of policy to discuss in connection with the Estimates I could understand the hon. gentleman opposite asking for a post-

ponement ; but as a matter of fact, the bulk of the Estimates are in accord with those passed by the late Government, and I cannot see any pressing necessity for the delay for which the hon. member asks. I think that we are all anxious for the session to come to a close, and it would be much better for us to sit, say, until half-past 11 and get through some business. I am perfectly aware that there are hon. members who wish to catch trains, but this House cannot be ruled by any such consideration. In years gone by we used to sit night after night much later than we have sat this session. The Government are anxious to finish the business of the session, and we have been delayed to-night certainly through no fault of this side, if there be a fault, it was on the other side, and I am not prepared to say there has not been. The Government propose, therefore, to go into the Estimates of the Minister for Mines and Works, and work at them for a little while.

Mr. GROOM said : Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER : There is no question before the House. I have allowed the leaders on either side to discuss arrangements, but there is no question. When the Order of the Day is called, and the motion is made for the Speaker to leave the chair, the hon. gentleman can speak.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Speaker leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into Committee of Supply, to further consider the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Mr. GROOM said : Mr. Speaker,—I think that the Colonial Secretary and members on the other side must not take any particular notice of what happened a few minutes ago. I do not think they should now seek, by refusing to adjourn, to neutralise and destroy the good feeling which has continued during the discussion of the Estimates. The Colonial Secretary knows that we have assisted him to get his Estimates through. Now the hon. gentleman has stated that the Estimates were framed by the late Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I did not say altogether.

Mr. GROOM : I think he said the Estimates he wants us to consider to-night. The hon. gentleman must know that there is £121,670 down for public buildings, many of the items in which will engage very strong opinions. The hon. gentleman remembers that members on both sides expressed very strong opinions on the £13,000 vote for additions to the Parliamentary buildings.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : We can go on till we get to that vote.

Mr. GROOM : What I wish to say is that, if the hon. gentleman will adjourn now, he can accept the assurance of the Opposition that we will gladly proceed with the Estimates to-morrow, and go through them up to the usual hour for adjournment.

Mr. MURPHY : You are only speaking for yourself.

Mr. GROOM : I think I can speak for others as well. We were here until 2 o'clock on Tuesday morning. There was no obstruction on that occasion. We were here until half-past 12 o'clock last night, and it is a quarter past 10 now. If we meet again to-morrow we shall make good progress. I would not like to see the present good feeling destroyed, and if the Government insist on going on to-night it may be destroyed. Some members who are absent

would have been here had they known that the Estimates were coming on, and there are some important matters to be brought forward. I want to draw particular attention to an article in an English paper of the 25th August, which I consider most damaging to Queensland—referring to our goldfields. I want to explain how it is represented that the British public has been swindled up to £4,500,000 in the names of certain companies, and I am anxious to give another member of this House an opportunity of stating the other side of the case—and he will be able to state that the writer of the article is himself one of the swindlers. These matters should be brought forward to-morrow and discussed in a quiet way; so that I do not think that what we ask is unreasonable, and I trust that the Government will accede to the wishes of hon. members.

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—I certainly do repudiate the doctrine of the Colonial Secretary that I am the cause of any trouble, and I can tell that gentleman that so long as I am here I shall, in conjunction with some other gentlemen, act as I think fit. I had a particular object to serve to-night. I shall not tell the hon. gentleman what that object was, but there was an object notwithstanding. Now, there has been so much soft soap being laid on lately that really the lines of party demarcation are pretty well rubbed out, and I am not disposed to indulge in anything of the sort. I am here to oppose the policy formulated by the other side, and the only way in which the hon. gentleman can get rid of me is to get me out of Parliament.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Oh, give him a billet.

Mr. BARLOW: I am happy to say that I am entirely independent of hon. gentlemen opposite and their billets.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the speech we have just listened to shows pretty conclusively that the interjection I made just now to the hon. member for Toowoomba that he was only speaking for himself was just and well-founded, because it is quite evident that there is a little knot of ill-conditioned men sitting in a certain part of the House who are determined that there shall be no legislation whatever done.

Mr. SMYTH: You borrowed that word "ill-conditioned."

Mr. MURPHY: The word is well applied, and fits them. There is no other word I can use that so well expresses my meaning and the feeling of this House as that very word does, so far as those hon. gentlemen are concerned. They have come here with the express intention of preventing any legislation being done by this side.

Mr. SMYTH: No.

Mr. MURPHY: That is their evident and express intention. Has the member for Ipswich not said that that was his intention, and that the only way in which we can get rid of his obstruction is to get him out of the House? I hope his constituents are proud of him.

Mr. BARLOW: They will return me again.

Mr. MURPHY: That may be, but I don't think they will; at least I give them credit for having a great deal more sense than to return a man of that stamp again.

Mr. BARLOW: You wait. You oppose me!

Mr. MURPHY: I hope the Government will take my advice and go on with their work to-night.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: We cannot sleep all day to-morrow like you can.

Mr. MURPHY: I have just as much business to do in the daytime as the hon. gentleman. I have to attend to my business, which is more considerable than the hon. member's.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: You can choose your own time.

Mr. MURPHY: I cannot. I have to be here in the House at night, and attend to my business in the daytime. I think it is a scandal to the country, and to any constituency that sends men into the House for the purpose of wasting the time of the House and the country.

Mr. HAMILTON: They are earning their two guineas a day.

Mr. MURPHY: Yes; that interjection gives me a clue to the obstruction of the hon. member. He is afraid the House will adjourn before he gets his full £200; and that measures the character of the hon. member, as I judge him, very accurately.

Mr. BARLOW: He will be very glad to adjourn to-morrow, if his object is carried out.

Mr. MURPHY: He has evidently come here for the purpose of obstructing and obtaining money. I hope the Government will not give way. Their supporters will see them through, no matter what may happen, and I for one will sit here if I have to sit for a week.

Mr. COWLEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I sincerely trust that these useless remarks will now cease. I and several other members have come over 1,000 miles to do business, and we are anxious to do it and get back to our homes again. I hope we shall at once get to business. The Colonial Secretary has made a very fair offer; he only asks us to stay to half-past 11. But if we occupy the time in this way we may be kept here till half-past 2 or half-past 4.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—The advice given by the hon. member for Barcoo is very bad advice, and I hope it will not be taken. The speech he has made is not very likely to conduce either to good feeling on the part of hon. members or to the progress of business this evening. The Government may succeed in keeping us here, but I do not think they will make very much progress with the Estimates. We have been taught some very good lessons in obstruction on this side by the hon. member for Barcoo and by the Colonial Secretary himself, and we had a very good lesson only to-night from the Postmaster-General. The hon. member for Barcoo charges some hon. members on this side with coming here to make money. There is no hon. member more anxious to obtain his fees than the hon. member for Barcoo, and I daresay there is no member of the House who needs his £2 2s. more than that hon. member himself.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I regret that this debate has turned into an unseemly altercation with regard to the paltry fees hon. members get for attendance here. I do not care what the position of any man here is; if he attends to his duties faithfully he is very ill-paid by the wretched fees he receives. I wish to offer a suggestion to the Colonial Secretary, who, from his long parliamentary experience, is better able to gauge the temper of the House than I am; and that is, that in the present excited state of feeling we are hardly likely to do the Estimates that justice which they demand. Some of the leading members on this side are unfortunately absent from ill-health. Personally, I should be happy to assist the Minister for Mines and Works in his Estimates, but there are many contentious matters included therein, and I am afraid that, with the angry spirit which prevails, justice will not be done to the Estimates, and the ill-temper of hon.

members will be intensified. We shall be much more likely to do business when we meet to-morrow in a happier state of mind. It rests entirely with the Colonial Secretary as to whether he will persist in going on now or adjourn till to-morrow. This bench is deprived of its leading members, and it will be very severe on the ex-Attorney-General to throw the chief onus of the debate on his shoulders; and it is scarcely fair to this side of the House. As to the charges that have been made, I fancy they reflect upon both sides of the House equally.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Surely we can take the first part of the Estimate, down to "Buildings."

Mr. UNMACK said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to enter my protest against proceeding with any further business to-night. I feel myself physically incapable of sitting here five nights a week, and proceeding in the way we have been doing. I do not think the Government will gain anything by pressing work on in this way. I look upon it as absolute nigger-driving. What difference will it make if we do sit four days longer? Hitherto the Opposition has offered very little obstruction, and has given every facility for the passing of the Estimates. It does not follow that because a few hon. members on this side of the House, for some reason of their own of which I have no knowledge or concern, have chosen to adopt certain tactics, the whole of us should be punished in the way it is proposed to do. If the Colonial Secretary is satisfied to go on with the Estimates as far as the item "Buildings," which ought not to take five minutes, I for one will raise no objection. But it must be remembered that each one of us has his private business to attend to during the daytime, and it is too much to ask us to sit here night and day. We were here on Monday till 2 o'clock, on Tuesday till half-past 11, and last night I felt myself physically incapable of remaining longer than 9 o'clock, and to-night we are again asked to sit till 1 or 2 o'clock, and perhaps longer. I hope the Colonial Secretary will take counsel with his colleagues, and give us at all events a little relief to-night. As I said, I am quite willing to wait until the first item on the Estimates is passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have mentioned that I do not want to go further than that vote.

Mr. ANNEAR said: Mr. Speaker,—Of course, the hon. gentleman speaks for himself. I do hope the Government will not go further to-night. The hon. member for Herbert has stated that we come here to do the business for which we are sent here. Now, since 6 o'clock this morning, several hon. members with myself have been hard at work on a select committee. In fact, I never worked harder in my life. The hon. member for Stanley went on until he could go no further; so did the hon. member for Warwick; and it must be remembered that we have worked late in this House every night this week. I have never gone in for obstruction since I have been a member of this House, but we have been taught very good lessons, and the hon. member for Barcoo should not forget that he sat here for over two weeks and did nothing but read historical matter from books. The hon. the Colonial Secretary has done the same. In fact, I was very much interested in the subject he introduced. Having a religious tendency, perhaps it did me some good to hear that hon. gentleman's exposition of baptism by water.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: You may get it by fire in the next world.

Mr. ANNEAR: Well, if I do get it by fire in the next world I know I shall have some mates with me. I do hope the Government will not press on with this business. I do not see anything very debatable in these Estimates, and I am sure that if we meet together to-morrow in a good spirit we shall push on with work, and no time will be lost.

The HON. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker,—I wish to press this matter on the attention of the Government. I have observed during the past week with great pleasure the admirable tact and judgment the hon. the Colonial Secretary has displayed in getting through the Estimates, and I think he will be only showing the same tact in deferring to what he must see is the unanimous wish of the Opposition. I admit that the first items on the Estimates do not involve a large sum of money, but still there are a good many matters that have been talked about and commented on in newspapers—for instance, those connected with bridges and bridge engineers—upon which hon. members would like to express their views. If we adjourn now we may save several hours of useless debate.

Mr. CASEY said: Mr. Speaker,—As a new member I very much regret, as no doubt every hon. member does, that so great a portion of the evening has been wasted in acrimonious and useless discussion. I think the general feeling of the followers of the Ministry is, that in the present temper of the House, not very much business is likely to be done to-night. I would, therefore, ask our present leader, the hon. the Colonial Secretary, to agree to a slight compromise; that is to pass one or two unimportant items of a non-contentious nature, and then adjourn until to-morrow, when we shall be in a better frame of mind to proceed with the consideration of these Estimates.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—Several hon. gentlemen who have spoken have remarked on the bad temper of the House. I think the House is in a very good temper. I know I have not heard so much laughter in the House during the whole of this session as there has been to-night; so that I conclude we are in good temper, and I do not think that sitting for another half-hour or forty minutes will put us in any worse temper. I am willing to accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Toowong—that is, to go on with the first item on the Estimates, and if there are any questions to be asked concerning bridges or bridge engineers, I am quite willing and, I hope, able to answer them. I am certain that if we do so, we shall continue in our good temper and leave the House in that condition. I should like to get to work at once. We have lost half-an-hour in discussing whether we should go on with business, and during that time we might have passed the items referred to in the Estimates.

Mr. MACFARLANE said: Mr. Speaker,—I think no one can blame me for preventing business being got through this session, or of "stonewalling," as it is called; and I would ask the hon. the Colonial Secretary to listen to the suggestions from this side of the House, and adjourn now. I believe the Estimates will be got through quicker by beginning them fresh to-morrow than by sitting up to-night. We all know that it is always on the first items of a department that much discussion takes place. Grievances are then ventilated, and general matters brought forward, which take a good deal of time, and trying to press on will perhaps only tend to aggravate members, and induce them to say more than they would otherwise. I strongly advise the Government to accept the suggestion, and adjourn.

Mr. SAYERS said: Mr. Speaker,—I think if the Ministry would kindly accept the proposition that has been made, it would tend very much to expedite business to-morrow.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have accepted it.

Mr. SAYERS: I have been speaking to several members around me, and I think if the Colonial Secretary will accept that offer we shall get on very much quicker to-morrow, when the leader of the Opposition, and perhaps the Premier, are in their places. I know that there will be some debate on the first item of the Estimates, and I think it is hardly advisable to start on it to-night. I leave the matter to the hon. gentleman's good taste.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. gentleman who, I believe, assumes for the present the position of the leader of the Opposition—the ex-Attorney-General, the hon. member for Toowoomba, and the hon. member for Toowong—have stated that they were willing to proceed with the Estimates up to a certain point.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No!

Mr. DALRYMPLE: I believe the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition in his leader's absence agreed to that, and that it was accepted as a compromise. On the Government side of the House hon. members are all ready to go on with the business, but a few hon. members apparently desire to dictate to the House the terms on which the business shall be transacted, and they do not desire that it should go on. Unfortunately, there are members for whom it would seem no one can speak, and one of them told us to-night that his object was to prevent the Estimates being passed. What guarantee have we that that gentleman will not come to the House in the same frame of mind to-morrow or the day after? If there was a gentleman on the other side qualified to speak for his party, and say "If the Government agree to adjourn to-night, we, as a party, will endeavour to push on with the Estimates," there would be some reason in the request; but if that promise cannot be given we may as well fight it out to-night as any other night. I endorse the opinion of the hon. member for Herbert, and I say many of us come hundreds of miles and we do not leave our business and come here to earn two guineas a day. We come at serious inconvenience to ourselves, and we wish to see the business of the House carried on. It is a fact that we are being paid by the country, and it is not a fair or an honest thing to take pay from the country for obstructing the business of the country. As long as I am in the House it will be my object to facilitate business. An hon. member has said the House will be "in a better temper" if we adjourn; but is it because a man's liver is out of order the whole business of this important colony should be interrupted? Some members have talked of "chuckers out," but even if some members are in that frame of mind this is not the place to show it. If the compromise which has been suggested is not accepted, we may as well fight the matter out to-night as any other night.

Mr. SMYTH said: Mr. Speaker,—It is all very well for the sugar-planting representatives and the farming and metropolitan members to argue in this way, but I may say I know of no organised obstruction on this side of the House. I say, as a mining member, I object to go into the Mining Estimates at this hour of the night. They should not be hurried through; and there is a great deal to be said in connection with this Mining Department, which deals with the biggest industry in the country at the present time. I

think we ought to adjourn now, and the Government will get every assistance to-morrow to get the Estimates through.

Mr. TOZER said: Mr. Speaker,—I will draw the attention of the last speaker to the fact that the Estimates for Mines will not come on yet. I think the proposition which has emanated from the Government is a most reasonable one, and I will not assist obstruction at any time in this House, except it be on some question of important public policy, when possibly obstruction might be justified. I cannot see any good to arise from it. I cannot understand the idea of the "temper of the House"; the common-sense of the House is what I want to appeal to. We have a good deal of business to do; the session is nearly at an end, and there are four or five items here which I do not think anyone has much to say against. I hope the members on this side will agree to go on with these Estimates to-night. I am quite prepared to sit here all night, but it will be with the avowed object of assisting the Government in the reasonable proposal they have made.

Mr. MELLOR said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it would be as well if the Government would accept the suggestion to adjourn. Many members have to get away before 11 o'clock, and other members who have long distances to go, and who have been hard at work all day, should be considered. The first item embraces the important matter of bridges, upon which I would like to express an opinion. I cannot do so to-night, as I shall have to go at a certain time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Why?

Mr. MELLOR: If I do not I shall have about three miles to walk. It will facilitate business to adjourn now, and from the feeling expressed I do not think there is much chance of our getting on with the Estimates at all to-night.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I have not troubled the House much this evening, and even at the risk of being charged with attempting to prolong the session to obtain the fees granted to members, I would respectfully suggest to the Colonial Secretary that it would be as well to adjourn the consideration of these Estimates until to-morrow. I should be very sorry to see the session prolonged, and I have no liking for opposition, for the sake of opposition, where an important matter of public policy is not concerned, but I believe the Colonial Secretary would do well to accept the proposal of the hon. member for Charters Towers, and adjourn.

Mr. DRAKE said: Mr. Speaker,—It is all very well for the House to go into committee, but the Government should take into consideration what probability there is of actual business being done. So far as I am concerned, I shall have a long distance to go whether we adjourn now or a couple of hours later. I can foresee that if we go on now there will only be a long debate. A great number of members who have spoken on this side have incidentally mentioned that there are matters in this first vote on which they desire to express their opinions, and I do not see how they can do so without taking up a considerable amount of time. I agree with some hon. members as to the good temper to-night, but I can foresee that a very little thing may put the House in a bad temper; and there may be a lot of undesirable wrangling, and we may go home eventually, after wasting an hour or two, without having done anything.

Mr. HAMILTON said: Mr. Speaker,—If the same amount of energy had been extended in passing the Estimates as has been spent in attempting to get you out of the chair, we should have got to the point indicated by the Minister for Mines and Works. I notice all of the

influential men on the other side of the House have either approved of the Minister's suggestion, or have stated they will not object to it. We must recollect that a lot of time has been wasted this evening by some hon. gentlemen who now wish to go home. If they had put their shoulders to the wheel in the first part of the evening we should have done a good deal of work. The hon. member for Maryborough referred to the hon. member for Barcoo obstructing when he sat on the other side, but he must remember that whenever we obstructed it was in pursuance of some principle, and it was following the lead of our leader; but I notice the obstruction which we have had night after night has not been with the desire or consent of their leader and the influential men of the party. It has been done by three or four speakers, who spent the time of the House in murdering the "Queen's English," by making speeches which are worthless and absurd, and which have tried the temper of the House. I am just as much interested as anyone in this particular vote, and I shall not allow it to be slummed over. No hon. member of the House is more interested in mining than the hon. member for Wide Bay, Mr. Tozer, and there is no greater authority upon this subject than he is, and he has stated he is quite willing to go on.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

SECRETARY FOR MINES AND WORKS.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the sum of £12,745 be granted for the Secretary for Mines and Works—buildings branch, bridges, and contingencies.

Mr. SMYTH asked the Minister for Mines and Works if he would inform the Committee whether the Under Secretary, Mr. Deighton, intended to return, what leave of absence he had got, and what salary he was drawing?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said Mr. Deighton intended returning to his post; he had got six months' leave on full pay, and three months' without pay.

Mr. SMYTH said there was another item which had not appeared in last year's Estimates. There were three draftsmen put down—one at a salary of £300, one at £208, and one at £100. Would the Minister for Mines and Works inform them what those draftsmen were required for?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said those draftsmen had been in the service of the department for some considerable time, although they had not appeared on the Estimates in that column. If the hon. member turned to the Mining Estimates, he would find that two of them had been paid from that Estimate previously—the one at £300, and the one at £100. The one at £300 was Mr. Nixon, the draftsman who took charge of all the leases and goldfields homesteads, and drafted them. The one at £100 was Mr. Knox, who was his (Mr. Nixon's) assistant. The draftsman at £208 was the draftsman at Charters Towers. They had all been brought under that Estimate, instead of being paid as formerly out of contingencies, so that the Committee might see what they were really voting money for.

Mr. HODGKINSON asked the Minister for Mines and Works whether he had contemplated making a division in the department by appointing a separate Under Secretary for Mines to have sole charge of that work?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: No.

Mr. UNMACK said he had understood the Minister for Mines and Works to tell the Committee that he had been in the habit of paying some of those salaries out of contingencies. Such a thing as that was entirely opposed to the Audit Act, where it was laid down that no salaries should be paid out of contingencies. From the remarks the Minister for Mines and Works had just made, he had understood that the department had been in the habit of paying those salaries out of contingencies. While he was on his feet he wished to ask, if the Under Secretary was absent on leave for six months at half-pay and three months without pay, how was it the salary was put down the same as last year—£800? If that gentleman were absent on half-pay, why should the Government ask for the full salary?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that if the salary was not paid it would lapse—there was an Under Secretary all the time.

Mr. GLASSEY said there were six clerks set down—one at £250, one at £150, two at £100, and two at £50. Were those clerks at £100, men or boys? Surely to goodness, £100 for a full-grown man was altogether too small for doing such work as that; and he thought the time had come when some effort should be made to raise the salaries of those who were paid least in the service, and who had an amount of work to perform for which they were not being properly paid. Supposing one of those clerks wanted a holiday, would he get six months' leave of absence on full pay?

Mr. PAUL: Certainly.

Mr. GLASSEY said he very much doubted that. He protested as strongly as he could against that distinct privilege being given to those who were the highest paid officials in the service, while those who did a large amount of the hard work were not sufficiently remunerated. Were those two clerks at £50 each, men or boys?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Boys.

Mr. GLASSEY: Were the two clerks at £100 each, men?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Young men.

Mr. GLASSEY said he supposed they were young men of twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, and possibly they might be married and have a family. He protested against those distinctions, and especially against leave of absence with full or half pay granted to men who could well afford to pay for their own holiday.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. member for Bundamba did not understand the business. The hon. member had not been behind the scenes, otherwise he would not be surprised at those matters. With regard to the remark of the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, that he (Mr. Barlow) had stated that he intended to obstruct the Estimates, he merely intended to say that he would obstruct the passage of the Estimates that evening, because lower down there was an item to which he had serious objection. He rose now simply to put himself right with the Committee, and to reply to the degrading insinuations of the hon. member for Barcoo—insinuations which could only be made by such a man. The hon. member was not in his place, but he would, no doubt, read what he (Mr. Barlow) had said. His object in speaking against time was to prevent the particular item to which he referred coming on that night. As to wishing to obstruct the business, he was only too anxious to get away. He would be very glad if the business were disposed of to-morrow. He did not want to prolong the session a single day.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had no doubt the hon. member was anxious to get away, but really if he made such speeches as that which he delivered just now the business of the session could not be gone on with. If one member continually answered another calling him names, talking about his qualifications, and indulging in personalities, the business could not go on. They must end it somewhere, and he (the Minister for Mines and Works) thought it was ended when the Speaker left the chair. The item the hon. gentleman had such an objection to was not included in that vote, and it was not proposed to go beyond the present vote that night, so that, as far as the hon. member was concerned, there was no reason for not proceeding with the Estimates.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. gentleman knew that he was gagged while the Speaker was in the chair, having previously spoken, so that he could not reply to the insinuations which were disgraceful to the member who uttered them, and degrading to him (Mr. Barlow) and to the Committee. He did not wish in any way to obstruct the business.

Mr. SAYERS said the hon. member for Gympie had asked where the Under Secretary was. The answer given by the Minister for Mines and Works was that the Under Secretary was away on leave of absence, six months on half-pay and three months without pay. If that was the case the full salary had no business to be put on the Estimates. He objected to the manner in which members opposite had spoken of them that evening, because they did not wish, at that hour, to go on with the Estimates. He thought they had given way quite enough.

Mr. LISSNER: When?

Mr. SAYERS said they had given way all through the session. He did not care whether the hon. member for Kennedy thought they had or not. He (Mr. Sayers) asserted they had. The leader of the Opposition not being in his place, members on that side thought they should have a certain amount of concession made to them, and he understood that it was not the first time such a concession had been made to the Opposition. He believed that when some of the members opposite sat on that side, with what the hon. member for Woothakata would say was a strong mob, similar concessions had been made. The insinuation that was made by the hon. member for Barcoo with regard to members on the Opposition side was quite enough to put any man with a spark of manliness in him on his mettle.

Mr. HAMILTON: He is not here now.

Mr. SAYERS said the hon. member should be there, and he would say the same if he were present. His remarks were an insult to the members of the Opposition. Members on that side might not be so wealthy as members opposite, but they were just as independent, and he, for one, objected to such insinuations being made. He had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if they had adjourned as suggested, the whole of those Estimates would be got through to-morrow evening, with debate, by 10 o'clock. But an effort had been made to force them to pass certain Estimates. The hon. member for Mackay (Mr. Dalrymple) said that he came there to do the business of the Committee. He (Mr. Sayers) did not think that any member could say that the business of the Committee had not been gone through with reasonable expedition. The Tariff Bill had gone through as quickly as any Tariff Bill in Australia, and there had been less opposition to the Estimates than had ever been shown in that Committee before. With regard

to the salary of the Under Secretary, unless the Minister for Mines and Works could show that the money was paid to another officer for doing that gentleman's work he proposed to move a reduction in the item, and to do it as often as he could.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the hon. member was quite correct in regard to his statement as to the conduct of the business of the session. But the hon. member for Toowoong made a proposition that evening which he accepted. The hon. member for Toowoomba (Mr. Groom), the hon. member for Charters Towers (Hon. A. Rutledge), and the member for Burke (Mr. Hodgkinson), did not object to go on with the Estimates to a certain length. The hon. member for Wide Bay (Mr. Tozer) also spoke in the same direction. The hon. member who had last spoken, however, did not think that they should consider the Estimates at all, because he was a mining man. But the Government had no intention whatever of going on with the Mining Estimates, and there was no necessity for the hon. member to object to the item before them. No mining vote would come on that evening, and the sooner all questions were asked which hon. members wished to ask, the better. In regard to the Under Secretary for Mines and Works, that gentleman was absent on leave for six months on full pay, and three months without pay; he did not know whether he had stated that correctly previously. No one was getting any pay for doing his work, which was being done by the accountant in the Works Department, Mr. Robertson, and the chief clerk in the Mines Department, Mr. Cameron. Those gentlemen were doing the work they did before, and the Under Secretary's work as well. In regard to the administration of the department, the Under Secretary did certain work which was brought to him, as it were, through the other two, who had to do quite as much work when he was there as when he was absent.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he thought the time had arrived when there should be a separate staff in the Mines Office. The old system of having one Under Secretary for Mines and Works was about obsolete, and the mining industry had developed to such importance during the last few years, and had extended so greatly all over the colony that they were warranted in creating a separate staff under the control of an Under Secretary for Mines to deal solely with matters relating to mines. There were efficient officers who had had to do with the Mines Department as long as it had been under the present dual system of management, and who must have gained considerable experience, and they should be told off to deal with the mines, and be put in a position equivalent in importance and responsibility to that occupied by the Under Secretary for Mines and Works. He did not know whether the hon. member had turned the matter over in his mind or not, but would like to hear his views on the subject.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said they had a separate department for mines now, but it was not presided over by a separate under secretary who had no other work to do. The two departments were separated, and the hon. member for Burke could bear him out in saying that. There were certain officers in the Mines Department, and certain others in the Works Department, who attended solely to their own departments, so that they were practically separate. He did not think there was any necessity for having an Under Secretary for Mines; he would be idle three parts of his time, if not more. The work of the Mines Department had increased, but not sufficiently to justify him or

any other Minister in recommending a separate under secretary. There was a great deal more justification for the separation of the offices of Railways and Works, because the work had become too great for any one man. That division took place when the late Mr. Miles died, and the same system was in force at present.

Mr. GROOM said the time had come when they should take some steps regarding the frequent leaves of absence on full pay. It was a very objectionable system, and its absurdity was shown by the fact that the work of the Under Secretary for Mines and Works had been carried on by other officers, who received no remuneration. The system was objectionable. He was reading a few days ago that a grant of £1,500 a year for five years had been made by the directors of a bank to the widow of the manager, who had been receiving £2,000 per year, and the shareholders resented it. At least, that was his reading of the case. Whenever those highly-paid officers wished for leave of absence they should go at their own expense, and not at the expense of the colony. Still more objectionable did he think it that other officers in the department should do their work and receive no remuneration for it. Two gentlemen, the accountant and another, were doing the work of the Under Secretary for Mines and Works, and he thought the Committee would cheerfully agree to grant them some extra remuneration, and provision for it might be made in the Supplementary Estimates. There must be some extra work for them to do.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was not there to defend, and he would not defend, the system of giving long leave of absence to highly-paid officials either on full pay or on half-pay. It showed the necessity there was for a good Civil Service Act. The system had been in existence for a long time. He did not know when it began; but everyone knew that highly-paid officials had been in the habit of receiving six months' or twelve months' leave of absence on full pay. He thought the same principle should be carried out with regard to officials lower down in the service if carried out at all. He had nothing to say against the statement that the two officers who did the Under Secretary's work during his absence were entitled to some remuneration; but he would point out that their work, instead of being filtered through the Under Secretary, was brought direct to the Minister, who had certainly more work while the Under Secretary was away. The two gentlemen at present doing the work of the Under Secretary in addition to their own did the work so well that it had struck him several times that there was no necessity for an under secretary.

Mr. UNMACK said he was somewhat startled to find that an under secretary was not necessary, seeing that there were two gentlemen doing the work satisfactorily without extra pay while the Under Secretary was absent. He thought that if those gentlemen received another £100 a year each the Government would be able to save £600 a year. That was a matter worthy of consideration. The Minister for Mines and Works had not told him yet whether the department was in the habit, contrary to the Audit Act, of paying salaries out of contingencies. That was a very serious question. He believed it was the practice in some departments to do so; and if that was the case, it should be brought under the notice of the Auditor-General. There was also another matter to which he wished to refer. There was a messenger put down at £130 a year; but on looking at the schedule it would be found that the messenger received an additional £175 a year,

which included "cleaning"; so that he received altogether £305 a year. The cleaning was supposed to be done by his wife; but he had no hesitation in saying that there was not an office in the whole of Brisbane in a more filthy or uninhabitable state. He considered that the amount paid to that messenger was a great deal too much, especially when it was compared with the salaries paid to some of the professional men in the department. A boy could very well do the work of the messenger; and there was no occasion to pay a man such an amount for delivering letters. There was no responsibility attached to the work; and he considered that £305 a year was an outrageous sum to pay, especially as the cleaning was not done as it ought to be done.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he made a mistake before in saying that some officers were paid from "contingencies." One was paid from the vote for survey of goldfields, and the other two were paid from the Mines Department. The hon. member made a mistake with reference to the salary of the messenger. A portion of that £305 was reckoned as rent for his house, valued at £75 per year. The hon. member was also mistaken when he said a boy could do the work. It would not be safe to entrust a boy with all the work done by the messenger. He had frequently to carry large sums of money, and pay cheques for the department. If the messenger paid for the cleansing of the office, or got his wife to do it, he was entitled to be paid for the work. As to the place being filthy, he would not say anything about that; but it was not more filthy than some other offices, both public and private.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he wished to know how it was that the chief clerk in the Mines Department received £50 a year less than the accountant. Mr. Cameron was a most efficient officer, and had a remarkable memory for all the minutiae of the Department. He did not wish to depreciate the ability of Mr. Robertson in any way, but he thought that Mr. Cameron was entitled to an equal salary. He was surprised that those officers had not received some remuneration for doing the duties of the Under Secretary during his absence; and he hoped that some allowance would yet be made to them for performing those duties. He wished also to refer to the position of Mr. Marshall. During the time he had charge of the department he offered Mr. Marshall considerable promotion, which, for reasons most creditable to himself, he declined to accept. He saw that the salaries of clerks were increased from £575 to £700. Did that include an increase to Mr. Marshall's salary?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that Mr. Marshall's salary had not been increased. He received the sum of £150, the same as last year. The fact of Mr. Cameron having £50 a year less than the accountant would have been rectified by him years ago but for the fact that he went out of office before he could do so, and his successors made no attempt to increase his salary. Mr. Cameron and Mr. Robertson were both first-class officers; but the Government had determined to make no increases that could be avoided; and it would be found that the increases on the Estimates were small increases given to boys. There was one boy on the Estimate increased from £50 to £75 to put him on an equality with other cadets.

Mr. HODGKINSON said the explanation was not clear to him. There were cadets in the buildings branch with £50 a year, and a cadet in the bridges branch with £75 a year; but the bridge administration had certainly not been a success during the last eighteen months. He

must again refer to the case of Mr. Marshall. That gentleman was offered the appointment of mining registrar at Gympie, worth £300 a year; but, for reasons that would command the admiration of every member of the Committee, he was compelled to decline the promotion. He was not in a position to accept it. He (Mr. Hodgkinson) was certain it was unnecessary to state the duties that Mr. Marshall had to perform; he was one of the most painstaking officers it would be possible to find, and his pay was disgracefully low, as was that of the chief clerk.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE asked if the hon. gentleman had left any minute expressing his views in regard to the salary of the chief clerk?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS AND MINES said he could not say whether he did or not.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said then his successor could not have known of the hon. gentleman's intentions.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the chief clerk informed him that he had said in the House that if he remained in office he would have him put on a level with other chief clerks.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he regretted the hon. gentleman did not go further.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: I left office.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said he understood the hon. gentleman's predecessor left a minute with regard to his views on the subject of Mr. Marshall's claims for promotion. That was the way in which a Minister should express his views. The hon. gentleman seemed to reflect upon his immediate predecessor in office, whereas it was his successor, the present Speaker, who was responsible. Any statement made in Committee when the Estimates were going through was likely to be forgotten, and he regretted that, in the interests of the chief clerk, the hon. gentleman had not left a minute expressing his views, which would have been entitled to great respect by his successor. The suggestion made by the member for Toowoomba was a good one—that some remuneration should be given to the gentlemen who were doing the Under Secretary's business. The hon. gentleman had shown good reasons why there should be a re-arrangement in that office, and he did not see why the two departments should be merged into one under the present Under Secretary. With an additional clerk or two the Under Secretary might be done away with, and the chief clerk and accountant promoted. It was impossible that the Under Secretary could be conversant with all the duties appertaining to both the Works and Mines Departments. The chief thing he did was to hand the papers to the Ministers; the chief clerk, who really did the work, pointing out to him the facts connected with each case. He should certainly like to hear why Mr. Marshall had not received some consideration, and he was of opinion that the messenger was handsomely paid. He should like to ask the Minister why the contingency vote had been increased by £1,000?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said £2,964 were spent last year.

Mr. MACFARLANE said the sum of £305, paid to a messenger, seemed a very large amount, and he could scarcely believe that so much was paid until he referred to the Schedule to the Estimates. He found the messenger received £130, quarters and fuel valued at £75, or £205

altogether, and that there was £40 paid for cleaning offices, and £60 for an office-keeper, which was received by his wife. He would suggest that it would be better that two women should be employed to clean the offices, and the work and remuneration divided.

Mr. HODGKINSON said there was an increase of £637 for cleaning offices, and for night watchmen. That seemed an enormous sum to spend for such purposes.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said one watchman was employed at the Treasury Buildings, and as for office cleaning, whoever did the work was certainly entitled to the money.

Mr. TOZER said there was a general feeling in the mining community that the work in the Mines Office was very well done, and the solution of the Minister for Mines was perfectly accurate. It was done now by officers who understood their work. The Works Department work was done by the accountant very well, and the work of the Mines Department was performed by the chief clerk most satisfactorily. It seemed that an injustice had been done, no doubt accidentally, to the chief clerk in the Mines Department, and that injustice the Committee ought to see remedied. The chief clerk was a specialist in mining matters; he had had a large experience, and it would prevent a great deal of the undue delay that was now so often complained of by miners throughout the colony if that officer were appointed to the post of permanent Under Secretary of the Mines Department. With reference to the item of advertising, he would suggest that there should be greater uniformity in the manner of advertising. At Charters Towers, for instance, everything was advertised that it was necessary for miners to know, such as applications for exemptions, while a different practice was pursued at Gympie.

Mr. HAMILTON said he agreed with the hon. member that there ought to be an Under Secretary for Mines, and it was the opinion of all the mining members that there was no one who could fill the position better than the present chief clerk.

Mr. ANNEAR said he wished to raise the question of bridges outside the Railway Department, but he would prefer bringing it on tomorrow if an opportunity could be found for doing so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was perfectly prepared to discuss the question to-night, but as hon. members wished to get away, he was quite willing to afford an opportunity for doing so to-morrow.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would again call the Minister's attention to the salaries of the clerks, which certainly ought to be increased.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was quite alive to the importance of paying proper salaries, but the pay must be according to the quality of the work to be done. They could not pay high salaries for low-class work. He would not be justified in paying a higher salary for the class of work than was paid elsewhere.

Mr. SAYERS said there was certainly something wrong when a messenger received £305 and a clerk high up in the service only £150.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said cases were common in banking institutions where the messenger got £150 and quarters, and some of the clerks only £100.

Mr. HODGKINSON said he would again press the case of Mr. Marshall, who certainly was deserving of an increase, and as to the chief clerk in the Mines Department he thought he was unfairly treated in being allowed to remain at his former salary of £450. The Mines Department was surely as important as any other, and yet it only had a chief clerk at that figure. It was good policy to pay good men good salaries.

Mr. LISSNER said he was quite in accord with the hon. member for Burke. Since he had been a member of that House he had had opportunities of seeing the chief clerk and Mr. Marshall in their offices, and he certainly thought they were each entitled to an increase. He should, therefore, like to know from the Minister whether there was any chance of raising the salary of the chief clerk to £500, and of giving Mr. Marshall another £50 by placing those increases on the Supplementary Estimates?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he quite agreed with the hon. member for Burke that it was not always true economy to pay small salaries to good officers; but in the same way as it was false economy to wear bad boots and catch cold, yet if a man could not buy new boots it was an economy he must practise. That was the position they were in at the present time with regard to the finances of the country. But he had no hesitation in promising that when increases of salary did take place, each of the officers mentioned would get a rise. He was quite aware of their good qualities, and they fully deserved an increase.

Mr. SAYERS said that just brought them back to where they started from. It seemed to him from what had fallen from hon. members that the Under Secretary was not required. He could not see why that officer should get £800 a year, while two other officers could do his work as well as their own, and yet they were screwed down simply because the Government were practising economy. He had been told that this was not the first time the Under Secretary had gone home on twelve months' leave of absence, and the chief clerk had done his work as well as his own, and had done it well, and yet on the next Estimates there was a sum put down for an assistant under secretary, so that, practically, they had one man doing three men's work, and doing it well, although he received only a comparatively small salary. If the Government were going to practise economy they should begin with the high officials who did little work, and pay those under them, who really did the work properly. He and several other members were opposed to the Mines Department being conducted in that way; and if the hon. the leader of the Opposition had been present they would probably have got more information than they were likely to get.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. The first business to-morrow will be the Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill, in committee, and after that, Supply.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at five minutes to 12 o'clock.