

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER 1889**

---

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

*Monday, 7 October, 1889.*

Question of Privilege—official records.—Questions.—Granville and Burnett Bridges Bill—committee.—Federal Council Referring Bill (Queensland), No 1—second reading.—Companies Act Amendment Bill—consideration of Legislative Council's amendments.—Adjournment.

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

**QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.****OFFICIAL RECORDS.**

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—If I am not in order in bringing forward the matter on a question of privilege, I shall conclude with the usual motion. I desire to draw attention to the business papers of this House, Nos. 77 and 78. The sixth item on the business paper No. 78 states, with reference to the encouragement of the sugar industry, that after the Chief Secretary moved that your ruling be disagreed to, debate ensued, the question was put, and the House divided—Ayes 26, Noes 20. It states further that the Speaker stated that, "in his opinion, the original question has been resolved in the negative," but I am unable to find any record of that question having been put. I

find in the sixth item on business paper No. 77, after the amendment of the Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith was disposed of, that the hour—7 o'clock—arrived at which Government business took precedence. I cannot find any record that you, Sir, ever put the original question, but the last item on business paper No. 78 states that there were 5 Ayes and 21 Noes. I beg to bring under your notice the omission from the business paper of any record of your having put the question, on the original motion of Mr. Cowley—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, early next session, to adopt some means for encouraging the sugar industry." These documents are records of the House, and may form the subject of future reference, and I trust I shall be excused for bringing the matter under your notice.

The SPEAKER said: The matter the hon. member has brought under my notice, is one requiring some explanation. As is shown by item No. 6 on the paper, the business before the House was "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable, early next session, to adopt some means for encouraging the sugar industry." I will call hon. members' recollection to the fact that after the division took place on Friday evening, the question was raised in this House whether, although that division had taken place, the mere fact of putting the question over again did not entitle hon. members to speak. If hon. members will refer to *Hansard* they will find that after the point of order had been raised I stated I would then declare that in my opinion the motion should be decided in the negative. Possibly I should have put the question, and ruled at once that it was one upon which no further speeches could be made; but I pointed out at the time that the motion was in exactly the same position as a motion upon which a division had been called, and the question put after the door was closed. And I think a reference to the records of the House will show that the motion before the House at the time was that moved by the hon. member for Herbert, Mr. Cowley. At the same time, if the House is of opinion that any further entry ought to be made it is quite competent to make an amendment. I may point out with reference to the records that some hon. members hold the opinion that every detail of business that takes place should be recorded in the "Votes and Proceedings"; but I may state that the practice now followed is that which has always been followed, and that the information given in the "Votes and Proceedings" is not only as full, but I think even more full, than that given in the "Votes and Proceedings" of the House of Commons.

#### QUESTIONS.

Mr. SMYTH asked the Postmaster-General—

1. What was the price paid for a site for a Post office on the United Smithfield Mine, One-Mile, Gynpie?
2. Who recommended the site?
3. From whom was it bought?
4. What has been done with the site, and in whose possession is it now?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson) replied—

1. £30 for house and cancellation of residence area.
2. Postmaster, Gynpie.
3. W. M. Walker.
4. The site is still in the hands of the Government.

Mr. HAMILTON asked the Postmaster-General—

1. What was the price paid for the site on which the One-Mile Post office, Gynpie, is erected, and from whom was it purchased?
2. Who recommended the purchase of said site?
3. In what portion of Graham street is it situated?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL replied—

1. (a) £147 10s.  
(b) Lydement, Heckscher and Younger.
2. No record in Post Office.
3. At the intersection of Graham street and a road to the back of Mount Pleasant and River road.

Mr. G. H. JONES asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to have a survey made for a railway to the Eidsvold Gold Field?
2. If so, when will a start be made to survey the same?

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

1. Yes.
2. According to present arrangements, in January, 1890.

Mr. SMYTH asked the Minister for Railways—

1. Who are the successful tenderers for the supply of coal for the Maryborough and Mount Perry Railways this year?
2. What were the several tenders?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied—

Contracts are now current for 1,000 tons of coal for the Maryborough Railway, and for 600 tons of coal for the Bundaberg Railway, both with the Isis Investment Company.

#### GRANVILLE AND BURNETT BRIDGES BILL.

##### COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS (Hon. J. M. Macrossan), the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into committee to consider this Bill.

Preamble postponed.

On clause 1—"Short title"—

Mr. SMYTH said he had seen in the Maryborough papers a statement that some correspondence had passed between the Minister for Mines and Works and the divisional board and municipality of Bundaberg, stating that it was the intention of the Government to put up a combined railway and road bridge, instead of putting up two separate bridges. He wanted to know if there was any truth in that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there was no truth in the statement that there had been any correspondence with the local authorities on the subject, but there was some truth in the statement notwithstanding. Hon. members might remember that when the Bill was read a second time objections were taken by some hon. members to two bridges being erected so near to each other over the Burnett River. He had placed himself in communication with the Engineer for Bridges on the subject, to see whether a combined railway and traffic bridge could not be erected, especially as there was some doubt about the traffic bridge impeding the traffic on the river. The result was that the Engineer for Bridges proposed a traffic and railway bridge which would cost £5,000 less than the traffic bridge alone would cost. He (Mr. Macrossan) submitted that plan to the Commissioners for Railways through the Minister for Railways, and they objected strongly to any such thing.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Why?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said they contended that it would be inexpedient, on account of the traffic, as the bridge would have to be closed too often. The bridge suggested would have a level decking, and the railway line would be on one

side of it. There was another bridge of the same kind over the Mary River—the Dickabram Bridge. There was also a bridge of the same kind at Normanton, which was giving satisfaction. The combined bridge which had been proposed would have to be handed over to the Railway authorities. The local authorities would have no control over it, and in the course of time, when the traffic became too great for the combined bridge to work well, it would then become a double line railway bridge. The material which had been purchased for the railway bridge could have been used for a bridge over the Kolan River on the first section of the Bundaberg line, but the Commissioners objected. They would not have it, and he had not attempted to force it upon them, although it would be a great advantage to the country, and, as he had said, would have cost £5,000 less than the traffic bridge alone.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: What would the traffic bridge alone cost.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said £56,000, and the railway bridge contracted for would cost £29,500.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that when a combined bridge was talked about the other day he thought a bridge like that over the Niagara River was intended, on which the railway was overhead and the ordinary traffic underneath. There would be no difficulty in building such a bridge. The railway bridge, of course, would be on a level with the top of the bank and the roadway would be a little lower, although certainly above flood mark. It was a very serious thing to spend about £90,000 on two bridges alongside of one another. Perhaps the Minister for Railways could explain the objections of the Railway Commissioners. He did not like that kind of bridge, except on the score of economy, but it was a lot of money to expend on two bridges close together.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS said the objection on the part of the Railway Department was that it was impossible to work the combination bridge with safety. If the bridge in question was erected on the combined system it would require a gate-keeper in constant attendance at each end, in order to secure the safety of the public. For some considerable time before every train was due the gates at both ends would have to be shut, and the traffic would be impeded during the whole of that time. If that was not done they would be constantly liable to have some serious accident. The whole width of the bridge was not more than sufficient for road traffic, being only about 30 feet altogether, and the idea of the proposed combination bridge was that the road traffic should use the same space as the railway traffic, and there was no fencing off of the rails from the rest of the deck of the bridge. It was impossible to have road traffic on the bridge at the same time with a train, and the main objection to the bridge on the part of the Railway Department was the expense of working that would be necessary to prevent accidents.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Why should the traffic bridge cost more than the railway bridge?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS said a traffic bridge always costs more than a railway bridge.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the traffic bridge would be wider, and the cylinders would have to be about 2 feet wider than those for the railway bridge. The Engineer for Bridges, who was also a railway engineer, and had been brought out by the Rail-

way Department for his special knowledge of bridges, calculated that there would be six trains—three each way—across the bridge a day, and the bridge would require to be closed for about ten minutes for each train, or one hour each day. That would not, he thought, be a very great impediment to traffic.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: There is a station close to each end, at which every train must stop.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that would not be a great impediment to traffic, but he had no desire to get into conflict with the Railway Department on the subject.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said he believed there must be some confusion between the two departments as to that bridge. He had had something to do with it some months ago, and at that time the Engineer-in-Chief had made out plans for a double bridge—a railway and road traffic bridge by which, if he remembered rightly, the road traffic would be underneath the railway. There were also plans prepared for two bridges, one for the railway and another for road traffic about 100 yards below the railway bridge. Those plans were in existence now complete in the office of the Engineer-in-Chief for Railways. The estimate given was that his plan of a combined bridge would be only £1,500 or £1,800 less in cost than the cost of the two separate bridges. It was submitted to the municipality and divisional boards concerned, and they were asked whether they would be willing to pay the extra cost to them of the two bridges—£700 or £800—and he understood that was decided on some months ago. If the statement now made that the engineer had given a plan of a combined bridge to be made for about £5,000 less than the cost of one bridge alone was correct, there must be some misunderstanding in the departments. The plans and estimates of the bridges he had referred to would be found in the Railway Department now. A bridge for the combined traffic such as described by the Minister for Mines and Works would require another row of cylinders, and would involve all the inconveniences which had been stated.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there had been no confusion between the departments in connection with that matter, because the Engineer for Bridges had himself designed all the bridges spoken of. It was not Mr. Stanley but Mr. Brady who designed them. There had been several combined bridges designed by Mr. Brady, and the design proposing that the road traffic should go in under the railway would not suit the levels of the river. That was the objection to it. The only confusion was that the Chief Engineer for Railways was opposed to combined railway and traffic bridges, and he had known that of old. He had known Mr. Stanley's opinion upon that point long ago. He did not know whether that gentleman had influenced the Commissioners or not, but those gentlemen had furnished a report on the subject which he had read.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—"Construction of terms"—passed as printed.

On clause 3, as follows:—

"1. A bridge, to be called the Granville Bridge, may be erected across the Mary River at Maryborough, between the districts of the municipality of Maryborough and the division of Granville, at such place and in such position as shall be agreed upon by the local authorities thereof, and approved of by the Governor in Council.

"2. A bridge, to be called the Burnett Bridge, may be erected across the Burnett River at Bundaberg, between the districts of the municipality of Bundaberg

and the division of Gooburrum, at such place and in such position as shall be agreed upon by the local authorities thereof, and approved of by the Governor in Council.

"3. Each bridge shall be not less than thirty feet in width in the clear, and shall be so constructed as to provide for general traffic thereon, and shall, subject to the provisions herein contained, be a public highway and thoroughfare."

Mr. ANNEAR said that when that question was last before the House the leader of the Opposition had referred to the necessity for a swing to be provided, so as not to interfere with the navigation of the Mary River. Since that time he had placed himself in communication with the local authorities, and he had also written to persons who had property on each side of the river, which he considered would be seriously affected if no swing was provided in the proposed Granville Bridge. On Friday last he received the following telegram from the secretary of the united municipality of Maryborough and Granville:—

"Special meeting of united board held this day. Members prefer fixed bridge without swing in order to save extra cost and that all danger through closing navigation be avoided by legislation if necessary."

He thought himself that once the bridge was erected without a swing, it would be no use for them to talk about getting a swing into it afterwards. If the bridge was built without a swing, that would be final. The United Municipality Board represented the Maryborough Municipal Council and the boards of the surrounding divisions, and as they were satisfied, he had no more to say on the matter. It was their decision, and he hoped that if at any future time they regretted it, it would be remembered that their attention had twice been called to the matter, once by the leader of the Opposition, and also by himself when the Bill was last before the House.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he called attention on the second reading of the Bill, to the absence of any provision rendering it lawful to close navigation by the erection of those bridges, and he was told by the hon. gentleman that he would correct that. No notice, however, had been given of any amendment on the subject, and that was really the only object for which the Bill was required. The rest could all be done by agreement between the Government and the local authorities.

Mr. ADAMS said that as far as the Bundaberg bridge was concerned, such a provision was unnecessary, as the bridge would not impede navigation. No vessels now went above the site of the proposed bridge, nor had any done so for the last ten or twelve years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said a swing in the Maryborough bridge would cost nearly £12,000, besides an annual expenditure of between £200 and £300. He believed the people of Maryborough were prepared to avoid that cost; and to prevent any disagreeable consequences happening after the bridge was built, he had an amendment to propose, which provided that no action, suit, indictment, information, or other proceeding should be presented, prosecuted, or maintained against the local authorities, or any other local authority or person, on account of the closure of the river to traffic by those bridges. He would move the amendment as a new clause to follow clause 3.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said it would be better for the new clause to come in after clause 10, because the provisions of the Bill up to that point required the plans to be prepared by the Minister, submitted to the local authorities, and then approved by the Governor in Council. Only bridges erected under those conditions would receive the protection of the clause.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would accept the suggestion of the hon. gentleman.

Question put and passed.

On clause 4, as follows:—

"The Governor may, by warrant under his hand, addressed to the Treasurer, direct him to advance and pay out of the consolidated revenue, towards the construction and erection of the bridge, such sum, not exceeding one-half of the cost of each bridge, as the Governor in Council may think fit, but not exceeding twenty thousand pounds for the Granville Bridge or twenty-two thousand five hundred pounds for the Burnett Bridge.

"Subject to the provision in the eleventh section hereof, the remainder of the cost of construction and erection shall be provided by the local authorities herein mentioned, in such proportions as may be agreed on by them respectively in each case before the commencement of the bridge."

Mr. TOZER said he asked, on the second reading of the Bill, whether the principle adopted in regard to the erection of the Granville and Burnett bridges would be applied to other bridges? In doing that he had in mind a second bridge over the Mary River, which was not very far above the one now proposed to be built, and which certainly demanded more serious attention than the Granville Bridge. An application was made to the hon. Minister for Mines and Works for assistance in the erection of the bridge referred to. The old bridge, he might mention, was washed away by a flood, and it was estimated that a new bridge would cost £3,000, but the Minister could only see his way to grant £1,000, whilst the consolidated revenue was to bear one-half the cost of the bridges provided for in the Bill before them. He (Mr. Tozer) had only just that instant received another letter, pointing out that the Tiaro traffic was stopped, and that people could not pass from one side of the river to the other for want of the bridge to which he alluded, and that they really could not get on at all with their agricultural operations without assistance from the Government. He would therefore like to know whether the Government would extend to the inhabitants of Tiaro—who had lost their bridge—the same terms and privileges as were granted by the Bill in regard to the Granville and Burnett Bridges?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he was afraid he could not give the hon. member an answer that would satisfy him. The money for the construction of the bridges referred to in the Bill was voted on the last Loan Estimates. There was a difference between the bridge the hon. member spoke of and the bridges which they were now legislating for, and that difference was that the Government had already built a bridge at Tiaro, the whole cost of which was borne by the Government, and they could not be expected to keep on building bridges if they were swept away; but the Maryborough people had not had a bridge built for them yet. The bridge the hon. member referred to was built especially for Gympie. Every member of the Committee knew that the bridge built across the Mary River three miles from the wharf at Maryborough was built for the accommodation of the Gympie traffic immediately after the goldfield was opened, so that it was not a Maryborough bridge at all. He (the Minister for Mines and Works) quite agreed that there should be some principle laid down by the Committee on which bridges should be built. He did not like the principle of the Government contributing one-half the cost of one bridge, one-third the cost of another, and perhaps the whole cost of a third, but until some general principle was laid down by Parliament he could only do the best he could with the funds at his disposal.

He certainly could not promise the hon. member any more than had been offered for the Tiaro bridge.

Mr. SMYTH said perhaps the hon. gentleman would tell them why he would only consent to grant one-fifth of the cost of a bridge near Gypmie which was to cost about £1,500, whilst he proposed to contribute one-half of the cost of the Maryborough bridge. There did not appear to be any consistency in such an arrangement.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did not draw that line at the Tiaro bridge alone; he drew the same line in regard to a great many other bridges.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Why not introduce a general principle into this Bill?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that Bill dealt only with two bridges for which money had already been voted.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he thought they should have some explanation as to what was to be done with regard to the extra cost of the Burnett Bridge. Were the local authorities to pay the extra cost?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Better leave that question until we come to the next clause.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said if they did that, and any alteration was made in the next clause, the two clauses would be contradictory. The 4th clause provided that the Government should contribute towards the construction of the Burnett Bridge a sum not exceeding £22,500, but one-half of the amount for the bridge proposed (£56,500) would be £28,250. He did not quite understand clause 11, which at first sight seemed to override the one they were considering. Clause 4 provided that the Government should arrange with the local authority for a bridge to cost £45,000; but if by any chance extras were incurred and that amount were exceeded, clause 11 would come into operation. According to the hon. gentleman's argument, the words in clause 4 were idle; what was the use of providing a maximum?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said clause 4 was quite in accordance with clause 11; it was subject to the provisions in the latter clause.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: How do you reconcile the two? What will the combined effect be?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the clause before them provided for £20,000 being spent in one case, and £22,500 in the other. But if those amounts were unexpectedly exceeded, clause 11 provided how the extra expense was to be divided. As he had already pointed out, the bridge over the Burnett would cost more than £45,000; it would cost £56,500.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said the two clauses contradicted each other. They were flatly contradictory, and he wanted to know what the Government proposed to do. It was impossible to find that out by reading the two clauses together.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had the estimates of cost of three designs. The cost of the one upon which the Bill was drafted would be £45,000; the second design would cost £47,500; and the third, £56,500. The last was the design that the Engineer for Bridges strongly recommended, for the reason that it would be a bridge that would stand not only floods, but would stand the test of time, without renewing for a long period. The engineer feared that the design to

cost £45,000, and that to cost £47,000, would require renewing before the whole of the principal and interest had been paid, which would be a very unfortunate thing indeed. It would mean a fresh loan to the local authority on the part of the Government.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he wished to know what the proposals of the Government were? The two clauses were contradictory.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he proposed to accept the recommendation of the engineer to build the bridge to cost £56,000.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said he presumed the hon. gentleman proposed that the Government should find one-half of the amount and the local authority the other half? Did the Government propose to contribute £28,250 or more?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the Government proposed to contribute £28,250. He thought the recommendation of the engineer was a very good one.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said if that were the case he did not see why they should pass a clause which said the maximum should not be more than £22,500. The clause did not give effect to what the Government intended. According to the Bill, the Government might contribute one-third or one-half of the cost of the bridge, provided its proportion did not exceed £22,500, and the remainder of the cost of construction was to be paid by the corporation. Any small extras were provided for by clause 11.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he thought it would better to alter the figures in clause 4 and insert £28,250 instead of £22,500. He did not think the Granville Bridge would cost more than the estimate; in fact, he believed it would cost a good deal less. There would be no apparent contradiction at all between the two clauses if that amendment were made. He moved that the words "two thousand five hundred" be omitted, with a view of inserting "eight thousand two hundred and fifty."

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said it would be necessary to have another recommendation from the Governor before that amendment could be passed; the amount of appropriation would have to be increased.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the recommendation they had had covered the Bill as it stood, and clause 11 provided for the cost being more than was stated in clause 4. He did not think any amendment in clause 4 need affect the present recommendation.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said the words in clause 4 either meant something or nothing. The clause was covered by a recommendation from the Governor, recommending that a certain sum of money be spent, and now it was proposed to increase that amount by £5,000 or more.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there were only two ways of doing it, as far as he could see. Either the amount mentioned in clause 4 must be omitted altogether, leaving a blank in place of it, or the Government must confine themselves to the exact amount mentioned therein, which would throw the additional cost on the local authorities. The question would then arise whether the local authorities would be able or willing to undertake the additional cost. He was not able to speak for the local authorities on that point.

Mr. ADAMS said that in 1883 or 1884 the Government then in office had a large surplus, and in the distribution of the surplus £30,000 was allotted for a bridge over the Burnett. Shortly afterwards that Government went out of office, and they had not an opportunity of carrying out what they intended. When he entered the House he tabled a motion for the construction of the bridge, and he was promised by the then Minister for Works, Mr. Miles, that if he would withdraw the motion the Government would erect a combined bridge free of cost to the inhabitants of Bundaberg. After that it was thought desirable not to erect a combined bridge, but to erect one of the kind now proposed, and the local authorities were asked if they would be prepared to pay one-half the cost. Their answer was "Yes." It was discovered, after the money had been voted last year, that the Government had no authority to expend the money, and the consequence was that the present Bill had been brought in. He had himself asked the united authorities whether they were prepared to pay their full half share of the cost of the bridge, and their answer had always been "Yes." He believed they were not only willing to pay half the cost, but would have ample funds to do so. At the present time the traffic was carried on by means of a steam punt, and there was no doubt the traffic would be greatly increased if the steam punt was replaced by a bridge. The revenue derived from the steam punt was £2,800 per annum, and the working expenses were, not £700 as he was reported to have said on a former occasion, but £1,100; and they expected, as soon as the bridge was completed, to reduce the working expenses from £1,100 to £300 a year. It was anticipated that, taking into consideration the great increase of traffic that must inevitably follow the erection of the bridge, they would be able to pay off both the principal and the interest within the specified time.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the hon. member had no doubt made out a good case for that bridge, but it would have been far better for Bundaberg to have had a combined bridge, and paid nothing for it, as seemed to have been promised, than to have a traffic bridge only, on conditions that they might never be able to carry out. Why not have a combined bridge? What was the objection to it? There were combined bridges all over the world.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the objections came from the Chief Engineer and the Commissioners for Railways, not from the Government. That objection had been already explained by the Minister for Railways. As to the contention of the leader of the Opposition about the Governor's message, it seemed to be completely met by clause 11, which authorised a sum in excess of £20,000 for the Granville Bridge and £22,500 for the Burnett Bridge.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said if that explanation was correct, it was a most extraordinary way to bring a Bill down to the House. The Government were to advance a sum not exceeding £22,500 for the bridge, and if it cost more they would pay the balance. That was really what it amounted to. They were asked to authorise the Government to advance a certain specified sum for the work, provided that if the money was not sufficient, whatever was necessary should be paid. The Bill was an Appropriation Bill, and it was certainly a new form. They would next be having the Estimates of expenditure upon a particular department stated at £100,000, and as much more as might be necessary. Appropriation Bills were not usually drawn in that form. He had never heard of an Appropriation Bill being brought forward in 1889—6 1

that way, but perhaps it was one of the new innovations. It would save a lot of trouble if instead of voting for a salary, £600, they were to vote £600, "and as much more as may be deemed desirable." No Auditor-General would be wanted, except to inspect the vouchers. The Government were simply asking the Committee to give them a blank cheque, and he did not think any Government would be so stupid as to ask Parliament for a blank cheque. According to the Bill the Government might advance the half of £45,000, and if the cost of the bridge should be £50,000 the Government would still pay only £22,500, and the remaining £27,500 must be found by the local authority. They should know the estimated cost of the bridge before the bargain was made. The cost might be £56,500, and by clause 4 the corporation would have to pay £34,000 and the Government the balance of £22,500. Then, section 11 provided that if the estimate were exceeded the balance was to be made up in the same proportion—that was, the Government would pay £22,500, the corporation the rest of the estimate, and the balance would have to be paid in the same proportion by the Government and the corporation. Any other reading of clause 11 was absurd.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said he was sorry he had not been present when the reasons of the Chief Engineer and the Commissioners for Railways had been given for objecting to a combined bridge. He did not at all object to the Bill, but he was positive that if a combined bridge was built over the Burnett it would save the State at least £20,000. There were other places needing bridges far more than Bundaberg and Maryborough, and he knew some places where there would be more traffic in one week than there would be over the Burnett Bridge in twelve months. He did not wish the hon. member for Bundaberg to think that he was offering any obstruction to the bridge. He would like to hear the objection of the railway authorities to a combined bridge, as he was inclined to think he would be able to say something against it.

Mr. BARLOW said when the Bill was being discussed on the second reading, he had suggested to the Minister for Mines and Works that he should bring in some general bridge scheme. If a combined bridge was anything like the combined bridge at Ipswich, he would advise the people of Bundaberg to avoid having such a bridge. He might mention that when the Railway Commissioners had crossed the Bremer Bridge a few days previously, they had had a little exhibition of the combined bridge. A railway engine was passing at the time the vehicle containing the Commissioners and himself were on the bridge, and the engine caused considerable disquietude and unpleasantness to them. He would suggest that all the bridges should be put into one general measure, so that something might be done for other places. As far as his reading went, clause 11 appeared to be like giving a blank cheque to the Government, as it would enable them to do just whatever they pleased. If the bridges could not be built for the amounts specified in the 4th clause, the balance was to be paid in the same proportions by the local authorities and the Government. He hoped they would get a bridge, although he did not grudge Bundaberg and Maryborough getting bridges. He would like to see the unnecessary expenditure on the Parliamentary Buildings and on other things directed to works which were absolutely necessary. He knew that he was charged with continually bringing that matter forward. He was sorry he had to do so; but he knew it was only a question of time for some terrible accident to take place on the Bremer Bridge, and

while he did not grudge the people of Maryborough and Bundaberg getting bridges, he hoped one would be given to his district by some general measure.

Mr. ANNEAR said the hon. member for Ipswich stated that he hoped Ipswich would get a bridge; but Ipswich had had a bridge for many years past, the whole cost of which had been defrayed out of the general revenue of the colony. For the first time in the history of Queensland, the people of Maryborough and Bundaberg had come forward and offered to pay half the cost of the construction of bridges. No other local authority in Queensland had ever made such an offer. He had no doubt that if the local authorities of Ipswich made an offer of the same sort to the Government they would get a bridge erected. Maryborough and Bundaberg were the first places to make such an offer. Those two towns, which were always accused of getting everything, were the first to offer to tax themselves to provide bridges. Clause 11 provided everything that was required. He believed that the Granville Bridge could be built for less than the estimated cost; but assuming, for argument's sake, that it cost £5,000 more, and that the Burnett Bridge also cost £5,000 more than the estimated cost, the local authorities in each case would have to pay £2,500 more. Would it be such a hardship that the Government should have to pay another £2,500? Were they going to quibble about a thing like that, when they had seen things ten times worse? He could not see any objection to a combined bridge over the Burnett. In that he quite agreed with what had been said by the hon. member for Stanley. The Chief Engineer estimated that three trains each way would cross the Burnett Bridge per day, and he did not see the necessity for any gates at the ends of the bridge, if they put a piece of kerbing between the traffic and the railway bridges, with a fence for twenty feet at each end. If that were done, the traffic could be carried on all day long. The leader of the Opposition and his colleague (the Hon. Sir Thomas McIlwraith) had travelled through larger cities than Brisbane, where trains passed through streets having more traffic on them than Queen street, and yet the people there did not complain. The railway trains went on and so did the traffic at the same time. He was not going to oppose the construction of the Burnett Bridge, but it seemed extraordinary that they should have to construct a bridge to take the railway over the Burnett River, and then within a short distance of that build another bridge at a cost of some £56,000. He was not an engineer, but he had seen scores of combined bridges during the last six months where a railway ran in the middle, and ordinary traffic crossed at each side—bridges where there was ten times more traffic than would be seen over the Burnett for the next twenty years. No complaints were made in those places. It seemed as if they had an overflowing Treasury and did not know what to do with all their money, when they proposed to go in for such unnecessary expenditure. He hoped to see a combined bridge over the Burnett, as such a structure would meet the requirements of the district for the next fifty years. A bridge was absolutely necessary as that was on the main road to the North. £56,000 seemed a large sum of money to expend when they had been committed for some years past to the construction of another bridge over the Burnett, even though the local authorities were willing to contribute half the cost. At one time the inhabitants of Bundaberg were quite satisfied with a combined bridge, and he was at a loss to know what had led to the change in their ideas. He hoped hon. members would

treasure up the fact that for the first time in the history of the colony had local authorities offered to contribute any part of the cost of a bridge, and would remember that the offer emanated from the people of Maryborough and Bundaberg.

Mr. BARLOW said the hon. gentleman had misunderstood him. He did not object to the proposed bridge in the slightest degree, or to public works in any part of the colony, but he must say that he never heard the chisels of the workmen employed in making the additions to Parliament House that he did not feel that money was being wantonly thrown away and wasted which would have given employment to labour in putting up bridges in various parts of the country where they were required. If hon. members wanted to see what a combined bridge meant he would like them to see the bridge at Ipswich on a day when there was a large amount of traffic there, when timber waggons, buggies, butcher boys, and restive horses were all mixed up together in utter confusion. In fact it was absolutely perilous to life to attempt to cross it at times. He had only been to Bundaberg once in his life, and there did not appear to be very much traffic there, but there would be more by-and-by. In the course of a few years Queensland was going to be a colony of a million of people, and they should carry out all their public works upon the expectation of the increased population they would get. Although, as the hon. member for Maryborough had stated, Ipswich had a free bridge, he contended that it was a great misfortune that ever Ipswich had got that bridge, and that the deviation was ever taken round by Woodend. If he went into the history of that transaction he could prove that it was a scandalous job from beginning to end; and the result was that the Ipswich people did not get a proper bridge at the time that other portions of the colony did. All they got was a miserable apology, a substitute for one, in the shape of a combined bridge. He did not begrudge public works to any part of the colony so long as the loan money was expended in an economical and useful way, and the new principle introduced was carried out fairly, so that all districts which required to avail themselves of it should be enabled to do so. He still looked upon clause 11 as a complete gate of escape, by which the Government could expend whatever they pleased on that work. So long as the people of the district paid half the expense, he had nothing to say, but as far as the clause presented itself to his non-legal mind, the Government could expend £100,000 on the work.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Do you approve of that?

Mr. BARLOW: No; certainly not.

Mr. COWLEY said he thought there was a great deal of force in what has been said by the hon. the leader of the Opposition, and that it would be wise to strike out clause 11 altogether, and let clause 4 stand. They had voted a certain sum of money for that work last year, and that vote ought not to be exceeded. If the bridge could not be built for that, let the local authorities find the balance. Surely the bridge could be built for less than £56,000, when the Minister for Mines and Works had informed them that the estimate of a combined bridge for both ordinary and railway traffic was £5,000 less than that sum. If that were so it would be better to have a combined bridge. There was something very remarkable in that—that a combination bridge would cost £5,000 less than the one proposed. He did not like the principle contained in clause 11, because although the cost of the bridge was estimated at £56,000, it might cost £100,000. In nine cases out of ten the estimated cost of bridges had been exceeded, and there should be



some limit fixed, so far as the cost to the country was concerned. He did not suppose a single bridge of any magnitude had been built in which the estimated cost was not largely exceeded, and in the present case Parliament might be called upon to vote £10,000 or £15,000 more than the amount put down.

Mr. UNMACK said he had not the slightest objection to granting those bridges upon certain terms, but he contended that the Committee had a positive right to know what the colony was to be called upon to pay for them. But clauses 4 and 11, taken together, left that entirely an open question. First of all, clause 4 provided that the Government were to contribute £22,500 towards the Burnett Bridge, but the Hon. the Minister for Mines and Works had informed the Committee that he was in favour of a design which was to cost £56,000; in other words, the country was to be called upon to pay £28,000. He did not object to the amount, provided it was known and fixed. His chief objection was to clause 11, by which it was provided that in the event of the bridge costing more than the estimated amount, the country should contribute proportionately to the remainder, whatever it might be. He would offer no objection to clause 4, provided the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill would consent to alter clause 11, so as to read that in the event of either bridge costing more than the amount estimated, the amount of such excess should be provided by the respective local authorities. That was to say, that nothing more would be required from the consolidated revenue. He thought that was a fair and reasonable demand. They should not be called upon to give a blank cheque, as it were, for any amount the Minister might choose to expend in the future. Let the Committee know what the maximum cost of the bridge would be, and they would pay half of that; and if it ultimately cost more than that, the local authorities, for whose benefit the bridge was to be erected, should pay the balance.

Mr. O'CONNELL said he could not see any great harm in the clause as it stood. It simply meant that the Government should provide one-half the cost of the bridge. Those were the terms on which he understood the hon. the leader of the Opposition, when he was in power, stated to a deputation from Bundaberg, that he was prepared to give the bridge. Clause 11 meant that if the bridge cost more than the £45,000 voted last year, the extra cost should be paid in equal parts by the local authorities and the Government.

Mr. UNMACK: How much is it to be?

Mr. O'CONNELL said it was impossible to say exactly what the cost of the bridge would be, but if it cost more than the sum appropriated last year the amount would be divided equally between the joint municipalities and the Government. It was not likely that either the joint local authorities or the Government would spend more on the work than they could possibly help. If there was going to be a big spree over the matter there might be some reason for objecting, but when the money was for an important public work he did not think there was much need for talking about blank cheques.

Mr. ADAMS said one would think from the remarks of some hon. members that the Government and the local authorities were going to be very reckless, but he could assure hon. members that they had not got much money to spare to be reckless with. The joint local authorities were quite willing to pay half the cost of the bridge, but it was impossible to say to a penny or a pound what the cost of the

work would be until tenders were invited. After tenders were invited they would know what the structure would cost, and if it was more than the local authorities could provide, then he thought they would tell the Minister for Mines and Works that such a structure was beyond their means. There had been eight or nine bridges which had been built at the cost of the country, and as the people of Bundaberg had been promised that bridge for so long, he did not see any reason for further delaying the work.

Mr. ARCHER said he should like to ask the Minister for Mines and Works if he would mention again the estimated cost of the different designs?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said in design A the main girders would rest upon six cast-iron piers and two concrete ones; it would have seven 110-foot steel spans, with timber decking and timber approaches. The length of the structure would be 1,486 feet, and the estimated cost was £44,716. That was the bridge which was promised to the people of Bundaberg, and agreed to by them. Design B was similar to design A as to length, but had steel decking, and tarred metal roadway, with steel spans only, the approaches being of timber. It would cost £47,500. Design C had steel spans, and metal roadway throughout the entire length of the bridge and approaches, and was estimated to cost £56,500.

Mr. ARCHER said he took it for granted that the Bill was drawn up before those estimates were framed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: The Bill was drawn on the first estimate.

Mr. ARCHER said if the bridge that was to be built could be built for £44,716 as estimated, although there was no certainty about it, then of course the Bill as it stood was exactly right. The question was, were the Government to be allowed to spend a larger sum, and make a far better work? In that case he saw nothing for it but to alter the sum in the body of the Bill in clause 4. As for clause 11, which apparently would allow for any expenditure, it would be found necessary to alter it. The Minister under the Bill had authority to spend £44,000 odd. Supposing he got a tender for £56,800; that would block the whole concern. If the Committee considered that the most economical was the dearest one, then, as they had agreed already to grant half the amount of the cost of the bridge, they ought to consent to allow the Minister for Mines and Works to increase the amount to meet any special tender, but they ought still to retain clause 11; so that, if the tenders were too high, the whole matter would not have to wait for another session. The amount should not be allowed to be increased by thousands, but they should allow some small margin. He thought both the clauses were required, but that both would require amendment.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he quite agreed with the hon. member that both clauses were necessary, and that they both required amendment. The 4th clause certainly required amendment, and the amendment could not be made without an additional message. They could not amend an Appropriation Bill by increasing the amount, or taking out any proviso which limited the amount. That used to be a familiar rule to them all. He regretted to see that some hon. members lost sight of it, because when he first came into the House every member prided himself on observing constitutional rules. A great many hon. members seemed to think now that anything would do. He very

much regretted to see that spirit spreading amongst hon. members. He had pointed out before that they could not increase the amount, and if it was necessary, he should have to ask the Chairman to rule that the amendment could not be put. There was another important matter connected with the work. The 6th clause provided that the term of the loan was to be for forty years. He did not think that was the proper term for a wooden bridge. He did not know of any wooden bridge in this colony forty years old that was of much good. The biggest wooden bridge he knew of was over the Dawson River, which was built twenty-five years ago, and which was by no means in a satisfactory condition. He really thought it was a matter worthy of serious consideration whether they ought to be frightened by the Railway Commissioners into spending £30,000 more than appeared to be necessary. He did not see why they should.

Mr. TOZER : A tender has been accepted.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that could easily be altered. A combined bridge, with the rails running level with the decking, would answer all purposes perfectly well. How long had the Dawson Bridge answered its purpose? Of course there were only two trains a day over the Dawson Bridge, and there would be six over the proposed bridge.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS : More.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the Minister for Mines and Works had told the Committee that there would be three each way, but suppose there were six each way? He did not agree with the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, that the ordinary traffic could go over the bridge at the same time as the engine.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN : It happens in Ipswich every hour in the day.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the hon. member did not understand that, in the case of the Burnett Bridge, it was not proposed to separate the trains from the ordinary traffic by any fence, as the whole of the deck of the bridge would be open. He did think the combined bridge was more worthy of consideration if they could save £30,000 by it. Were they so flush of money that they could afford to spend so much extra? He did not think they were, and he would like to know how much money they had before they proposed to put an additional burden upon the country, when the only reason given was that the Railway Commissioners did not like a combined railway and traffic bridge. Neither did he; a separate bridge would no doubt be much nicer, and it would be nicer still to have a fine suspension bridge, or perhaps two. That would look much prettier, and they might have a nice balcony outside the bridge, and a variety of other improvements that might be suggested. That was not the question, however. The question was, could they afford to spend £90,000 to bridge the Burnett River when £50,000 would do?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that personally he agreed with the hon. gentleman that a combined bridge would be much better and cheaper. It would be cheaper by about £30,000; but, as he had stated, he was not prepared to come into conflict with the Railway Commissioners. But if that Committee was prepared to come into conflict with them, he would be prepared to do so.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN : I will make one.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he certainly was not prepared to fight them single-handed, but if he was backed up

by the members of the Committee he would be prepared to do anything. The case stood thus: The bridge first designed for £45,000 was a timber bridge, that would have to be renewed in less than forty years, and the decking would have to be renewed twice in that time at a cost each time of £2,500. That was the bridge to which the Government were committed by negotiations between the local authorities and themselves, and also by the Treasury Bills Act passed last year. The bridge recommended by the Engineer for Bridges was a steel and iron structure wholly, and would last all time; it would last twice or three times forty years, with very little cost for repairs. That was the better bridge, and the one he would himself recommend. Then came in the question of saving £30,000. He believed Mr. Brady to be a thorough and competent Engineer for Bridges, and that gentleman had told him that his estimate of the cost was a very liberal one, and, in fact, led him to believe that the estimate he gave would probably not be reached. If that was the case the combined bridge would cost about £5,000 less than a single bridge alone, and a combined bridge would certainly meet all the requirements of the road and railway traffic for the next fifteen or twenty years.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN : The Ipswich bridge has done it for thirty years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would not go as far as that, as he hoped the district of Bundaberg would have advanced very much in thirty years. He was quite certain the traffic would be trebled in that time, and the traffic would be very much greater. If they were to have half-a-dozen trains a day, it would meet the traffic; but he thought three or four trains a day would be sufficient for the present, as two trains a day were sufficient for the traffic on the Central line. He thought they might very well risk the combined bridge. As he had said at starting, if the Committee was with him, he would be prepared to go in for it. The Bill of course would have to be passed all the same, but it would need to be altered.

Mr. ANNEAR said he would like to ask whether the Bundaberg people would pay half the cost, if the combined bridge spoken of was adopted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS : No; they will pay nothing in that case.

Mr. ANNEAR said that, going back again to the question of the swing on the Granville Bridge, he had a little while ago read a telegram from the United Municipality of Maryborough and Granville on that subject, and a few minutes ago he had received a telegram from one of the gentlemen to whom he had referred last week as likely to be affected by a fixed bridge. The gentleman was Mr. Taylor, and he happened to be absent for a time and had been unable to answer his letter before. Mr. Taylor wired that day to him, as follows :—

"If the bridge is not a swing one it will ruin us having invested over £13,000 in the mill. Our trade principally shipping. Writing this mail being absent."

"TAYLOR BROS."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH : Where is their place?

Mr. ANNEAR said it was above where the proposed bridge was to be constructed, and about half way between the present bridge and the site of the proposed Granville Bridge. He did not think the Government had any desire to wilfully injure any person, and he thought it his duty to read that telegram.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS said that with regard to the traffic there would be on the Burnett Bridge, Mr. Brady's estimate appeared to him to be too small. It was quite certain that as soon as the railway bridge was opened there, the traffic backwards and forwards on it would be very considerable. Of course there would be a saving to the Railway Department in one way, as only one station master and one traffic manager would do for the whole of North and South Bundaberg. One difficulty was that the workshops for repairing locomotives and rolling-stock were on the north side. It was something like Ipswich in that respect, and locomotives and other rolling-stock would have to be taken across the bridge frequently. Then there would be a considerable amount of coal traffic across the bridge, and, besides that, when they went on with the construction of the Bundaberg to Gladstone railway, there would be a good deal of railway traffic over the bridge in connection with that work; and when that line was opened there would be trains running through to Gladstone. So that it would be seen that a combined bridge could only be a temporary thing. The bridge would be a quarter of a mile in length, and from the time a train came in sight at one end of it until it crossed over to the other, the bridge would have to be closed to ordinary traffic. That would have to be done for every train, and he should imagine that would not be very satisfactory to dray and passenger traffic. After all, it would only be a temporary affair, as the Railway Department would have to take over the whole of the bridge when the traffic required it; and then there would have to be a separate traffic bridge built after all. He could not, of course, tell when that would be.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They have never had to do it in Ipswich.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS said he had never heard that the Ipswich bridge was considered satisfactory, and, moreover, it was a good deal wider.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It has been doing all the work for thirty years, and the traffic is like what it is in Queen street.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS said the railway traffic across the bridge was altogether unsatisfactory, on account of the Ipswich bridge being used for ordinary traffic. The whole of the bridge was, in fact, required for the work of the department, and the present arrangement rendered the working of the Ipswich yard expensive and inconvenient. He did not hold that because the Commissioners disapproved of the combined bridge that was binding on the Committee. Quite the contrary; but he thought they should take the recommendations of the Commissioners into consideration. He himself was not in favour of a combined bridge. When the matter was first brought under the notice of the Government a combined bridge was talked of, but the hon. member for North Brisbane, Sir Thomas McLlwraith, who was himself an engineer, did not approve of it, and the Treasury Bills Bill brought in last year provided for a separate bridge, the railway bridge being of course provided for out of loan for railway construction. But since that, in fact since the Railway Department had let the contract for their bridge, quite a new idea had been started with reference to a combined bridge. That had been submitted to the Railway Commissioners, with the result that they did not approve of it. At the same time, he did not see why if any benefit would accrue to the country they should not make a combined bridge, but with his present information he was not in favour of such a course.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said the Ipswich bridge was not a combined bridge. What they meant by a combined bridge was a wider structure which would carry both railway and road traffic. The Ipswich bridge was built for the railway, and, as he had said, was not a combined bridge. Ipswich had not got a bridge as the hon. member for Maryborough had stated, nor even a culvert. It had been in contemplation to make a combined bridge that would be far more satisfactory than the present bridge. The traffic on the Ipswich bridge was almost as much as the traffic in Queen street at the present time, and women and children were afraid of their lives to walk on it. It was too narrow.

Mr. BARLOW said the Ipswich bridge had one footway about 2 feet 6 inches wide and a roadway about 14 feet wide. At the edge of the roadway there was a balustrade about 3 feet high separating it from the railway. As the Minister for Railways had stated, there was a great deal of trouble in shunting, because of the narrow space for the railway, and a person going across the bridge in a vehicle never knew when a train or shunting engine would pass by. He (Mr. Barlow) had himself when driving a buggy across had his horse's feet almost on a level with the balustrade, and he could assure hon. members that the bridge was most dangerous to vehicular traffic. As the hon. member for Stanley had said, Ipswich never had a bridge; it was merely a sort of sufferance that the people were allowed to use the roadway, which was simply an addendum to the railway bridge.

Mr. MELLOR said he wished to say a word or two in reference to the desirability of making provision for a swing in the Maryborough bridge. Taylor Brothers had a saw-mill between the old bridge and the proposed new bridge, and they intended erecting another above the bridge, so that there were two establishments which would be interfered with by the bridge. He thought the Government should insert some provision in the Bill to enable them to construct a swing if necessary, as it would be a serious and unfair thing to do an injury to an old established industry. At one time there was a good deal of traffic down the river from Yengarie, but there had not been so much since the railway had been built. He might state that, when a bridge was erected about seven miles above the proposed one, there was a swing put in it. Formerly that swing was used; he did not know whether it was used now, but he believed it was. The bridge was erected some fifteen or sixteen years ago, and tolls were collected the same as was proposed to be done on the bridges dealt with in that Bill. The tolls were not collected very long, but were abolished, as he presumed would be done in the cases under consideration, and the whole cost of the bridges would eventually fall on the Government. It was well that hon. members should understand exactly the expenditure to which the country would really be committed by the construction of those bridges. He hoped, with the hon. member for Wide Bay, that the same principle which was applied to those bridges with regard to assistance from the Government would be applied to the whole colony. As the hon. member had stated, there were other places on the Mary River where a bridge was more required than where it was proposed to erect the Granville Bridge. They wanted a bridge very badly at Gympie, as there was no bridge there sufficient to carry the traffic in time of flood. When the question of bridges was under consideration last year, he (Mr. Mellor) drew attention to that matter, and the Minister for Mines and Works said, "The policy which had been adopted would be carried out throughout the whole of the colony"; that

was the policy of one-half the cost being contributed by the Government. He believed the local authorities could repay the loan by endowment on special rates, and that the expense the Government would be put to in the event of the tolls being abolished would be not only the £20,000 mentioned in the clause, but two-thirds of the whole cost. At the present time there was an endowment to local authorities for the construction of bridges, and he believed that many places were doing what he had described. The Government were entitled to pay the subsidy when the local authorities struck a special rate for purposes of that kind. He hoped the Government would grant the same concession to other places as they were granting in connection with the Granville and Burnett Bridges. With regard to the extra cost that would be entailed by constructing two bridges at Bundaberg, he thought it would be better to incur that expenditure and build two bridges, than to build a combined bridge for railway and road traffic. He was sure it would not be satisfactory to have a combined bridge. Bundaberg was increasing in size very rapidly, and they would soon want more accommodation in that direction. He understood that the contract for the railway bridge had been let, and, in that case, if they made up their minds to have a combined bridge, and altered the plans and specifications, the contractor would expect compensation. In reference to the other matter he thought they should make some arrangement whereby a swing might be erected in the Granville Bridge. He hoped the Government would see their way to granting the people of that place the same facilities as were given to other people in that direction.

Mr. ADAMS said it was suggested in the correspondence that had been referred to that it might be desirable to build a combined bridge, but of course they wanted to know what was the opinion of the local authorities who would have to pay one-half of the cost of construction. They had been told that a traffic bridge would cost something like £56,000, and that a combined bridge would cost about £5,000 less. The local authority had sent an urgent wire to him, to say that they were perfectly satisfied to take a combined bridge, so long as it was really a combined bridge, and not only a railway bridge planked over. They were also told that the bridge was to be 30 feet wide, and taking the width of the average dray at 7 feet 6 inches, they would require 15 feet or 16 feet for the traffic bridge. They could place a kerb right down the middle of the bridge without much expense, and put a rail on top of that. By adopting that course they would be able to do without a caretaker at each end of the bridge, and in two or three years the extra expense of that barrier would be recouped. That arrangement, he thought, would be acceptable to the people of Bundaberg and the surrounding districts, as the bridge could be open at all times. Travelling in New South Wales four or five years ago, he happened to be staying with his brother, near where there was a combined railway and traffic bridge, a good deal longer than the one which would be required to cross the Burnett. He had asked his brother if there were never any accidents, and he replied that he had lived there for fourteen years and had never known an accident. There was a kerb down the middle of the bridge, leaving sufficient space for the railway train. Above the kerb there was a substantial fence, morticed into the kerb. His constituents were quite willing to pay half the cost of the bridge.

Mr. ARCHER said he was not prepared to support a combined bridge. It was intended that there should be a bridge capable of carrying

a double line of rails, and that the space which would be taken up by one line should be used as a roadway.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: The bridge itself is to be 30 feet wide.

Mr. ARCHER said if there was sufficient room on the combined bridge it would be all right, but he had a great deal of sympathy with the hon. member for Ipswich, who objected to being obliged to drive on such a narrow roadway.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the Ipswich bridge was 35 feet wide, including the part crossed by the railway.

Mr. ARCHER said that was 5 feet wider than the bridge they were considering.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there was to be a pathway as well, besides the 30 feet.

Mr. ARCHER said he should advise the Government to be very careful if they thought of building a combined bridge.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the bridge would be 30 feet wide, and there would be a cantaliver footway outside the bridge, 6 feet wide. It would be better to pass the clause as it stood, with amendments, and if the Committee gave him the authority, he would try and get the combined bridge if possible. If he could not, the people of Bundaberg would have to be satisfied with a bridge to cost £45,000, or to provide the balance themselves. It would be much better to have a combined bridge. The hon. member for Gympie had asked him about bridges elsewhere, and about the principal and interest of those bridges being paid from a special rate. The present Bill provided that the principal and interest were to be provided by tolls, an entirely different thing.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH: Suppose the tolls are not collected?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that in that case the people would lose their endowment; there would be no toll necessary for a combined bridge.

Mr. TOZER said that having had the experience of travelling over a toll bridge for some years, he trusted the Minister for Mines and Works would not perpetuate the blunder in those two bridges. When what had been facetiously called the Gympie bridge, but was really the Maryborough bridge, was erected, a toll was established there which was the greatest nuisance that could be possibly conceived. The result was that the people of Maryborough got so disgusted with reference to the tolls that they did away with them. It was impossible in the present state of public feeling in Queensland that toll bridges could continue. Besides that, the cost of collecting the tolls was so great that nothing was got out of them. He hoped the discussion would induce the hon. gentleman to supervise the question of combined bridges. Over the Tyne there were two low traffic bridges, but the last bridge erected at Newcastle was a combined bridge, the traffic being carried over the top of the railway. There was no difficulty in engineers doing whatever they were told. They did all they possibly could to stop the utilisation for commercial purposes of combined bridges. Take the Dickabram Bridge, for instance. There was as fine a bridge for the requirements of the colony as could be found anywhere. It had been built nearly two years and a-half, and the last time he was there not a single team had gone across it, owing to the railway people putting their heads together to prevent it. He did not know whether that bridge was now open,

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS:** Yes.

Mr. TOZER said he was glad to hear it. He was certain that a bridge like the Dickabram Bridge would be sufficient for the requirements of Bundaberg for many years. He hoped the people would get their combined bridge without having to pay for it. The Burdekin Bridge was a sample of a road bridge being utilised for railway purposes, and he had never heard of any accidents happening there by reason of the trains crossing. A combined bridge over the Burnett would be not only a very convenient but a very handsome structure, and would cost within the amount stated in the clause.

Mr. ANNEAR said he was entirely opposed to the toll being removed from the Maryborough bridge. That bridge, which was not much used since the opening of the railway, was, as the Minister for Mines and Works stated, erected for the convenience of Gympie. It was now costing some hundreds a year to keep in repair, paid solely by the ratepayers of the Tinana division and Maryborough, and in a few years it would collapse altogether. It was about the greatest white elephant of a bridge that was ever erected in the colony. They had been told by the Minister that the bridge was to be 30 feet wide, with a cantaliver side 6 feet wide for foot passengers. Nine feet were sufficient for the railway, which would leave 21 feet for the road. Allowing 1 foot for kerbing with a good iron fence in the kerbing to separate the roadway from the railway, that would give a roadway which would meet all requirements. The hon. gentleman had also stated that up to the present time Maryborough had had no bridge. They had made the same offer as the Bundaberg people, but by the adoption of the combined bridge the Bundaberg people would get a bridge for which they would have nothing to pay. He would prefer—and he believed the majority of the people of Maryborough would prefer—to see the long promised railway to Pialba constructed before the erection of the bridge. He had put himself right with the mayor of Maryborough, who had placed himself in communication with the local authorities, and they had decided to pay one-half of the cost. He wished to draw attention to the statements made by some hon. members that afternoon. Had there in the history of the colony up to the present time been one instance of repudiation of their just claims by any municipality or local authority? Throughout the colony the local authorities had faithfully fulfilled their engagements. He was entirely opposed to taking away the tolls from the bridges to be erected. The people concerned wished that tolls should be levied, and had asked for a clause giving effect to that to be inserted in the Bill. He was confident the traffic across the Mary River would pay the interest on the money the local authorities had to contribute, and wipe off the debt in the forty years allowed. He did not want to individualise Maryborough, but for the credit of the colony he stated that every local authority had faithfully fulfilled its obligations in the past. He hoped the Minister for Mines and Works would attend to what he had referred to previously, and again that day. He was sure Parliament had no desire to injure any single individual, and he had read a telegram from Messrs. Taylor Brothers, stating that they had invested £13,000 in the Albion saw-mills. No bridge should be constructed across the Mary River which would impede navigation, and the construction of that bridge without a swing would not only injure Messrs. Taylor Brothers, but many others. The Mary River was navigable for twenty-five miles above that bridge. He had loaded ships twenty miles above the bridge himself. They were

young yet in Maryborough, and, as the hon. member for Wide Bay had said, the time would come when the whole of the lands for miles on either side of the river would be irrigated, and they all knew the land in that district was very rich. The hon. member for Wide Bay had stated he would propose a clause whereby they would meet the request of the local authorities. Messrs. Taylor Brothers stated in their telegram, "If bridge is not a swing one it will ruin us having invested over £13,000 in the mill. Our trade principally shipping. Writing this mail." If it would injure even that one firm to that extent they should make provision for a swing in the bridge. Yengarie was a very large sugar refinery. They did not get as much by the river as formerly, as the railway now brought a good deal of the limestone, and took away their sugar; but still ships went through the present bridge, in which there was a swing which was frequently opened, in order to get to Yengarie. If the Granville Bridge were constructed, Messrs. Taylor Brothers would be between the two bridges, and they could go through the one to get up the river, whilst they could not go through the other to the different ports of the colony. If there was not to be a swing, he thought it would be better to have no bridge at all. Not only had they to consider the effect to that one mill, but there were several other saw-mills on the Mary River above the bridge—one at Five-Miles, and one at Tiaro; and they all knew that the land on the Mary River was equal to the best in the colony. They should do nothing to impede navigation, and he hoped the hon. member for Wide Bay would devise some amendment by which such a state of things would be prevented.

The Hon. P. PERKINS said he was sorry to hear the hon. member for Maryborough talk as he had done that afternoon, because if the hon. member had paid a little more attention to the subject he would not have made the remarks he had done. Maryborough was going to become a curse to the colony like Ipswich, and was going to prove an annoyance to the Committee. The hon. member should not take up the time of the Committee, so as to prevent other hon. members from transacting their business.

Mr. McMASTER said that so far as tolls were concerned, the Government might as well strike out the word altogether. Toll-bars belonged to the past ages.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS:** We have not come to that clause yet.

Mr. McMASTER said that when they did come to it they might as well strike it out, because if power was given to the local authorities to levy tolls, pressure would be brought to bear on the Government to do away with them, as had already been the case in Brisbane. In the 4th clause the Government asked for a cheque for so many thousand pounds; but in the 11th clause they asked for a signed cheque, which they could fill in as they chose, and he thought the 11th clause should be amended. The Bundaberg people would be very unwise if they did not accept a combined bridge; but he did not think the hon. member for Bundaberg meant what he said, when he stated that the local authorities would be willing to pay one-half of the cost of the combined bridge.

Mr. ADAMS said that what he meant to say was that if it came to the question of a single bridge, they would be prepared to pay half the cost.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS** said that if it was to be a combined bridge, the sooner the question was decided the

better. The contract for the erection of the railway bridge had been let, so that negotiations must be entered into with the contractor to obviate any great claim for compensation he might make.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: How will this Bill apply to a combined bridge?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the Committee seemed to be in favour of a combined bridge, and he should take that as an authority to build a combined bridge, even if the Railway Commissioners were not in favour of it. By leaving the amount as stated in clause 4 there would be, with the amount voted for the railway bridge, enough to build a combined bridge, or a bridge which would cost £45,000. He would try to get the combined bridge if possible, and he saw no impossibility if backed by that Chamber; therefore he thought they ought to go on with the Bill as far as possible. He proposed to amend the 4th clause by omitting the words "subject to the provision in the eleventh section hereof." It would then read:—

"The remainder of the cost of construction and erection shall be provided by the local authorities herein mentioned in such proportions as may be agreed on by them respectively in each case before the commencement of the bridge."

The £22,500 would be sufficient with the £29,500—the amount of the contract for the supply and erection of the railway bridge—to make a combined bridge; or if the combined bridge could not be had, the £22,500 would be sufficient to pay for the bridge first designed and accepted by the Bundaberg local authorities.

Mr. ANNEAR said he saw the legal adviser of the Government present; and he would ask whether he was not correct in saying that if the bridge were made without a swing Messrs. Taylor Brothers could go to the Supreme Court and stop the erection of the bridge?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: We shall have to provide a swing.

Mr. ANNEAR said he believed that the Minister for Railways was going to persist in building a certain bridge on the Nerang line against the wishes of the members of the divisional board—with one exception—and he believed they were going to the Supreme Court to stop him. He had every reason to believe they would succeed, and he trusted that the Minister would take those things into consideration.

Mr. UNMACK said he should like to ask the Minister for Mines and Works, by what process of reasoning he arrived at the conclusion that in the event of a combined bridge being erected, the local authorities would have to pay nothing towards it? If that was the case, it would open the door to many similar claims.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the reason why the local authorities should not pay for a combined bridge, was because the bridge would be the property of the Government. When the traffic warranted a double line, the whole of the bridge would be required by the Railway Department; and it would not be right to compel the local authorities to pay for the half of a bridge over which they would have no control.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that the remainder of the Bill would only apply to the Granville Bridge. It would not apply to the combined bridge. Was it intended that the Bill should not apply at all, in the event of a combined bridge being made? If it was intended that the £22,500 should be appropriated by the Bill to pay part of the cost of a combined bridge, there should be a proviso to the effect that, in addition

to what would be the cost of the railway bridge, the Government might pay the extra cost of a combined bridge to the extent of £22,500.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the words "subject to the provision in the eleventh section hereof," be omitted.

Mr. GLASSEY called attention to the state of the Committee.

Quorum formed.

Amendment put and passed.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the following proviso was added to the clause:—

Provided that if the Burnett Bridge is constructed in such manner as to serve as a railway bridge as well as a public highway, the sum which may be so advanced and paid out of the consolidated revenue fund may be (in addition to any moneys provided by Parliament for the construction of a railway bridge over the Burnett River at Bundaberg) the whole of the amount by which the cost of the bridge is increased by means of its being constructed in such manner as to serve also as a public highway, but not exceeding the said sum of £22,500.

Mr. GLASSEY said he would like to know if the clause was to be taken in conjunction with clause 11? If it was he should object to it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Not now.

Question put and passed.

On clause 5, as follows:—

"All moneys to be provided by the local authorities towards the construction and erection of the respective bridges shall be borrowed by, advanced to, and repayable by them, and the repayment thereof may be enforced by the Treasurer, under the provisions of the Local Works Loans Act of 1880."

Mr. HODGKINSON said he understood the bridge was to be a combined bridge. If the hon. gentleman wished to carry out his original idea he could do so, and the clause would then be inoperative. It appeared to him that that was a sort of double-barrelled Bill to provide for a contingency that could not possibly arise, because, when the hon. gentleman advanced arguments in favour of a combined bridge, he committed himself to it. The clause seemed to be quite unnecessary.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said clause 5 provided for the Granville Bridge, and might be required for the Burnett Bridge. If the local authorities preferred a bridge such as was offered to them, of course the same money, £22,500, would be available. In any case, if they did not borrow the money there was an end of it.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 6, as follows:—

"Each bridge shall and is hereby declared to be a work of the first class within the meaning of the Local Works Loans Act of 1880, and the term of the loan in respect thereof shall be forty years."

Mr. HODGKINSON said the clause was a mandate. It permitted of no change, and yet they were told there was to be a change and that there was to be a combined bridge.

Mr. BUCKLAND said the decking of the bridge he presumed was to be of timber. That certainly could not be called a forty-year work, within the meaning of the Act. There was no timber construction that he had ever heard of that would last anything like forty years. Any bridge that they had in Queensland which had been erected for twenty or twenty-five years was not fit for carrying traffic. For proof of that they had only to refer to Victoria Bridge, which had been re-decked only a few months ago. It had not been in use anything like twenty years. Even the very best timber decking would not last twenty years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said timber decking might not last forty years, but that would not make the bridge any the less a first-class work, because the superstructure would be first class. The decking would last a great deal longer than the decking of Victoria Bridge, because the traffic would not be so great.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he confessed he had some doubts about the clause. They knew very well that one of the bridges would not be a first-class work, and why should they say it was? The Burnett Bridge would not be a bridge of the first-class. That part of the Bill raised a very serious question, because it assumed that tolls would be kept up for forty years. He agreed with some hon. members with respect to tolls. The Bill said that tolls might be imposed; but suppose the local authorities did not impose them, then how would the repayments of principal and interest be met? Their other funds would not stand it, he was sure. It would be about £20,000, and that would mean something like £2,000 a year, and he was quite sure the funds of the local authorities would not bear £2,000 a year, and he was quite sure they would not raise that amount from tolls. It would be the same as with the Victoria Bridge—the Government would have to take them over at last. He did not think the Government had looked far enough ahead. They should take into consideration the probability that the bridges would have to be renewed; and what would happen then? It was no use saying they would stop the endowment, as it was more than possible there would be no endowment by that time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said some other arrangement would have to be made if the endowment was stopped, as it would no doubt be before forty years. He was quite sure the local authorities could pay interest and principal in less than twenty years if they chose by tolls. He believed tolls would pay both in ten years. It would be a question for the local authorities to decide whether they would keep the tolls on or repay the loan by general rates. The hon. gentleman had forgotten what kind of structure the Granville Bridge was to be. It was to be a steel and iron structure.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 7, as follows:—

"The sums to be borrowed by the local authorities, respectively, to provide their proportions of the cost of the construction and erection of the bridge shall not be taken into consideration in estimating, or otherwise affect or limit, the amount of money that may be borrowed by the local authorities respectively under the Acts in force prescribing or relating to the borrowing powers of such local authorities."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said of course that clause in effect meant that they would trust entirely to the tolls to get their money back, as the local authorities would want to borrow to the full extent of their borrowing powers for other purposes; and if the tolls were stopped there would be an end to the whole thing.

The HON. C. POWERS said they might say the same about waterworks, and their cost was not taken to affect borrowing powers.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: They are always reproductive.

The HON. C. POWERS said the bridges could be made reproductive, because if the people themselves did not or would not take them in hand, he presumed the Government would do it. So far the local authorities throughout Queensland had kept their contracts, and he did not see

they would be more inclined to break them in connection with a bridge than in connection with waterworks. The only remedy was that the Government could take over those things and enforce payment, if such a catastrophe occurred as the leader of the Opposition suggested. The local authorities could not take up the bridges if it would affect their borrowing powers for other necessary works.

Mr. HODGKINSON said they knew very well, from the history of tolls in the colony, how easily they could be abolished. The moment those tolls were set up, there would be just the same cry against them as there had been against tolls previously imposed in the colony. Hon. members who could speak with more local authority than he could, would be in a position to say how long the people would be likely to put up with tolls.

Mr. MELLOR said that tolls, in his experience, were not endurable. They had an instance of that in the Victoria Bridge. That bridge was to be paid for by tolls, but they did not last very long, and they had the same experience in connection with the Maryborough bridge. In every instance where an attempt was made to collect tolls the people would not have it, and they would not allow them to exist. The people would very soon petition against the collection of tolls, and there was a provision, under the 18th section of the Bill, to the following effect:—

"Nothing in this section shall prevent the Governor in Council, at any earlier period than last mentioned, upon the joint request of the local authorities, from abolishing, in the prescribed manner, any such tolls, rates, or dues."

He did not mean to say that the local authorities would try to evade their responsibilities; but the collection of tolls was a very unpleasant and very objectionable way of getting revenue, and the people would not have it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said that the local authorities themselves had agreed to impose tolls. He thought that was sufficient, and they must trust the local authorities.

Mr. HODGKINSON said that in the case of the Burnett Bridge there was a provision in the Bill providing for exemption from tolls in certain cases, and by another provision the Government was really committed to the duplication of the existing line of railway at an early period, because so long as the space was left for a second line over the bridge, and it was not constructed, it would be a local reproach. With regard to the other bridge, there was a provision for levying tolls upon it, and that was followed by another provision for doing away with them. Anyone who would gravely suppose those tolls would be maintained had a greater faith in the institution of tolls than he had.

Mr. BUCKLAND said that any member of the Committee who had had any experience of local authorities could only express one opinion on the subject, and that was that if a toll was imposed on a bridge it would take but a very short time, and but very few elections, before the ratepayers would see that it was removed. He knew from his experience of divisional boards that whenever it was mooted to put a toll on a bridge or a road, action was invariably taken to prevent such a toll being exacted. If the toll was exacted, it would not be long before the ratepayers took such action as would lead to its abolition.

Mr. O'CONNELL said that with regard to the tolls on the Bundaberg bridge, not only had the joint local authorities interested agreed to accept that as a means by which they could pay the debt to the Government, but



there had been two largely attended meetings held in Bundaberg, at which resolutions to the effect that the repayment should be made by means of tolls and not by local rates were carried unanimously.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That was to get the bridge.

Mr. HODGKINSON: There will be another king arise who will know not Joseph.

Mr. O'CONNELL said the question was, whether they should pay a toll for going over by means of a ferry, or pay a toll for going over the bridge. It was all very fine to say that tolls were antediluvian, but ferries were still more antediluvian. It was only a matter of expediency, and they preferred to pay a toll for going over the bridge, rather than to pay the same toll for crossing by means of a ferry.

Mr. HODGKINSON said the argument of the hon. member was very ingenious, but it must be borne in mind that a ferry could be shifted, but a bridge could not.

Mr. HUNTER said he would point out that there was an agitation going on in South Brisbane to abolish the ferry tolls and run free boats. That showed how much further the argument against tolls could be carried.

Mr. ANNEAR said some people would like to have everything free. How was it possible to do away with ferry tolls in Brisbane? The Victoria Bridge had been referred to as a case in which tolls had been abolished; but in that instance the Government took away the lands and sold them, and the proceeds, he believed, paid for the construction of the bridge. The local authorities had asked the Government to introduce a measure such as that before the Committee, and he was sure they would faithfully observe their obligations, as they had always done in other matters hitherto. At the present time there was a steam punt at both Maryborough and Bundaberg. Granville was a pretty large place now, and was a rising suburb, and the people were willing to tax themselves to pay the interest on the cost of constructing the bridge. Some hon. members might fancy that the people residing there were like the people in another part of the colony which he would not name; but he would tell the hon. members representing that constituency, and who had been very prominent in the discussion that evening, that they would carry out their obligations. He did not see the difference between a loan for waterworks and a loan for bridge construction. In the former case a special rate was levied for the repayment of the loan, and in the measure under consideration it was proposed that tolls should be levied for the same purpose; and clause 18 provided that—

"Nothing in this section shall prevent the Governor in Council, at any earlier period than last mentioned, upon the joint request of the local authorities, from abolishing in the prescribed manner such tolls, rates, or dues."

That was sufficient protection, as no Government would ever consent to abolish the tolls unless some other means were provided for raising the money for the payment of the loan. He did not want to insult anyone, but he could not help stating that some people wanted the Government to put down bores, make bridges, and do everything for them. The people of Bundaberg and Maryborough instead of doing that said, "We want a bridge, and are willing to pay one-half the cost." If others would follow that example they would soon get bridges.

Mr. MELLOR said the Gympie people had gone to the Government and asked to get a bridge constructed on the same terms, and had also applied for a loan for the construction of

waterworks, but they could not get either. It seemed as if Maryborough and Bundaberg were favoured places. Tiaro also wanted assistance from the Government in the erection of a bridge, but had not succeeded in getting it. He should like to see the Government apply the principle adopted in the present case to all places in the colony, and not make fish of one and fowl of another.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—"Plans, etc., to be submitted to Minister"—passed as printed.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he presumed the plans and specifications of those bridges would be prepared in the Government office.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS: Yes; by the Engineer for Bridges.

Clauses 9 and 10—"Governor in Council may sanction loan," and "Plans may be altered"—passed as printed.

On clause 11, as follows:—

"If on the completion of either bridge the cost shall be found to have exceeded the estimated cost thereof, the amount of such excess shall be provided and paid out of the consolidated revenue and by the local authorities respectively in the same proportions as the estimated cost was authorised by the Governor in Council to be advanced from the consolidated revenue and agreed to be provided by the local authorities respectively."

"Any moneys to be provided by the local authorities under the provisions of this section shall be deemed to form part of the loan authorised for the work."

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH asked whether it was proposed to do anything with regard to authorising the stopping of the navigation of the water-way?

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there were two plans by which that might be done—namely, either by providing for a swing in the bridge or by providing that the local authorities should not be prosecuted in any way if a swing was not provided. He was inclined to think that there should be a swing in the Granville Bridge, but the extra cost would be between £11,000 and £12,000. No swing would be required in the Burnett River bridge. At the Granville Bridge there was, he believed, 30 feet of water, so that the river was navigable there. How far that depth extended up the river he did not know.

Mr. ARCHER: A long way.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he did not think that that depth extended a long way up the river. However, he proposed to insert a proviso to the following effect:—

Provided that any bridge erected by the local authority over the Mary River, shall be constructed so that a portion thereof can from time to time be opened to allow the passage of sea-going vessels.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It would be better to make that a new clause.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he would make it a new clause and insert it in the place of clause 11, which he proposed to negative.

Clause put and negatived.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he had a new clause to propose. It was as follows:—

No action, suit, indictment, information, or other proceeding shall be commenced, presented, prosecuted, or maintained against the local authorities, or against any other local authority or person for or in respect of the erecting or maintaining of the said bridges or the obstruction of the navigation of the rivers thereby, or for or in respect of any damage, loss, or expenses occasioned or alleged to be occasioned by reason of such erecting, maintaining, closure, or obstruction, or in anywise whatever arising therefrom.



Then the following had better come in as a proviso:—

Provided that any bridge so erected across the Mary River shall be constructed so that a portion thereof can from time to time be opened to allow of the passage of seagoing vessels.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he was afraid that would be a very poor protection for the people who had property above the Mary River bridge. In respect to the Burnett, it was proposed to close navigation altogether. Practically there was no navigation at present above the site of the Burnett Bridge, although there was deep water. He believed all the frontages above that bridge belonged to the Government.

MR. O'CONNELL: Not on the north side; on the south side only.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said persons who did own frontages above the bridge would have a grievance. Where there was deep water they had right of access to it. Of course it was within the power of Parliament to deprive a man of anything. The British Parliament had often confiscated property and handed it over to the Crown, or someone else. He was not disputing the power of Parliament, but simply pointing out what the effect would be. In respect to the Mary River, the clause and the proviso would not protect the people at all. It was very poor satisfaction to a man who could not get through, to tell him that the bridge was capable of being opened. The authorities would say they had made no arrangements for opening it, and if the man brought an action against them, they would say the bridge was capable of being opened. That was asking for bread and getting a stone. So long as the bridge was capable of being opened it was all right; there was no provision compelling them to open it.

MR. ADAMS said there was no deep water for any considerable distance above the bridge; the shoals were something tremendous. Flat bottomed boats and punts could travel up and down; but no vessel drawing more than 4 feet of water could go. He was sure that any vessel not drawing more than 4 feet would be able to go under the bridge.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he found the following proviso to clause 1 of the Victoria Bridge Act:—

"And provided also that no bridge erected by the said municipal council shall be so constructed as to obstruct the navigation of the river Brisbane by any seagoing vessels."

He would not advocate the adoption of a clause like that. No bridge could be constructed that was not an obstruction; but there should be a proviso in the present case saying that the bridge should be opened at all reasonable times when people required the use of it.

The HON. C. POWERS said, looking at the Act which provided for the temporary closing of the Victoria Bridge, he found the clause before them was almost a copy of a clause in that Act. Part of the preamble of that Act stated—

"And whereas under and in pursuance of the powers of the said Act, the said municipal council erected a bridge across the said river Brisbane, now called the Victoria Bridge, which bridge was so constructed that a portion thereof might from time to time be opened to allow of the passage of seagoing vessels."

Although the clause in the Bill did not say that, it showed that the bridge was not to obstruct navigation.

MR. MELLOR said the clause as it stood referred to the Mary River generally. It ought to specify that bridge only, otherwise it might block the erection of bridges on other parts of the river.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved that the following words be added to the proviso:—

And shall be opened by the local authorities at all reasonable times for the passage of such vessels.

MR. ANNEAR said he did not understand how the swing was going to cost an extra sum of £12,000. The swing must be on one of the piers of the bridge. Taking 30 feet as being wide enough for a waterway, the swing would open up and down stream, which would give two waterways, one for vessels coming up and the other for vessels going down. The pier would be 30 feet wide, making 80 feet in all. That 90 feet formed a portion of the bridge, and would have to be paid for if the swing was not made. The extra expense for a swing would be the construction of a transom at the top of the pier, and the swing would work in the same way as a swivel gun was worked, and by almost the same machinery. He had already read a telegram from one firm who had invested £13,000 in one factory, and who would be seriously injured if the navigation of the river was so impeded that vessels could not come to their mill. He felt confident that a swing bridge could be put across the Mary River for £40,000. Of course the swing would not be such a costly affair as the one in the Victoria Bridge over the Brisbane River. The science of engineering as applied to bridge building had greatly advanced since that swing was made, and he estimated that the extra cost of putting a swing in the Granville Bridge would not be more at the outside than £3,000. He did not know the width between the piers, but he believed a bridge could be built over that part of the Mary River for the sum he had named, which would do no injury to the industries already established in that locality.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said he presumed the effect of the clause would be that the Maryborough people would have to pay all the extra cost. That was to say, they would have to pay £32,000 to the Government's £20,000. Did the hon. member for Maryborough think his constituents would pay that?

MR. ANNEAR: I could not say.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said they would be very good if they did, and he hoped they would.

The PREMIER: If they get the £20,000 they will do very well.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said the cost of the bridge, according to the engineer's estimates was £36,350, and the cost of the swing between £11,000 and £12,000. If the swing could be constructed for £3,000 so much the better. The bridge would consist of three 170-foot spans.

The HON. C. POWERS said he also had received a telegram from Taylor Brothers to the effect that they would be ruined if no provision was made enabling vessels to get beyond the bridge. As to the question of whether the Maryborough people would be willing to pay the extra amount, it must be remembered that the plans had first to be approved of by the Governor in Council, and if they were deemed too expensive, timber might be substituted for steel for the flooring so as to keep the cost within a reasonable amount. He might mention that the trade of Messrs. Taylor Brothers was mostly with shipping. He did not think the ratepayers of Maryborough wished to ruin them altogether merely to have a bridge. Besides, there was a lot of land above the bridge which would be useful for wharfage, and the people would not want to limit the amount of frontage for wharves. Before the

bridge was built the ratepayers and local authorities would be asked to approve of the plans and specifications, and a vote of the people would have to be taken before the loan was obtained. He was sure the local authorities would get the advice of the hon. member for Maryborough upon the plans and specifications before they agreed to them.

New clause put and passed.

Clause 12—"Joint local authority to maintain bridge to be constructed"—put and passed.

On clause 13, as follows:—

"The joint local authority may establish a toll upon the bridge, and may demand, take, recover, and receive, for passengers, vehicles, cattle, sheep, horses, or other live stock crossing the bridge, reasonable tolls, rates, and dues, as may from time to time be determined by the joint local authority by by-law made as herein prescribed."

The HON. SRS S. W. GRIFFITH said it would be better to use the word "shall," instead of "may." That was the language used in the Victoria Bridge Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS moved the omission of the word "may" in the 1st line of the clause with the view of inserting the word "shall."

Mr. GLASSEY said he wished to know if the word "shall" were inserted whether the local authorities would be bound to levy tolls?

The PREMIER: Unless it is made compulsory, they cannot take tolls.

Mr. GLASSEY said they were going back to what had been done in past ages. In old countries tolls had proved so pernicious and distasteful to the people that the pressure of public opinion had led to their abolition, and it was sad to see in a new country like Queensland that old, fusty, cobweb system perpetuated. He had seen conflicts, and even riots, take place between the collectors of tolls and those who had to pay the tolls in the old country. The heartburnings surrounding the collecting of tolls had proved something awful there, and yet they were now proposing to establish that intolerable system in Queensland. In a new country they should have the most modern appliances. He did not like tolls at all. They had been obliged many years ago to abolish tolls in Ireland, and a few years ago they had been abolished in England and Scotland, except in a few exceptional cases. He did not know of a single place in the three countries where a toll at present existed except where a road went through private property. The British Government had been obliged to pass a law abolishing the tolls, and subsidising the local authorities in lieu of the tolls. In the board of health of which he had been a member they had forty miles of road to maintain; and, prior to the abolition of tolls, conflicts and impositions innumerable had taken place over the collection of tolls, and in many cases the cost of collection was actually greater than the revenue derived from the tolls. In very exceptional cases tolls might be erected, and for a limited time only, but he was utterly opposed to the system. He might cite a case where a toll might be allowable. At Woodend, where the hon. member for Stanley resided, a bridge was absolutely necessary to enable persons from Brassall and that district to get to Ipswich without having to go a long way round by North Ipswich across a rough and hilly country. In that case a toll might be levied, but it would be most objectionable to allow it for any length of time. Now, the hon. gentleman came down and asked them to pass a Bill establishing a toll which was bound to create hardships and heartburnings and conflicts. When farmers were bringing their produce to market

the first thing they would find would be that they would be stopped and blackmailed by having to pay a toll. He trusted the Committee would not adopt a system which should not be tolerated at the end of the nineteenth century.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he agreed with what the hon. member for Bundamba had said, as he had no great love of tolls, but there were exceptional cases in which tolls might be levied, and the present was one of the exceptional cases. The people themselves would have to consent to the levy of tolls, and if they did not want a bridge with tolls on it, they need not have it. It would save the Government so much money. It was a question entirely for the ratepayers and the local authorities, and if they were willing to endure the tolls, surely the Committee need not mind. The hon. member asked whether some means could not be devised by which there would be no necessity for tolls. They could devise some means by building all the bridges at the cost of the Government. If the Government, instead of spending £20,000 on the Granville Bridge, spent £40,000 on it, there would be no necessity for a toll there. That was the only means by which it could be done.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he thought it could be done by levying a special rate. If that plan were adopted, the amount of rates to be levied would be light, and would not entail any expense in collecting. It might be contended that those who used the bridge should pay for it; but those who used the bridge would be those who did the carting for the district, so that it would amount to the same in the long run. The clause might be altered so that the necessary revenue might be raised either by a toll or by extra rates.

The HON. C. POWERS said the argument of the hon. member for Bundamba would apply if the proposal was to levy a toll on a road, but the proposal was to provide for a toll on a bridge that would be used by persons who now paid a larger toll for crossing a ferry. They not only paid a larger toll, but they lost a good deal of time in crossing the ferry, and they lost a good deal of money through not being able to cross during floods. As to the special rate advocated by the hon. member for Rosewood, that would fall principally on the people who would not use the bridge. The people who would use it would willingly pay the toll rather than use the ferry, and there was no reason why a heavier tax should be put on the property of those who did not use the bridge.

Mr. ISAMBERT said he did not advocate a special rate to the exclusion of a toll. What he suggested was that the local authorities might please themselves as to whether they should levy a toll or a special rate, which would produce an equivalent amount.

Mr. HUNTER said the hon. member for Burrum seemed to contend that only those who personally used the bridge should pay for it; but he thought that the owners of allotments at Granville who were agitating for the bridge should pay in the shape of rates. The influence of the poor farmers who had to bring their produce to market was not sufficient to bring about the introduction of the measure, and he did not see why they should have to pay tolls. It was the influence of the large landowners at Granville and about Maryborough that led to the proposal. The bridge would greatly increase the value of their property; and a special tax should be levied on their property to pay back the money to the Government.

Mr. ANNENAR said it was evident the hon. member knew very little about the matter. The persons who would use the bridge were the

persons who requested the Government to introduce the Bill; and they were willing to tax themselves to pay for the bridge. The construction of the bridge would greatly benefit the State, because there were thousands of acres of unsold land which people would buy for residence sites. The beautiful suburb of Granville had grown since the member for Burke (Mr. Hunter) was there; and it would give him great pleasure to show that hon. member the palatial residences, the public halls, and the churches that had sprung up there since he had gone to live in the North. If a request had been made that there should be no toll, the proposal would never have passed in Maryborough, because the majority would not consent to be taxed for the construction of the bridge. The people chiefly concerned were quite willing to pay a toll, because they paid a heavier toll every day when crossing the river by the punt, and it would be a great relief to them to have a bridge because they could then cross the river in one-tenth of the time now occupied. He was glad to have been informed that the navigation of the river would not be impeded. That was a concession, and would prevent a good deal of unpleasantness. As to the suggestion of repudiation, he claimed that no local authority in the colony had ever repudiated an engagement entered into with the Government.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said after the remarks that had been made by hon. members, he thought the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill would do well to withdraw the word "shall," and allow "may" to stand, and thus leave it at the option of the local authorities to establish a toll.

Mr. BUCKLAND said he must repeat his objection to tolls, and he would point out to the hon. member for Maryborough that there was a very ready way of collecting special rates under the Joint Local Authorities Act. He would also point out that a special rate would be entitled to be subsidised by the Government, which would not be the case if tolls were levied. In all cases within his recollection in the old country whenever the House of Commons had given authority for the collection of tolls, they had invariably added a schedule of the amounts to be collected, and he thought the Committee should do the same in that Bill, otherwise they might be giving the local authorities a great deal too much power. Without some provision of that kind the clause would not work at all.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said there seemed to be a general opinion that "may" should be retained instead of inserting "shall." All the Government was concerned in was getting payment of the principal and interest, and if the local authority chose at any time to establish a rate instead of a toll, they should have it in their power to do so. He would therefore withdraw his amendment. He believed "may" covered all that was required.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GLASSEY said only a few days ago he had a rate-paper left at his residence in connection with a special rate for the bridge over Breakfast Creek, and he did not see why a similar course could not be adopted with regard to the bridge under discussion. He thought tolls should be discouraged as much as possible. They were utterly and thoroughly objectionable. He had not heard a single complaint in the neighbourhood in which he lived against the rate levied for the bridge over Breakfast Creek, although it was special rate. There was no doubt the bridge across the Mary River would benefit the whole community directly and indirectly, and he believed that if they struck out the clause providing for

tolls, and substituted a special rate under the existing law, there would not be much objection to it. He did not presume to know as much about the district in question as the hon. member who represented it, but he did know that there was a wide-spread feeling everywhere against tolls, and he was sure that if they were imposed in that case, the people would take the earliest opportunity of ridding themselves of so obnoxious a tax.

Mr. STEPHENS said he altogether objected to tolls if they could be done away with, but as hon. members pointed out, if a special rate was struck the Government would have to pay endowment on it. That endowment would probably be £2 for £1, so that he would advise the people of the district to strike a rate, because by doing so they would have very little to pay. He did not know whether the Government understood that, but it would make a wonderful difference if the Government had to contribute £2 for £1 on the rate. They would be contributing a great deal more than one-half the cost of the bridge.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 14—"Toll gates may be erected"—and 15—"Exemption from toll"—passed as printed.

On clause 16, as follows:—

"The joint local authority shall put up or cause to be put up, and continued in some conspicuous place at, upon, or near the bridge, toll-gate, or toll-bar, a table painted on a board in legible black letters upon a white ground the name of the bridge and a list of the tolls payable at the bridge, distinguishing severally the amount of tolls and the different sorts of cattle, beasts, carriages, or other vehicles for which they are severally to be paid where there is any variation."

Mr. BARLOW said it might appear a trifling matter, but he would suggest that the letters should be white upon a black ground, on the same principle that some watches had white figures on black ground. They would last longer and could be more easily read in twilight.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said he thought black letters on a white ground were quite as good as the others.

Mr. HUNTER said supposing the joint local authority painted white letters on a black ground and an action was brought against them, how would the matter stand? It might be held that they had not complied with the provisions of the Act.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the matter was more than a mere form. If white letters on a black ground were used, a question might be raised as to whether the toll could be legally demanded. Why not say "in legible letters," irrespective of colours altogether?

Mr. BARLOW said he had made the suggestion *bonâ fide* for the public good, and would point out that a white board would get discoloured by the weather sooner than the other.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS, the words "black" and "upon a white ground" were omitted.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 21, inclusive, passed as printed.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said clause 4 had been amended so as to provide for the possibility of the Burnett Bridge being constructed entirely at the cost of the Government, and of course if that was done it would not be subject to the control of the local authorities. He would move the addition of the following new clause:—

The provisions of this Act relating to local authorities, and joint local authorities, shall not apply to the Burnett Bridge if the whole cost of construction is paid out of the consolidated revenue.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

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

# FEDERAL COUNCIL REFERRING BILL (QUEENSLAND), No. 1.

## SECOND READING.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND WORKS said: Mr. Speaker,—This Bill, the second reading of which I am about to propose, is to be referred to the Federal Council. It is a legal Bill, which I believe the legal gentlemen of the House understand a great deal better than I do; but I believe it to be a very useful Bill. There are many cases which come before the courts which concern suitors or clients in other colonies, and which concern suitors and clients in this colony who have business in other colonies, but at the present time there is no jurisdiction. This Bill, if it becomes law, as I hope it will, will be the means of giving effect to proceedings which may take place in this colony and in other colonies which refer the Bill to the Federal Council and the Federal Council pass it. I am quite certain that the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition will be able to explain the measure much better than I can. Therefore I shall say nothing more than that at the present time it is before the Parliament of Tasmania for reference to the Federal Council, so that if we pass it there will at least be another colony which will be in the same position, and documents that are required to be produced by the court will be produced in Tasmania and in other colonies which pass a similar Bill. I move, Mr. Speaker, that the Bill be now read a second time.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said: Mr. Speaker,—As representing this colony on the Federal Council with my hon. friend, the Minister for Mines and Works, I feel it my duty to say something in respect of this Bill. The Imperial Federal Council Act provides amongst other things that the Federal Council shall have legislative authority in respect of certain matters referred to it by two or more colonies; amongst which are included any matters of general Australasian interest with respect to which the legislatures of the several colonies can legislate within their own limits, and as to which it is deemed desirable that there should be a law of general application. By the Federal Council (Adopting) Act of 1885 we adopted the Federal Council, and became one of the Federal Colonies, and we referred to the Federal Council, besides the things referred to it by the Imperial Act, the following:—

“The status of corporations and joint stock companies in other colonies than that in which they have been constituted;

“The trial and punishments in one colony of offenders against the laws of an adjoining colony.”

That was to enable us to administer justice to a greater extent on our western borders. Our efforts up to the present have been unsuccessful in inducing other colonies to make similar references, with the exception of the colony of Tasmania, where they have taken a very great and intelligent interest in matters relating to federation, which might be followed by other colonies. They are anxious that besides the matters already referred, there should be power given to the courts of one colony to recognise the orders of courts in another colony in respect of matters of lunacy. A little consideration shows that to be very desirable and necessary. Whether a man is insane or not can best be ascertained where he is. His property might be in all the other colonies; and I am quite sure the courts of any colony would, if directed in this way, willingly recognise the finding

of any jury or proper tribunal as to the state of the man's mind, and the place where he is, is where such an investigation can best be made. At present they may do so, but the matter is dependent upon the idiosyncrasy of the judge who may hear the matter. This, then, commends itself as a desirable reference to make. Another matter has been brought particularly under my notice when in Hobart, on two occasions when I have been there, and that is the difficulty of compelling the production of a will. Suppose a man dies, leaving property in Queensland, and his will is in the possession of some person in New South Wales or Victoria. How are you to get it? Nobody knows. If you wish to prove the will here, and to get possession of the property and administer the will, the Supreme Court of Queensland has not the power to compel the production of the document for the purpose of having the will proved, and until it is produced it cannot be proved. That is a matter which was brought specially under my notice; but, upon consideration, it seemed to me that there was no reason why we should confine such provisions to wills, or why the provisions should not be extended to any other document or thing, the production of which is necessary for the purpose of administering justice. I advised my hon. friend, in introducing this Bill, to extend the provisions to any document required for the administration of justice. No matter what the document may be, if it is required for the purpose of administering justice in Queensland, we should have the power to bring it before our courts, and I do not think that any of the colonies would be likely to object to the production of any document that would assist the court in Queensland in administering justice here. The same thing will, of course, apply in the case of every colony. I believe extremely useful provisions of this kind may be made, if these matters are referred to the Federal Council. These two matters commend themselves to me as likely to be very useful. Some gentlemen say that the Federal Council has not done much good; but it is not intended to let off fireworks, rockets, or anything of that kind. It is intended to do steady, useful work, and to remove difficulties found in the administration of Government in Australia at the present time, where we have practically several jurisdictions independent of one another. That is very good for many purposes, but it is far better for many other purposes that there should be one jurisdiction. There is one jurisdiction now which has power to deal with matters referred to it by individual jurisdictions, and this enables us to secure completer administration of justice than could otherwise be done with the diversity of constitutions in Australia. This Bill, if adopted by the legislature of this and the other colonies, will enable the Federal Council to do some very useful work in connection with the administration of justice, and I therefore gladly support the second reading.

Mr. HODGKINSON said: Mr. Speaker,—In the consideration of this matter it must not be forgotten that this Federal Council is probably the initiation of a body which will have a very powerful influence upon the Australasian colonies. It is the most practical step we have yet taken towards federation. At the last Council the representation of the colony of Queensland was arranged under somewhat difficult circumstances, owing to a change of Government. On that occasion the hon. the leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Mines and Works were, at the desire and with the approbation of the whole colony, appointed to represent this colony on the Federal Council. The matters which are specially referred to in this Bill are such as will

no doubt commend themselves to everyone; but we must not forget, in view of the powers which the Federal Council may yet exercise, that the question of representation should be placed upon a proper basis. Our experience of Bills passed in our own legislature is, that they are improved by discussion by both parties. No matter by what Government a Bill may be introduced it is very frequently modified to a serious extent by the Opposition. Whoever the Government may be that introduce a measure, they can generally accept suggestions from the Opposition that tend to perfect the measure. In committing to this Federal Council what are really legislative powers, I think it should be brought under notice that, at any rate, speaking for our colony, the delegates to such Council should be elected. They should not be the nominees of the Government for the time being, but should be elected by the members of the legislature they represent. Otherwise we deprive ourselves of the assistance that we cheerfully avail ourselves of in our own Chamber. It would be quite possible under certain circumstances to have two delegates, or whatever may be the number contributed by this colony—exclusively the nominees of the Government for the time being, and not representing the general feeling of the Assembly. On the last occasion we were particularly fortunate, as owing to a change of Government occurring about the time but not completely effected, we were able to send a representative from each side of the Chamber, the leader of the Opposition and the Minister for Mines and Works. I do not think the colony as a whole has lost by that. It had two representatives of distinct sets of opinions, each capable of forcibly presenting his own special arguments. The Federal Council will, in time, have to deal with even more important matters, and if the number of representatives is increased, as will undoubtedly be the case, and greater powers are exercised by the Council, I think it will be desirable that the representatives should be elective and not be the nominees of any Government.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I hardly agree with what has fallen from the hon. member for Burke. I believe that any Government of the colony will be sensible enough to appoint as representatives to the Federal Council the men who are the ablest to represent the colony, and that if their appointment was to be decided by election in the House it would give rise to a much stronger party feeling than at present exists. If they were elected by the House I presume it would be in the ordinary manner by writing their names down in the same way as is done in regard to members of select committees. In that case members would just put down the names of their own friends, and party spirit would be much stronger than it is at present. I think it will be well to let the matter remain as it is. It would be a very peculiar Ministry, or the Opposition must be utterly destitute of good men, if representatives were not appointed from both sides of the House. I know that if I had anything to do with a Ministry I should be very sorry indeed to see the representatives all appointed from one side. The Ministry did well on the last occasion in making appointments from both sides, and I do not think they could have made a better choice than they did.

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE said: Mr. Speaker,—I am very glad indeed to see this Bill, the second reading of which the hon. gentleman has just moved. It goes to show that the Government are fully alive to the advantages of federation, and that they are not less convinced than my hon. friend, the leader of the Opposition, that federal action is a good thing for this colony,

and likely to be a good thing for the whole of the Australasian colonies if all the colonies can see their way to unite with those who have already adopted the principle of federation. This is the first Bill, I think, which has been submitted by the present Government for referring matters to the Federal Council. It is not a very pretentious one, it does not cover a great deal of ground, but I am very glad to see brought in even at this late period of the session a Bill of this sort, not only because it will tend to promote the federal spirit by keeping matters of public importance such as are proposed to be dealt with by the measure before the colonies of Australia, but also because a real benefit will be secured for this colony by the adoption of the provisions of the Bill. Anyone who has had to do with the administration of justice, and who has had experience in connection with the matters on which it is proposed to legislate, will see at once that it does not require any words to commend the objects of the Bill. It will, if acted upon, remove many difficulties which have seriously impeded the interests of justice, and will not only be very beneficial in many particulars with regard to the redressing of private wrongs, but will also tend to facilitate the administration of justice in some of its criminal aspects. I am glad the Government have introduced the Bill, and I trust it is but the first of a long series of Bills of this sort which we shall have.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN said: Mr. Speaker,—I regret exceedingly that I have made no preparation to speak on this Bill to-night. It is a very short one, and although I saw it a few days ago, I allowed the matter to escape my attention. I fully agree that a few things such as those mentioned by the leader of the Opposition may be of some advantage to us, as for instance the production of wills and several other little matters of that kind pertaining to lawyers. But the rambling speech made by the hon. member who has just sat down I could not follow, he spoke so fast. The hon. member went over the whole range of federation and cast the whole subject off his hands just as he would brush his coat. He said it would settle this and that and the other thing, but it strikes me that although federation is a noble thing to look at in theory, yet in practice it would not suit Queensland at the present time. If we had everything that pertains to Queensland relegated to the Federal Council we should be like a plucked turkey or a divisional board. We should have no laws of our own comparatively, and we should be in competition with a powerful society at home that goes in for Imperial Federation. I take it that the hon. member for Charters Towers, the Hon. A. Rutledge, would not go that far. Does the hon. member think for a single moment of attaining in his day or mine the thing that is called federation?

The Hon. A. RUTLEDGE: No; not Imperial federation.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The hon. member, so far as I know, has not gone into the matter except in theory: he has not gone into the practical part of it. This evening I just jotted down a few things that we, as an independent colony, must part with if we go in for federation, either Imperial or colonial. We should have to give to the Federal Council the defence of the colony against foreign powers, and for that purpose we should require to have a uniform system of railways, and I believe a double line, in order to carry our soldiers and ammunition from place to place. We should have to hand over the control of the military and naval forces. The Federal Council would have to make our fortifications and arsenals and protect our coasts. It would also see to the construction and maintenance of our

trunk lines of railway and our telegraph and postal systems. Trade and commerce would be under its control, and also the navigation and lighting of our coasts, currency and coinage, weights and measures, Customs and Excise duties, and all other general taxation, the command of banks, and savings banks, and matters in insolvency, copyright, patents of invention, marriages and divorce, immigration and naturalisation—all these would be dealt with by the Federal Council, besides criminal law, and the payment of our judges. In a word, the Federal Council would have power over everything not expressly handed over to the different local Governments. What would we have left; can any hon. member tell me? Federation upon a few points, such as those just mentioned by the practical leader of the Opposition may be of use; but this complete system of federation is merely a dream. It is a simple theory, and I for one refuse to part with any of these privileges of my own colony. Of course, I have not the slightest objection to supporting the second reading of the Bill. I have not the least objection to a few able men from our Assembly going down South and measuring themselves with the great men from the other colonies, although I am a believer in the doctrine of Henry George, that there is scarcely half-an-inch between them all. It does not matter who goes and who stays at home, nor do I care for my own part whether they are elected by the House or by the Government. It is only a sort of jollification, a trip to another colony, and after all there is really nothing in it. To please the hon. member who brought forward this Bill, I shall vote for the second reading. I suppose if it went to a division I should be alone. I have gone into this matter and turned it over. Theoretically, and looking at it from the outside, it is all very well, but when you come to investigate it, it is like the Dead Sea apple, all rotten and full of dust inside.

Mr. ANNEN said: Mr. Speaker,—The Federal Council of Australasia has been before this and the other Parliaments of Australasia for a good many years. We see that the Council meets, and I have asked myself what has been the result of their meetings in Tasmania? I fail to see that there has been much result up to the present time. Now we are asked to pass a Bill to give the Federal Council further powers which are in regard to the following:—

“(a) The recognition in other colonies of orders and declarations of the Supreme Court of any colony in matters of lunacy:

“(b) Compelling the production to the Supreme Court of any colony of any documents, or of any property of any kind, the production whereof may be required for the purposes of any proceedings in the Supreme Court of any other colony.”

I have no doubt that these are very essential matters; but I think the business of the leading men from all the colonies who meet there, ought to be of a more substantial nature. The first thing the Federal Council should do, should be to equalise the tariffs throughout the colonies. The other day there were a lot of people landed on the jetty at Adelaide, who had just come to Australia. They were met by a Customs officer, and I saw that officer, who was in the pay of the Government of South Australia, levy the sum of 3s. towards the revenue of that colony, on account of some ribbons which had not been used, and which he found in a lady's box, after turning all her clothes and things out on to the jetty. I will refer to the tariffs later on. In Victoria the Custom-house officers are also very careful in seeing that no dutiable goods are taken into the colony without paying. In New South Wales when passengers' goods are landed on the wharf no Custom-house officer

comes to look at them in any way whatever. In Queensland we have a very energetic officer on our border, and he sees that no goods upon which duty should be paid according to our tariff come in free. Is that leading in any way to that unity which is strength? The first duty of the Federal Council should be to make a uniform tariff. Now, I will refer to the Telegraph Department. The cost of a telegram from Albany, West Australia, to Brisbane is 4s., and from Adelaide 3s. The charge from Melbourne to Sydney is 1s., but from Melbourne to Brisbane 3s. New South Wales and Victoria are united so far as telegrams are concerned.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Hon. J. Donaldson): Those rates are only for the first ten words, remember.

Mr. ANNEN: In regard to freetrade, Australia contains about 4,000,000 of people, and the tariffs are altogether different in the various colonies—different Customs tariffs, and different telegraphic tariffs; but I believe the postal tariffs have been to some extent equalised. In Australia there is a separate department of Customs' officers in every colony, whereas in America, with its population of 65,000,000, there is not a Customs' officer in the entire territory. It is absolute freetrade amongst Americans inside America, and protection against the outside world. They have put 50 per cent. on machinery—some hon. members were horrified the other day because we tried to impose a duty of 15 per cent.—and 70 per cent on English tweeds; and when Australasia becomes united, and protects her own people against the outside world, she will become the great nation we all thoroughly believe she will be. Until that is done we shall only be as we are now—at sixes and sevens one with the other. There is nothing whatever in common. It should be the duty of those gentlemen who meet in Tasmania to bring about this unity. To my mind the Federal Council, up to the present time, has been a myth. It has been a Federal Council in name; I do not see what good they have done; and now they come before us with a Bill of two clauses referring to Supreme Court cases, when there are other matters of far greater importance to the interests of the people of Australasia which they leave absolutely untouched. What we want is a federated Australasia. We do not want to federate with Great Britain. We can run by ourselves if we are united, and when we are united we shall become that great nation which we are destined to be if we are properly governed. I trust that when those gentlemen meet again in Tasmania next year they will do something to bring about that unity. In England the other day the Great Eastern Railway Company called for tenders for fifty locomotives. This was in freetrade England. What was the result? A Belgian tenderer sent in the lowest tender, and it was accepted by that English company. Belgian engines go into England free, on English engines imported into Belgium there is a duty of 25 per cent. It is all very well for hon. members to talk about freetrade. I travelled the other day to the Crystal Palace with a gentleman who represented Singleton in New South Wales for many years, Mr. W. C. Brown, and we saw on our way some very large factories, with letters as tall as I am on the walls, stating that “freetrade closed this establishment.” That is what England is doing. Let us imitate America and protect ourselves against all outsiders. Everyone outside America is a foreigner to her, and everyone outside of us should be a foreigner to Australia. Put on those duties, and this will become one of the grandest countries on the face of the earth.

Mr. CALLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—The hon. member for Maryborough, in speaking on this subject, has not put before the House his own views. He does not say whether he is in favour of protection or in favour of freetrade. He also finds fault with the Federal Council because they have not adopted any particular policy. The hon. member forgets that at this early stage of the Federal Council it is impossible for it to adopt a policy. The hon. member says he is in favour of a uniform tariff. That must inevitably follow in course of time, but whether in the direction of protection or of freetrade is a matter for the future. There must be a uniform tariff of some kind before federation takes place. I shall support the second reading of this Bill, because it is some slight step towards federation—a matter which everyone with the interests of the colonies at heart must wish to see growing stronger. The instances cited by the leader of the Opposition show the necessity there is for some uniform mode of procedure in all the colonies. It was suggested by an hon. member opposite that the representatives of the colony to the Federal Council should be elected by the House. I think that would be altogether wrong. I agree with the view that the nomination should rest with the Government of the day, who would be much more disposed to appoint an able man from the other side of the House as one of the representatives than nominate the whole three from their own side. If the matter were left to the House to decide, it would lead to a great deal of difficulty. The hon. member for Stanley said he was quite certain that federation would never come about. For my own part I feel certain that federation—that is, local federation—will be an accomplished fact before very long; whether on the lines of protection or of freetrade is a matter we cannot decide now, but I think it will be on the lines of protection. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Question—That the Bill be read a second time—put and passed.

The committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### CONSIDERATION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL the House went into Committee of the Whole to consider the amendments of the Legislative Council in this Bill.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said it would be more convenient to deal with the amendments as they appeared in the "Votes and Proceedings," although they were not in the order in which they appeared in the Bill before them. The first amendment disagreed to by the Legislative Council was the transposition of clauses 7 and 8, and the reason given was "because the clauses are in the nature of exceptions to the provisions of clauses 5 and 6, and would most conveniently follow after those clauses." The Government proposed to accept the contention of the Legislative Council. On reference to the English Acts, it would be found that clauses 7 and 8, now 14 and 15, were not taken from the same Act, and as they dealt with the exceptions provided for in clauses 5 and 6, it would be most convenient to insert them after clause 6, and leave them as they were before the Bill passed that Committee. He begged to move that the objection of the Legislative Council be agreed to. The clauses, which followed each other consecutively, were taken from the English Act of 1867, and he thought the other two clauses were inserted in the Act of 1877. To

1889—6 K

his mind it would make the Bill clearer having those clauses following clauses 5 and 6.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the Bill as it was printed showed the scheme pretty clearly. By the English Act of 1867 it was provided, in section 9, which was clause 4 of the Bill, that a company might reduce its capital; section 10 of the English Act, which was section 5 of the Bill as printed, provided that a company might add the words, "and reduced," to its name for a limited time; section 11 of the English Act, which was clause 6 of the Bill, provided that when a company had reduced its capital it might apply to the court for an order confirming the reduction, and the court, if satisfied that every creditor who was entitled to object had either consented to the reduction of capital, or else had had his claim discharged, could make an order confirming the reduction. Then it went on to provide, in the clause immediately following, that every creditor who was entitled to object to the reduction should be entitled to object, and provision could be made to pay the creditors off, and that the order of the court was to be registered; and then it dealt with the case of creditors who did not care to proceed. Those provisions were all in consecutive clauses in the English Act of 1867. Then ten years later another Act was passed, in which were qualifying clauses—that was to say, when the reduction of capital did not involve either the diminution of any liability in respect of unpaid capital, or the payment to any shareholder of any paid up capital, the creditors should not be entitled to object, and so on. That was a provision qualifying the whole of the preceding provisions, as it did in the Bill before them; but now the Legislative Council insisted upon putting that qualification into the middle of the provisions it qualified, and before many of the clauses it qualified. The result would be that anyone would have to read the Bill through three or four times, and then, by comparing the marginal notes, he might come to the conclusion that that clause had got in by accident, and that probably it did not make any difference. Those who had been present when the Bill was going through Committee would be able to make some sense of it, but others would be embarrassed, and would not know how the qualifying clause had got in before some of the clauses it qualified. That was not the ordinary way to legislate. He did not mind it, but clauses 14 and 15 contained different provisions altogether.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: They follow each other in the original Bill.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the Amending Act of 1877 dealt with two entirely different subjects. He would point out that clause 4 of that Act qualified the general scheme of the Act of 1867; and as the Bill now stood, it followed that scheme, qualifying the whole of it. Clause 5 of the Act of 1877 was on an entirely different subject, and it was now proposed that the clause should be put back into the middle of another subject altogether. If the hon. gentleman chose to do so, he did not mind, but he would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that they were deliberately going to make the Bill as unintelligible as they could. They proposed now to put those clauses in between clauses 6 and 7, which dealt with the rights of creditors; whilst clause 15, which was proposed to be inserted between clauses 6 and 7, dealt with the reduction of capital. However, he supposed that some day they should have to put it right.

Question—That the Committee do not insist upon the transposition of clauses 7 and 8—put and passed.



The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee do not insist upon the insertion of the word "preceding" in clause 15 of the Bill.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the clause meant quite a different thing in the English Act, and the amendment made by the Assembly was necessary. The English Act to which the clause applied consisted of only sections 7 and 8, but the Bill before the Committee contained fifty clauses.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: This refers to the preceding section.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that hon. members would see the absurdity of the Council's disagreement to the amendment by referring to the following paragraph in clause 7:—

"The minute required to be registered in the case of reduction of capital shall show, in addition to the other particulars required by law, the amount (if any) at the date of the registration of the minute proposed to be deemed to have been paid up on each share."

One might look in vain in any preceding part of the Bill to find out what that referred to, but if the student of the Bill was diligent and read on till he came to clause 11, he would find that it referred to a thing required to be done by that clause; so that there was something in the 7th clause which qualified a provision contained in the 11th clause. He was merely pointing out the absurdity of the transposition. Then the 8th clause—the 15th clause as printed—provided that any company limited by shares might so far modify the conditions contained in its memorandum of association, if authorised so to do by its regulations, as to reduce its capital by cancelling unissued shares. And without the amendment made by the Assembly the clause would provide that none of the provisions of the Act should apply to any reduction of capital made under the section; but what was meant in the English Act was that the provisions contained in clause 7 should not apply. The 18th section—the 17th as printed—provided that the statement of the number of shares into which the capital was divided contained in every copy of the memorandum of association issued after the passing of any special resolution by which the capital was increased or reduced, or by which the amount of the shares was reduced, should be in accordance with such resolution. Was not that clause to apply? Suppose the capital was reduced from £100,000 to £10,000, was the memorandum of association to say that the capital was £100,000, or was a minute to be registered, showing that the capital was reduced to £10,000? The clauses seemed to have got astray somewhere.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he thought the word "preceding" ought to be taken out. It was quite necessary to insert the word when the position of the clause was altered, but unless it were taken out, the clause would not cover the whole ground when placed back in its original position.

Mr. HODGKINSON said that surely there was no man so stupid as not to see the absurdity of the proposal. Was it thrown out as food for the lawyers?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: State your objections, and I will answer them.

Mr. HODGKINSON said the leader of the Opposition had pointed out that the clause containing the provision with regard to the minute had reference to a subsequent clause.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the next amendment of the Legislative Council was in clause 17 as now printed—to omit the words "increased or reduced, or by which the amount of the shares is reduced," and to insert the words

"divided into shares of a larger or smaller amount." He thought the amendment was a very useful one, as it made the clause clearer than it was before. At the same time he did not care very much whether it was carried or not, because under the Act of 1863, shares could be increased, and that provided only for a reduction. If the leader of the Opposition had any strong objection to the amendment he would not press it. In the meantime he moved that it be agreed to.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that was an important amendment. The first part of the Bill enabled a company, by special resolution, to reduce its capital to a smaller amount than was fixed by the memorandum of association. Then that clause provided that when that was done, the memorandum of association issued should be in accordance with the special resolution, and show that the capital had been reduced, or that the amount of the shares had been reduced. That was very important, because it would inform the public dealing with the company of the liability of the members. The provision respecting the increase of capital was unimportant. But the Legislative Council's amendment left out all reference to the previous parts of the Bill, which were for the protection of the creditors of the company, and made it apply merely to the last preceding section, so that it would be simply a means of gratifying idle curiosity.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Negative the motion.

Question put and negatived.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said when the Bill was going through Committee there was considerable difference of opinion as to whether the system of audit proposed should apply to other companies as well as banking companies; and the weight of evidence appeared to be in favour of not having it extended to all other companies. For instance, it was pointed out that it should not apply to mining companies, and as it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Mining Companies Bill next session, he moved that the Committee do not insist on their amendment in clause 23, line 41.

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he proposed to agree to the amendment of the Legislative Council in line 27 of the same clause—to insert "banking" before "company."

Question put and passed.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the next amendment of the Legislative Council was in clause 24—to insert "banking" before "company;" to omit "the chairman of" in line 35, and to insert "at least one of the." He thought the words "the chairman" should be omitted, because difficulties might arise in consequence of the chairman being absent at any time. The amendment was a very desirable one. He proposed to agree to both the amendments of the Legislative Council.

Question put and passed.

On clause 25—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

On clause 26—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee do not insist upon the proposed new clause to which the Legislative Council disagree.

Question put and passed.



On clauses 23, 24, and 25—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said that he would put the question that the transposition of the clauses 23, 24, and 25 be insisted upon. He had no intention of accepting the Council's disagreement, because he thought the Bill was far more intelligible as it left the Assembly, notwithstanding the Legislative Council's assertion that "The proposed transposition would tend to confuse two distinct subjects under one heading." He moved that the Committee insist upon the transposition of clauses 23, 24, and 25, and the proposed amendment in clause 25.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said there must be some extraordinary mistake in the message. The reason given against the transposition was that it confused two distinct subjects, but they were the whole of an English Act of Parliament, consisting of three clauses, and as they were proposed to be put in the Bill they would be in order. The Committee proposed to put them in their right order of 1, 2, and 3; the Legislative Council, on the contrary, insisted upon putting them in the order of 3, 1, and 2, and they said that putting them in the order of 1, 2, and 3, was mixing up two different subjects. Either the members of the Committee did not know what they were doing, or the Legislative Council did not know what they were doing. He was sorry to speak disrespectfully of another place, but the message was most astonishing. The other proposed amendment in clause 25 had nothing whatever to do with the transposition, and was connected with a different subject. It was put in to prevent any conflict with the last section of the Act.

Question put and passed.

On clause 28—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee do not insist upon their amendment.

Question put and passed.

On clause 29—"Manner in which shares are to be issued and held"—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the words, "the memorandum of association, or by," had been inserted by the Committee, and the Legislative Council disagreed to that, "because it was desirable that the registration of the contract should in all cases be insisted on." He proposed that the Committee do not insist upon the amendment.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that provision was entirely for the protection of the public. For one member of the public who would see a registered contract, fifty would see the memorandum of association. It was the omission from the English Act of the amendment which they had inserted which had given rise to interminable litigation.

Question put and negatived.

On clause 31—"Transfer may be registered at request of transferrer"—which the Legislative Assembly had amended by the insertion of the words—"and on the production of a transfer duly executed by the transferee"—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he would move that the Assembly do not insist upon their amendment, because at the present time it was unnecessary. The transferee would sign the scrip transferred in the usual way, and to provide that he should do so in the clause was surplusage. If the right given to the transferrer to register a transfer could be fully availed of, it might be very dangerous, but it was provided that it should be "in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as if the application for such

entry were made by the transferee." He considered there was no danger about the clause whatever, because any articles of association he had ever seen, provided that transfers should be in writing. Then, again, the directors of a company had the right of rejecting any transferee whose position they did not think good enough. That was a proper right to reserve because men of straw might be substituted for substantial men.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: Do you not think that the directors might be sometimes willing to register men of straw?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said that neither the clause as it stood or as amended would affect that in any way. He had thought a great deal about the clause, and it would have been better if it had been omitted altogether from the Bill. It would not have done the slightest harm, as it was only the affirmation of a principle to give the transferrer the right to register a transfer of his shares. Shares might be sold and never transferred, and if the company went bad the transferrer would be liable for calls; but he would like to see something provided to protect the transferee if possible. There was no necessity to insist upon the amendment, as hon. members knew that if they wanted to transfer shares the transfer had to be in writing signed by the transferrer and transferee, and there was no use for the clause.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said the clause without the amendment would either be extremely dangerous or it would have no meaning.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It has no meaning.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH said that without the amendment it would enable a transferrer to put someone else's name on the share list, and shift all liability from himself. It ought not to mean that, and as they had amended it, it could not mean that at any rate. It might be useful in some cases as amended, but it could not be dangerous. If the amendment was not insisted upon, a man might find that his name had been forged and that he was a shareholder without knowing anything at all about it. The hon. gentleman said that companies generally required a transferee to sign the transfer, but some of them did not. That was not by any means a universal rule. Suppose a company did not insist upon that, a member might put another man on the shareholders' list, and then he would be liable for calls. That would be injurious to the company as well as to the transferee. The reason given by the Council for objecting to the amendment was that it would render the clause practically useless, and it was desirable that the right of a transferrer to claim registration of his transferee should be affirmed by statute. That was exactly what the clause did as amended, and he hoped the hon. gentleman would insist upon the amendment, because the clause would be most dangerous without it.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said the clause altogether was a very useless one in his opinion, and he was sorry they had not struck it out when they were passing the Bill in Committee.

The HON. SIR S. W. GRIFFITH: It is too late to do that now, and we had better make it as harmless as we can.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said that as it stood it was exactly as it appeared in the English Act, and he dared say there was a good reason for having it there. With regard to the statement that a person might find himself in possession of shares that he did not bargain for,

he repeated that he had never seen any articles of association of any company that did not provide that transfers should be in writing and signed by transferor and transferee, and they merely provided in the clause for exactly the conditions under which transfers were usually made. He could not see that there was any danger to be apprehended from it at all.

Mr. UNMACK said he hoped the Committee would insist upon their amendment. The clause said that any company should enter in its register the name of a transferee on the application of a transferor, and there was nothing to show that it should be upon conditions.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It says, "In the same manner and subject to the same conditions as if the application for such entry were made by the transferee."

Mr. UNMACK said they should insist upon their amendment, as without it any person who was the owner of shares which he wished to get rid of, could go and sign scrip and put on the name of anyone he liked, and yet that person was allotted the shares and the liability. The amendment was a very good one; it was a safeguard, and they should insist upon it being retained in the clause.

Mr. BARLOW said that the amendment was insisted upon by the hon. member for Burke, Mr. Hunter, who, he was sorry, was not then present. It appeared a monstrous thing that a man should be made a transferee and incur liability without his consent.

Mr. TOZER said the object of the clause in the English Act was simply to give a legal status to a person who had a right to have his name placed on the register, and enable him to bring an action to compel the company to register his name if they refused to do so. If they allowed the clause to go without the amendment people would act upon it and stick anybody upon the register, but as amended the clause could do no harm.

Question put and negatived.

On clause 35—"Company to hold meeting within six months after registration"—which the Assembly had amended by omitting the word "six" and inserting the word "three," by omitting the words "and every subscriber of the memorandum of association," and by adding the words "such meeting shall have power to transact all such business of the company as shall be specified in the notice convening the meeting, or of which previous notice shall have been given in manner required by the articles of association."

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee do not insist upon their amendments.

Question put and passed.

On clause 36—"Where compromise proposed court may order a meeting of creditors, etc., to decide as to such compromise"—which the Assembly had amended by omitting the words "this Act and" and the words "or either of them"—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the Committee do not insist upon their amendments in that clause.

The Hon. Sir S. W. GRIFFITH said the reason given by the Legislative Council for their disagreement to the amendment in that clause, was remarkable. The clause, as amended, provided for companies being wound-up under the principal Act, the only Act under which they could be wound-up, and the Legislative Council disagreed to the amendment, "Because the proposed amendment might be held to limit the applica-

tion to companies registered under the Companies Act of 1863." That was utterly absurd. The whole Bill dealt only with companies registered under that Act, and they were told that the amendment was objectionable, because it might lead persons to form a correct opinion as to the object of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported to the House that the Committee insisted upon some of their amendments, did not insist upon others, and agreed to certain amendments made by the Legislative Council upon their amendments.

On the motion of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, the report was adopted.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. The first Government business to-morrow will be the Local Government Acts Amendment Bill in committee; after that the Diseases in Sheep Act Amendment Bill in committee; after that the District Courts Act Amendment Bill in committee, and after that, if there is time, Supply.

Question put and passed.

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