

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 11 JULY 1893

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, 11 July, 1893.

Members Sworn.—Ministerial Statement.—Boat Station Drill.—Motion for Adjournment: Improper Language by a Member.—Railway Border Tax Bill: Committee.—Adjournment.

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

MEMBERS SWORN.

The following members took the oath and subscribed the roll:—

Jason Boles, Port Curtis.

George Silas Curtis, Rockhampton.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith) said: After the division that took place on Wednesday last on the Railway Border Tax Bill, I waited on the Governor on his arrival from Melbourne, and represented to him the position of the Ministry. I told him that after what had taken place the Government thought it right to tender him their resignations, and I accordingly tendered him the resignations of myself and colleagues. I represented to him the way in which the Government were defeated, the heads of which I will shortly give to the House as I gave them to His Excellency. First, I represented that the Labour party's programme was to vote against the Government.

Mr. HOOLAN: Wrong; untrue!

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on Opposition cross-benches: Question!

The PREMIER: That was the programme they announced at the general election.

Mr. HOOLAN: Correct.

The PREMIER: I am glad to hear the hon. member for Burke say "quite correct."

Mr. HOOLAN: I did not say "quite correct"; you are nearly correct in that matter.

The PREMIER: I represented further that the leader of the Labour party, the hon. member for Burke, admitted that in the debate, and that in practice they have shown that they adhere to that programme—namely, that no matter what the question is, no matter how it affects them or the interests of their constituents, they vote against the Government.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HOOLAN: Untrue!

The PREMIER: I represented also that if the Labour party had voted in the interests of their constituents, and in their own interests, many of them would have voted on that question with the Government. I represented also that several members not attached to the Labour party, but usually, or rather, always, sitting in opposition to the Government, had voted against the measure for the latter reason only, and against the interests of their constituents. I further represented that several members usually supporting the Government had voted against the Government, objecting to the principle of the measure. I also represented that if the members approving of the Bill, but objecting to the Government, were taken from the division list the Government would not have been defeated. I represented further that several

members who abstained from voting did so because, although disapproving of the measure, they did not wish to injure the position of the Government. I represented, further—and I promised the House to represent this—that several of the Government supporters who opposed the measure, on the following day expressed their confidence in the Government. The Governor informed me that he had seen the reports of the debate in *Hansard* and the daily papers. A large amount, therefore, of what I might have had to say to His Excellency was cut short, because I generally expressed to him my confidence in the fidelity of those reports. The only part in which I saw an omission was the omission where Mr. Hoolan, the hon. member for Burke, acknowledged the principle on which the Labour party was worked. I further represented to His Excellency that the only practical form of supporting a Government that I recognised and that the Government recognised was supporting their measures, and that the Government defeat was owing to a portion of the Government supporters joining an Opposition who opposed the Bill, not to defeat the Bill, but to defeat the Government. I further represented that no Government could submit to the defeat of an important measure and carry on without humiliation and the transfer of responsibility from themselves to a section of their followers, which was quite unconstitutional. Of course the merits of the Bill itself I did not discuss with His Excellency, nor do I remember ever having discussed it with him; that was quite outside the question. I then tendered him the resignation of the Government and the interview closed, His Excellency desiring time to consider the position. I waited on him again on Monday, and he then gave me his answer in writing, with a request that I should communicate it to the House. That answer I shall now read—

“MINUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

“In consequence of the result of the division in the Legislative Assembly on the 5th instant, on the motion for the second reading of the Border Tax Bill, Sir Thomas Mellwraith has submitted to me his resignation, and that of his colleagues in the Ministry of Queensland, the motion having only been carried by the casting vote of the Speaker in a House of fifty-eight members, half of whom voted for and half against the motion. I have very carefully considered the course to take in this unexpected difficulty, and I have no hesitation in saying that I do not think there is sufficient ground for my acceptance of these resignations; and I am of opinion that it is desirable, in the best interests of Queensland, that there should not be a change of Ministry at the present time. I cannot look upon the division of last Wednesday as in any way equivalent to a vote on a question of confidence in Ministers; and I believe that on most other questions of importance that are likely to arise in the near future the Ministry would have the support of a substantial majority of members of the Legislative Assembly.

“Having regard to what I have just stated, to the great difficulties that attend the administration of the colony at present, and to the importance of the Ministry being composed of men of administrative and political experience, as well as to the circumstance that according to the best of my belief no other Ministry that could now be formed would be able to carry on the Government, even for a very limited period, while a dissolution would, under present circumstances, and immediately following a general election, be a public calamity, I hope that the Premier and his colleagues will consent to withdraw their resignations and carry on the Government, notwithstanding the indecisive division on the second reading of the Bill introduced by Sir Thomas Mellwraith.

“If the Premier and the other Ministers accede to my wish in this matter, I request that this minute may be communicated to the Legislative Assembly.

“H. W. NORMAN,

Governor.

“To the Hon. Sir Thomas Mellwraith, K.C.M.G., Chief Secretary of Queensland.”

I called a special meeting of the Cabinet last evening to consider the minute that had been submitted to me by the Governor, and after considerable discussion the Government decided to carry on the business of the country. They decided also to go on, as the first business of the House, with the Railway Border Tax Bill.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

BOAT STATION DRILL.

Mr. TURLEY asked the Colonial Treasurer—

1. The names of the steamers on which boat station drill has been held by the Government Shipping Inspector, from 1st January, 1890, to 1st July, 1893, in Brisbane?

2. The dates on which such boat station drill was held?

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. H. M. Nelson) replied—

There has been no boat station drill held by the Government Shipping Inspector during that period named, nor is it required by any Act or regulations. That duty devolves upon the commanders of steamers; and, as he is perfectly satisfied that that has been performed, no further action on his part is necessary.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

IMPROPER LANGUAGE BY A MEMBER.

Mr. KINGSBURY: I rise with the intention of moving the adjournment of the House in order to debate a matter of public importance—namely, the impropriety of Mr. Dawson's action in using, or allowing to be used, his privileged position as a member of this honourable House to lend weight to the publication of “unbecoming or offensive words in reference to another member or members of this House”—the publication of the words to which I refer having been made in a Charters Towers newspaper called *The Eagle*, dated the 24th June, 1893, under cover of correspondence addressed “to the editor,” and entitled “Letter from Dawson.”

Standing Order No. 130 having been complied with,

Mr. KINGSBURY said: The matter with which I have to deal is one which, I think, will best be dealt with briefly. It is one which will considerably pain those members of the House who are acquainted with the facts of the case, and it will be a matter of grief to all right-thinking men in the House. I will read the paragraphs to which I desire specially to refer as offensive:—

“All kinds of rumours are flying about the city to the effect that the Queensland Investment cases have gone against Mellwraith and Co., but it is impossible to get at the truth. I asked Sir Charles Lillie, and he thinks there is not time yet, but he is satisfied his decision will be upheld. The leading lawyers of England consider he was right. To-night it is rumoured that Mellwraith is dead. I am afraid the news is too good to be true. It is only the young die good.”

“Mellwraith wears a lily—the emblem of purity—in his coat. Is that great plaster of outside purity meant as an extenuating circumstance for the blackness within?”

“Dalrymple is the Government bravo. He is what might be termed an oratorical contortionist. He possesses the peculiar faculty of throwing his nose on either ear, or flogging his wisdom teeth with his backbone.”

Dealing first with what may be termed the ludicrous elements of this letter, its intense vulgarity is only to be recognised by the reading thereof. If the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Dawson, were possessed of such an extraordinary fine physique as might have justified him in standing as a model for a Grecian sculptor, that is no reason why he should direct his satire against any other member of the House, and create a feeling of wounded pride or bitterness in this Chamber. Were the hon.

member for Mackay to refer to the backbone, or the nose, or the ears of the hon. member, as this scurrilous letter does, we should all condemn him; and were he to refer to the hon. member's wisdom teeth, he would refer, I think, to that which has no existence. The imputation of the hon. member for Charters Towers is one that the House must view with the most serious concern. It is very doubtful to my mind whether we should not have dealt with him under that one of our Orders which enables us to bring a member to the bar of the House for condemnation. Those who pretend to criticise the past history of this colony ought to be aware that it has been built up more largely, in a favourable way, by Sir Thomas McIlwraith than by any other man in the colony. But those members to whom I refer are new to the country, and to a great extent they are ignorant of our past and of the struggles by which Queensland has been made Queensland, and fit to live in. Usually they have been imported at the expense of the colony, to decay which they afterwards devote their energies. Similarly, for economic purposes, we have imported *Sida retusa* and other pests. But the sooner we recognise the fact that a breach of decorum, and an insult to this House, has been perpetrated by any member of the House, and the more strongly it is resented by the House, the less likely is that member, or any other member, to repeat the offence. By construction of words, and by implication, the hon. member for Charters Towers has expressed a wish for the Premier's death.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Labour party: No, no!

HONOURABLE MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

Mr. KINGSBURY: Anyone who knows anything of parliamentary government must admit that the expression of such a wish as that is simply disgraceful. Those who have lived in the colony for anything like a quarter of a century must remember that services unparalleled in the political history of Queensland have been rendered to Queensland by the Premier, and that disasters which have fallen on the colony would have been averted had we taken the advice given to us from time to time by him. But if we are not to reverence ourselves, to reverence our institutions and our only constituted order, what will the colony come to? The office of Premier is, to my mind, the highest office in the colony, and no matter who fills that office, he has been put there by the majority of the electors. Reverence should be paid to the office, if not to the occupant, with decorum and Christian kindness. The Premier has been in receipt for some months past of anonymous letters of a scurrilous description; and if members of this House will set such an example as has been set by the member for Charters Towers, need we wonder that anonymous scribblers follow in the same disgraceful path?

Mr. HOOLAN: It is nothing wonderful in these times.

Mr. KINGSBURY: I will refer briefly to the paper in which the hon. member has chosen to deliver himself of these sentiments. There are very few of these papers in the colony, but it has been marked down as one which it is desirable should be placed in our Parliamentary Library. It is, I believe, the lineal descendant of a paper called the *Dead Bird*.

Mr. HOOLAN: No; of the *Telegraph*, Brisbane, once edited by the Rev. Brentnall.

Mr. KINGSBURY: This paper, the *Sydney Bulletin*, and a few other papers of a similar character are recommended to be introduced to the library of this House. There is another

matter arising out of this, and that is the position in which it places our honoured ex-Chief Justice. I cannot for a moment believe that he would descend to hold conversation with the member for Charters Towers regarding a matter which must still be considered as within the jurisdiction of the highest court of the British Empire. I do not believe he would so far forget himself, his past or his present position, as to do such a thing as that. I need not add anything to what I have already said. I do not wish for a moment to implicate in this the party with whom the member for Charters Towers sits. I think every right-feeling man in that party, and I believe many of them are right-feeling men, will feel that a mistake has been made, and that by pointing it out directly and openly in this House the best means have been taken to prevent a recurrence of the mistake.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HOOLAN having risen to speak—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Dawson! Dawson!

Mr. HOOLAN: Allow me to know my own business best. I will take the trouble to inform hon. members opposite that I am leader here. It is very gratifying to know that that silvery-tongued orator, the junior member for North Brisbane, has at length found his tongue. It was very disagreeable to the whole of us, and a lamentable thing for the whole colony, to think, from the hon. member's silence, that he was likely to become one of those horrible machines known in parliamentary phraseology as a "Ministerial dummy." I offer my sincere congratulations to the hon. member on the recovery of his tongue. Without inflicting too much rodomontade on the House, I may inform hon. members that I impressed upon the youthful politicians around me that the hon. member was one of those persons to whom they might look up as an example in political matters, as the hon. member had brought himself so prominently forward and did so much for his party at the general election. The hon. member's recent silence somewhat depressed them, and they were inclined to believe that I had misled them in my estimate of the hon. member, and I am therefore glad he has found his tongue at last. I do not say whether the words complained of are offensive or not. That is for hon. members to decide, though I have my own opinion on the subject.

Mr. FOXTON: What is it?

Mr. HOOLAN: It is in favour of freedom of speech and freedom of writing, particularly where people so closely connected with this Assembly have set the example for the past three or four years. Freedom of speech and free criticism of public men has been an example set in this city by a gentleman placed in the position he holds in the Legislative Council by the present Government, and who is the intimate friend and almost the political father and grandpapa of the youthful hon. member who has brought this matter forward. The hon. member takes exception to a criticism supposed to have been written by a member of the Labour party in this House, Mr. Dawson. He, of all members in this House, takes the exception; he, an unknown person, brought out at the general election, and used round the country at the beck and call of every Government candidate. The hon. member got up on platforms and slandered and improperly maligned other persons endeavouring to obtain positions in this House. That he should take this stand this afternoon, and ask that this matter should be dealt with under our Standing Orders, is intolerable and simply ridiculous. Is the hon. member aware of the ridiculous light in which he

has placed himself before the Assembly and the country generally? Is he aware of the numerous slanders he uttered against our late leader, Mr. Glassey—a man at whose disposal every seat held by the Labour party would be placed to get him into the House, and to retain him as our leader? Is he aware of the deliberate slanders he put upon that gentleman? The hon. member stood up in that celebrated institution at Ipswich known as the "Deposit Institute," with which he is so intimately connected, and alluded to Mr. Glassey as "Glass-eye," to Sir Charles Lilley as "Lill-lye," to Mr. Horsley as "Horse-lye," and to Mr. Casey as "Case-lye." It is the place of other members here to-day to show the hon. member that they do not forget the dishonourable and degrading position in which he placed himself. If the hon. member wants to bring up this matter, and would like a discussion at the bar of the House, let him do so. This matter may be very vulgar writing and not writing which any refined person would indulge in, and not suitable at the present time, or suitable at all to members of this House, but it is not one bit worse writing than we had, day after day and week after week, from the hon. member's most intimate friend and trustworthy acquaintance, and the hon. member's moral, religious and political guide in all matters pertaining to his welfare. That is Mr. Brentnall, of the *Daily Telegraph*, in Brisbane. Possibly there might be more in the articles quoted by the hon. member, but that is not for me to say. The hon. member laid heavy stress upon one of the paragraphs, containing an allusion to the supposed death of the Premier, but what is there in that more than a jest?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Shame!

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. T. J. Byrnes): It contains an expression of regret that he is not dead.

Mr. FOXTON: "It is too good to be true." What do those words mean?

Mr. HOOLAN: A jest may be made about the supposed deaths of people. Some of us are living to die, and some of us are living a living death, and some of our doings inside and outside this House subject other people to a living death. There is no great harm in a member of the House saying in a jesting way that he would be glad if another member were dead; it need not be looked upon as showing ill-feeling for anyone to wish that they were dead. An hon. member should be free to express his opinion, and it would not trouble me in the least if all the members in the House, individually or in a body, expressed a wish that I were dead. I would not take umbrage at a trifling matter like that, and that an humble individual, in an obscure position like the member for Charters Towers, should say such a thing is nothing to take umbrage at. We should be glad to support the freedom of the Press, but about the vulgarity of the thing we do not express an opinion. I do not wish to inflict a long discourse on the Assembly, but I must say I think the hon. member was very unwise and injudicious in bringing forward this matter. People have not forgotten what has passed; they are not so far immersed in a multitude of troubles that they forget everything that has been said outside, and what has been inflicted upon them by the Press that supports hon. members opposite. They do not forget that Sir Thomas McLlwraith was a strong supporter of *Punch* and *Figaro*—papers that were offensive in every line to numbers of people—and that the Government subsidised those papers heavily. Do hon. members forget the continual slander that is going on in the *Telegraph*, and do they think that other people

have no feelings? Do they think we are lost to all feeling and all sense of delicacy, and that we do not feel the continual lies and misrepresentations to which we have been subjected for so long? That is the reason why we show less delicacy; but we are not lost to all sense of delicacy. We know how to read and speak of public men, and deal with them, not as we would be done by, but as we are done by. Whether the hon. member for Charters Towers has been subjected to any particular annoyance or censure, I am not prepared to say; but we are not prepared to accept censure at the hands of the hon. member who brought this motion forward. He is the very last hon. member who should have brought forward such a thing. It does not become him; it puts him in a false light, considering his own public utterances, considering his own published words, and considering his own public actions as a financier, which are not at all too clean at the present moment.

Mr. DAWSON: The junior member for North Brisbane has particularised me in a certain matter this afternoon. I do not wish any personalities to be indulged in, but that the question shall be thrashed out on its merits. I would like to point out before going any further that the hon. member gave notice one afternoon of his intention to ask me certain questions on the following day. I left the House that afternoon under the impression that he was going to ask those questions on the next day, and I was prepared to answer the questions. Just before the House met the next day, I happened to notice in the *Telegraph* that the hon. member had withdrawn the questions, and had given notice of his intention to move the adjournment of the House. I mention this, because I think if the hon. member was desirous of taking the earliest opportunity of getting an explanation he should have gone on with his questions. Had he desired to give me an opportunity of making a full and free statement, he should have given me notice that he withdrew the questions and intended to move the adjournment of the House. He did not take that course, but since that time the hon. member informed one of my friends that he had withdrawn the matter altogether; yet he brings it up again this afternoon as a surprise motion.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He withdrew it for Thursday.

Mr. DAWSON: If the hon. member himself says he did not do so, according to the custom of the House, I shall have to take his word; but until he does say so I shall think he has been guilty of brazen deceit, and nothing else. The hon. member has given it as his opinion that to wish another person dead is bad, and particularly to wish that the Premier was dead is very bad. Well, I have no hesitation in stating that to wish that the Premier was dead, physically, would be very bad. I should condemn that as well as any man; but I say at once that I entirely repudiate ever having held such a wish, but I have no hesitation in telling the House now, or at any other time, that I do wish sincerely and with all my heart that the Hon. the Premier was politically dead.

Mr. SMYTH: That is too thin.

Mr. DAWSON: I sincerely and honestly wish that. I think, while that would not be any loss to the hon. member himself or to his family, or to his friends, or would not injure his domestic enjoyment in any way—I do not think the political death of the Premier would be anything like a political calamity to Queensland. To wish that the hon. member was physically dead would be a very poor compliment to us, because that would leave the inference that it

was only by the hon. member's physical death that the principles we advocate could ever catch on to the public mind. That would be a very poor compliment to us and to the people of Queensland.

Mr. FOXTON: You are paying yourself a very poor compliment now.

Mr. MURRAY: You have no show so long as he is alive.

Mr. DAWSON: I think we have, and a very big show indeed. I think the next time an hon. gentleman is elected to occupy the position you, Sir, are occupying this afternoon, it is those who hold the opinions that we do who will have the privilege of electing that member. I do not wish to occupy the time of the House at great length. I have no wish, and never had, for the Hon. the Premier's physical death; but I would have received the intelligence this afternoon with a great deal of favour that he had resigned, and given someone else a chance. The hon. the junior member for North Brisbane, Mr. Kingsbury, inferred that certain individuals knew nothing about the country; that they were strangers who had been brought out at the expense of the taxpayer, and since they had come here had presumed to have opinions of their own. I may point out for that hon. gentleman's information, though I believe he is an imported individual himself, that I am a native of North Queensland, and have never been out of it. If he did not refer to me he probably referred to our party, and I can tell him there are more natives in this party than in any other party in the House. He also spoke of a paper in which I choose to express my sentiments. The hon. member would have to be pretty clever to find out any paper in Queensland in which I have expressed my sentiments in letters to the editor. I give his statements a most distinct and emphatic denial, and as to his references to contempt of the Rules and Standing Orders of the House, and his statement that the proper course was to have brought me to the bar of the House, I may point out that I am not here at the beck and call of the junior member for North Brisbane, or to answer any questions he may put to me. I was sent here by a constituency to do certain work, and while I do that, and retain their confidence, I will stay here. But directly I fail to do that they will shunt me and put somebody else in my place. If at any time I violate any of the Standing Orders or observances of the House, then I take it that I will be called to account; and if such violation be proved, I will have to suffer the penalty imposed upon me. Until that is done I entirely resent any insinuations of the hon. member. I am quite willing to stand all the consequences of any action of mine, either before I came into this House or since, and do not ask the indulgence of any hon. member. I do not ask anyone to accord me sympathy, but simply desire that a most rigid examination should be made into my conduct, and that if found guilty, such punishment may be meted out to me as I deserve, and if I am not guilty my innocence should be made known. I am not asking for indulgence, but simply for justice.

Mr. FOXTON: What about the conversation with Sir Charles Lilley?

Mr. HOOLAN: Has the hon. member not as much right to converse with Sir Charles Lilley as plenty of others in Brisbane? Sir Charles Lilley has not always been in company as honest as that of the hon. member for Charters Towers. He has nothing to be ashamed of in that.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I think the hon. member for North Brisbane has been unwise in bringing up this matter to-day. Had he gone on with his

question my colleague would have had an opportunity of stating whether or not he was guilty of writing that paragraph.

Mr. HOOLAN: There is no guilt in it.

Mr. DUNSFORD: No, there is not; but the hon. member has come here and read a paragraph without any proofs at all, and he has no right to remark upon the personal appearance of any hon. member. He said that my colleague looked like a skeleton, or something to that effect.

Mr. KINGSBURY: No.

Mr. DUNSFORD: Well, if Nature has been parsimonious to my colleague in the matter of flesh, she has also been parsimonious to the hon. member for North Brisbane in the matter of brains. That hon. member has evidently raised unto himself a god. He has made a god of the Premier. No one dare write or speak of matters in connection with the Premier. If he only used a little common sense in every-day political affairs, as he is to be presumed to do in matters of business, he would not take up so much of our time, especially at such a period as the present, in discussing trivial matters of this kind of which he has no proof. He has condemned my colleague, and desired to sentence him without the slightest evidence or proof. It was contemptible for him to move the adjournment of the House without any proof, and take it for granted that my colleague was guilty. Had he brought his proof here there might have been some reason in it; but there are matters of grave importance to be decided, and it is no time to move the adjournment of the House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I rise to bring back hon. members to the subject under discussion. It seems to me that the three speakers who have preceded me have studiously avoided the main question, which is by no means a light one. When the conduct of the hon. member for Charters Towers was brought before the House there was only one course open to him, and that was to express regret and apologise for the language he had used. But, instead of that, he has taken up this position: Whatever I have done, let my constituents be my judges. That is not the proper position to take up. This House, in combination with the other branch of the legislature and His Excellency the Governor, as representing the Queen, are authorities in the country; but this House is an authority to itself, and there are Standing Orders—unwritten rules as well as written rules—and if any hon. member breaks them he should be brought before this House for his conduct. The hon. member has attempted to evade the question. The hon. member said he had alluded to the political death of the Premier; but that is perfect nonsense. Was not a rumour flying about town that the Premier was dead? We heard that rumour, but did anyone imagine that only a political death was referred to? The Government had just come back from the elections in full strength, and yet the hon. member said he alluded to political death.

Mr. DAWSON: I would like to correct the hon. member, and at the same time I would like him to understand that he is now in the House and not at the bar. I never had, and have not now, the slightest wish for the Premier's physical death, but I said that I have for his political death. Those were my words.

The PREMIER: What do I care for that?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am speaking as a member of this House, and if I have used a forensic style in this matter it is because I have sometimes had to use that forensic style

in dealing with people who have committed offences. There is no doubt that the hon. member has committed a gross offence in the first instance, and that offence has been aggravated by his conduct here. There can be no question as to what is meant by that article. The hon. member has these alternatives—first of all, he can say that he did mean what is in the article, and, if so, I say that his intention was diabolical; if he did not, then his conduct shows that brutal disregard for the feelings of the Premier and his friends and his family, and for the feelings of others, that has been at the root of all the tyranny and oppression that has stigmatised the world since the world first began. If he wishes to clear himself before this House, he should make avowal of his fault and apologise and ask for pardon. He would not be the first man in the world who has done that. Had the hon. member done that, this House would have extended to him some consideration as a young member; but if he and his friends persist in attempting to palliate this offence, then there is only one punishment in store for him, and that is the absolute contempt of this House and the country.

The SPEAKER: I may say, in answer to the hon. member for Charters Towers as to why the hon. member for North Brisbane did not ask the questions of which he had given notice, that it was at my request the questions were withdrawn, as I did not think they could be submitted under our Standing Orders. Therefore the hon. member for North Brisbane, Mr. Kingsbury, is not to blame for not asking them.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: I rise to express my regret that not one of the members who sit on that side of the House has expressed any sorrow for the shameful expression of feeling which was made, apparently, by one of their colleagues. I am not surprised that that hon. member has not denied the statement, or that he should attempt to shuffle out of it, which is what he has done; but I am astonished that not one of the hon. members on that side of the House, some of whom I believe to be good men, with the natural feelings of humanity, has repudiated what that hon. member has said.

Mr. HOOLAN: No, they have not. They are all brutes.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: As for what the leader of the Labour party has to say, I shall take no notice of it. The hon. member has mistaken his rôle, and I am surprised that his followers do not see it. The hon. member was cut out for a low comedian or a buffoon. However, they are content to follow him.

Mr. HOOLAN: You were cut out for an ape.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: That letter, so far as it affected the Premier of the colony, was the expression of the feeling of an inhuman man. A man who will say that he wishes that a member of this Assembly, whom he meets every day, should die—for that is practically what he is guilty of—only requires immunity, I believe, to be himself a murderer. Not only has that hon. member expressed his feelings in this paper, but by doing so he has published to the world the fact that his instincts were those of a wild beast. I believe there are few men in the colony who would rejoice to hear of the death of their fellows; and when they do so, they are marked as men of inhuman feelings. Hon. members opposite arrogate to themselves the name of a party which desires equality and fraternity. What fraternity is there in desiring the death of a man whom we meet daily?

Mr. DUNSFORD: It was never desired; that has been denied.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: To say that you are only sorry that a man is not dead is equivalent to desiring his death. What else is it?

Mr. DUNSFORD: Politically.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: I call such an attempt at defence a mere shuffle. If the hon. member made that statement, he should do what an honest man and a man of humane feelings would have done. If the hon. member who penned that disgraceful effusion were a man, he would regret it, and would have said he regretted it. No man should be ashamed to admit that he has done wrong. A man who brazen out his first offence aggravates the offence he has committed. As to the allusion made to myself, I have nothing to complain of. The hon. member did not praise me; he has done me no injury. I am exceedingly thankful that he did not praise me. As for his conduct, which is defended by his colleagues, that, I take it, is a matter for his constituents. If his constituents are satisfied with him, it is not for me to object to him. But I say they are most extraordinary constituents if they are satisfied with conduct which must derogate from the credit that constituency should have in this House. I have no reason to believe that the miners of Charters Towers are destitute of proper feeling, or that they would encourage their member in making attacks in ambush upon other members. They would expect him, if he desires to do his duty as a man, and attack those other members, to attack them in this House. The hon. member has done me no wrong; he has wronged himself, and I do not wish to attack him in any way. But I would, at any rate, give him this advice: that if he desires to attack members of this House, he should do so in the House. There is a very good reason—and the debate to-day is certainly a proof of it—that we members of the House, who have to deal with the affairs of the country, should endeavour to speak of one another at any rate with some degree of decency. The reason is that if we do not the public suffer, and the business of the country suffers. Our time is taken up now by what? Is it in dealing with the business of the country? No, Sir, it is in dealing with personal matters, and for that the senior member for Charters Towers is entirely responsible. I will say no more on this matter. As far as I am concerned, I am perfectly indifferent what the hon. member says about me. He may insert 40,000 letters in "Dead Birds" or other periodicals, and he will hear nothing whatever from me. But I do say that if his conduct is that which it appears to be, that when a charge is made against him he will not admit it, censure from that hon. member is praise.

Mr. HOOLAN: Censure is praise from some quarters.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Buffoons.

Mr. FISHER: I do not think this question was raised for the reason given by the junior member for North Brisbane. I am candidly of opinion that it is the red herring drawn across the trail during this Ministerial crisis. It is the identical thing wanted to ostracise those members who are likely to follow the Labour party and act with them, and it would be a relief to the Government if they could cement their following and carry on the government of the country in the way they desire. It is quite evident that the letter complained of has gone before the world as a signed letter, and whatever is wrong in it, if there is anything of which there is reason to complain, which I do not deny, the responsibility rests with the senior member for Charters Towers. It is most injudicious and uncomplimentary, and betrays a want of

business knowledge and capacity on the part of the junior member for North Brisbane to bring such a small matter before the House. If all the matters, the most serious and most dogmatic assertions and virulent statements made with regard to Mr. Glassey, the late leader of the Labour party, were raked up it would take the whole evening to review them, and they would be no credit to any member here. I believe that had the Premier been consulted he would not have agreed to this matter being brought on. I know that there are a number of persons in the colony who really do wish that the Premier was dead.

Mr. FOXTON: Who are they—friends of yours?

Mr. FISHER: No. The hon. member for Charters Towers, since I have known him, has proved himself a man with a great deal of humanity. The Attorney-General attacked the hon. member, but it must be remembered that there is no proof that this is the identical letter which was written.

Mr. FOXTON: Does he deny it?

Mr. FISHER: I have had no conversation with the hon. gentleman. I returned to Gympie after the notice of the question was given, and heard no more of the matter until this afternoon, and I am not here to answer for the hon. member. He has explained for himself. I regard such a feeling as altogether wrong, and not in accordance with what should come from any person in a public position; but a greater wrong has been done this afternoon in bringing forward such a trivial matter, and preventing useful legislation, suited to the requirements of the present crisis. The offence itself is not more serious than hundreds that are being committed in the colony at the present time. I remember that when Mr. Glassey entered this House he was supported by some of the present occupants of the Treasury benches; but in the illustrated paper which was their organ he was vilified in a worse way than what is now complained of, and the hope was expressed that his death would be a good thing for the colony and for this House.

Mr. HOOLAN: They vilified Sam. Griffith, and slandered him fifty times worse than the matter now complained of.

Mr. FISHER: I am a very humble individual; but I have been advised that certain persons who follow the Ministerial party think it would be a good thing if I were drawn and quartered. Of course, that is only out-and-out abuse. Such a statement carries no weight, and it would be better that it had never been spoken.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Who made the statement? There is no harm in you.

Mr. FISHER: I will give the hon. gentleman the name privately.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. FISHER: The fact of the matter is that I should be ashamed to name the person here. It was a lady high in society.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. FISHER: That was expressed to a number of persons. It is public property, and there is plenty of evidence to be got if necessary; but I do not wish to drag the gutter, like the hon. member for North Brisbane. If public scandal is what is most desired by hon. members opposite, they are not going to get it from me.

Mr. HOOLAN: We will give them plenty of it, if they want it.

Mr. FISHER: There is plenty of material at hand, if it is to be raked up. I rose, however, to say that this small matter has merely been

brought forward at such a juncture to distract the attention of the country from more important questions, and should be allowed to drop.

Mr. KINGSBURY, in reply, said: The subject is a very painful one, and as it is in my power to bring the debate to a conclusion, it is better, perhaps, that that were done. Little or nothing has been said in explanation, but a great deal has been uttered which only tends to confirm the offence. The hon. member for Burke took the opportunity of making some insulting remarks about the Chairman of Committees of the other House—remarks which were untrue. He then charged me with having slandered Mr. Glassey during my election addresses. Mr. Glassey personally thanked me for not having used any language concerning him of a slanderous nature. The hon. member for Burke could only adduce one instance—that at Ipswich, where I had jokingly referred to him as "Mr. Glasseye." If that is slander, then of course of slander I am guilty. We were also told that death was a subject that might be jested about. That stamps the inner nature of the hon. member who professes to lead the Labour party. He also told us that his party was not lost to all sense of delicacy. Well, if he was speaking regarding himself, I am profoundly pleased at the information. I should not have believed it otherwise. The hon. member referred to the Queensland Deposit Bank, and financial transactions which were not too clean. He is too great a coward to make that remark outside of this Chamber.

Mr. HOOLAN: I will make it to you anywhere.

Mr. KINGSBURY: No institution in this colony has ever had a cleaner record, or ever made a braver fight for existence, or ever succeeded better than that institution. The hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Dawson, shuffled. He drew a distinction between death in the undertaker's sense and death in the other sense, but he was careful to avoid the latter part of the letter—that contemptible reference to the lily in the Premier's coat being meant to cover the blackness within. Of course the hon. member only referred to colour blackness. He did not refer to physical blackness, or moral blackness, or spiritual blackness, but only the blackness of his coat. That would be on all-fours with the low subterfuge in which the hon. member indulged in while endeavouring to extenuate his conduct in other particulars. He said that he was elected—I am sorry for it—and that only his constituents could shift him. He may find out differently if he pursues the line of conduct which he seems to have laid down for himself as the proper course to follow. The hon. senior member for Gympie, Mr. Fisher, I regret to say, referred rather objectionably to my having brought the hon. member for Charters Towers to book in order to draw a red herring across the trail. I do not see any reason why the hon. member should call his colleague a red herring. He also said that this was a small matter. A small matter to wish the Premier dead? A small matter to refer to his inner life as a life of blackness? A small matter to make vulgar jokes about the hon. member for Mackay? A small matter to turn this House into what might be called a third-class debating society, in order to punish an hon. member for his ignorance and vulgarity? It is no small matter. The hon. member told us he was a very humble individual. Perhaps of the order of Uriah Heep. Of his humility we have seen little. Of his lady of society, that has nothing to do with the subject, and we wish to know no more about it. With the permission and indulgence of the House, I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

RAILWAY BORDER TAX BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On the question "That the preamble be postponed"—

Mr. GROOM thought this was the proper time to refer to some remarks that fell from the Premier in making his Ministerial statement that afternoon. He was not going to question the action taken by the hon. gentleman from a constitutional point of view, but thought he was justified in taking exception to some of the reasons given to His Excellency the Governor for suggesting a certain course of action. The hon. gentleman referred to the Labour members, and he (Mr. Groom) would leave them to speak for themselves. He also said that certain other members voted against the measure because they were opposed to the Government, and that others voted against the Bill from principle. He (Mr. Groom) took it that the members sitting round him voted against the Bill from principle, and not because they were in opposition to the Government. If they had been satisfied that the measure was for the benefit of the colony they would undoubtedly have given the Government their support on its second reading. He should be unworthy of a seat in that Chamber if he were to oppose a measure purely for the sake of opposition; but in this case he saw nothing to alter the opinion he had formed after hearing the case as stated by the hon. member for Bulloo, the hon. member for Balonne, and after making subsequent inquiries into the question. It was somewhat unusual, after a measure had been practically defeated, to attempt to again force it upon the House, and he did not think the Premier could refer to any precedent for the course he now proposed to take. He was satisfied that if the opinions of hon. members generally were exactly known it would be found that there was a clear majority opposed to the Bill. The Premier also said that he and other members voted against the Bill to the injury of their constituents. He was prepared to take the opinion of his constituents on his action. He was responsible to them alone for any vote he gave in that Assembly. He understood that the Bill was not a cardinal part of the financial policy of the Government, but simply a question of obtaining traffic for our railways; and after looking at the question in all its bearings he was satisfied that the course taken by the Opposition was the correct one, and that they would be justified in following that course to-night.

Mr. HOOLAN wished to contradict the Premier's statement to the effect that the Labour party were here to oppose the Government in everything. It was optional with them to do as they thought proper, and they opposed the Bill as a matter of principle. If the Government were to bring in suitable measures they would support the Government in passing those measures.

The PREMIER was very glad to hear the announcement just made by the leader of the Labour party. No Government could exist on the principles on which the last division was taken. There was one solid phalanx, consisting of the present Opposition voting on principle against the Government, no matter what might be the question, simply for the purpose of defeating the Government. When he informed the Governor that he believed that was the case, he made the statement from what he read of their programme during the general election, from what he had seen of their conduct while the Assembly had been sitting, and from what the hon. member for Burke admitted to be their principle of action in the debate on Wednesday night. He was glad to know that the party had come to common sense. It was impossible to carry on the Government on the principle to which he had referred, if there

was to be any encouragement given them from any other part of the House. If other members were weak enough to support the Opposition they could defeat the Government, but they could not form a Government to carry on the business of the country, and that was what was wanted. The hon. member for Toowoomba objected to another part of the information given to the Governor—namely, that several members, not attached to the Labour party but in opposition to the Government, voted against the measure for the latter reason alone, and against the interests of their constituents. He was glad to hear the hon. member admit that he had voted conscientiously on the matter, as he did not believe in the principle of the Bill. It was wonderful how readily the hon. member fitted on the cap, and he would admit now that when he made that suggestion to the Governor it was members like the hon. member for Toowoomba that he had in his mind. He believed he was telling His Excellency the truth, and he believed now that if that hon. member had been consulting his own interests, and the interests of his constituency, he would have gone straight for the Bill. If there was one member in the House from whose principles, as stated to the House in bygone years, he should have more thoroughly relied upon than another to support the Bill, it was the hon. member for Toowoomba. The hon. member had always professed himself to be a pronounced protectionist, although he had occasionally seen him lapsing from the true path when he had some particular point to make against the Government. He should have thought the hon. member had the agricultural interests of his district at heart, and there was nothing more calculated to benefit that industry than the Bill before the Committee. Besides, Toowoomba was a centre, and an increasing centre, for locomotive work, and if the hon. member had had the interests of his constituents in his mind he would have known that nothing could be better for them than an increase in the number of engines and wagons plying on the south-western line. For those reasons he had expected that the hon. member would have voted for the Bill and supported the Government. At the same time he accepted the hon. member's assurance that he had voted conscientiously against the Bill, although the hon. member was quite wrong, and ought to have voted for it.

Mr. LEAHY said he quite agreed with the hon. member for Toowoomba that in forcing the Bill through committee the Premier was adopting an unconstitutional practice. That hon. member was not only an old member of the House, he had also been its Speaker, and consequently ought to know the rules and forms of the House, and he challenged the Government to quote one precedent for the practice they wanted to drag on the Committee into adopting. There was no doubt that a majority of hon. members were opposed to the Bill, and that it would have been lost by a large majority but for personal regard to the Premier. The hon. gentleman told them the other night that he was not going to carry on the Government of the country by the casting vote of the Speaker. What was he doing now unless he had dragooned some of his followers into it, as was evidently the case by the look of things on the other side. He had no desire to quote articles from newspapers to the Committee, but he would advise hon. members to read the articles on the subject which had appeared a day or two ago in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, and also an article in the *Melbourne Argus*, which compared Queensland to the petty republics of South America. That was the opinion of disinterested parties.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Victoria is more interested in this question than any other part of Australia.

Mr. LEAHY said Victoria had no direct interest in the question before the Committee. The Premier had taken upon himself to lecture hon. members on that side as to what was their duty to their constituents. The hon. members themselves were the best judges of that; it was a matter for which they were responsible to their constituents alone. The Premier was certainly doing all he could to benefit his constituents in North Brisbane. The whole of the colony was to be taxed to pamper that great octopus, the Brisbane River. The question before the Committee was that the preamble be postponed. But the entire argument for the Bill was contained in the preamble, and the hon. gentleman wanted to postpone the argument until he had pushed the Bill through. Besides there were certain statements in the preamble which were not the fact. One was that large sums of money had been expended by the Government in extending and maintaining railway communication to the south-western district of the colony with the object of promoting agricultural and pastoral settlement. He (Mr. Leahy) totally denied that. The line was run in a north-westerly direction, and its object was not to secure the south-western traffic, but to secure the trade that ought legitimately to go to Rockhampton. The preamble ought to be dealt with at once, as it contained the whole argument for the Bill.

The PREMIER said the whole of the hon. member's speech—and he a new member, too—was nothing else than an attempt on his part to dragoon himself (the Premier) and the other members of the Ministry. As to the opinion of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, he had not for years regarded the opinion of that journal any more than that of any other old woman in Sydney. The hon. member had told them that Victoria, who was not interested, was against them also, but Victoria was very much interested. He had expected to hear thunders of dissent, but the humble remarks of the Engineer-in-Chief in Sydney was worth all their thunders—that if the Bill was carried they might just as well shut up the line to Bourke. That was what had had weight with him. When a young member suggested that they should observe constitutional practice, and not carry on the Government with a majority of one, he called that a cheeky proposal. The hon. member for Toowoomba could have informed the hon. member that he had been himself a member of a majority of one that kept a Ministry in for a whole session, and enabled them to carry important measures; and that one of that majority was carried into the Chamber on a stretcher from a sick bed which he had not previously left for weeks. As another example: the Valley Railway was carried by a majority of one, and that the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees; and he (the Premier) was one of those who voted against that railway.

Mr. DRAKE said the result of the debate on the second reading appeared to be that some members were constrained to vote for the Bill, as they did not wish to displace the Government, and others had to vote against it notwithstanding the fact that they would be very sorry if their vote put the Government out. All that tended to show that in the opinion of the majority the Bill was radically bad. The Premier had explained that he did not discuss the merits of the Bill at all with the Governor, but there was the tacit understanding that the Bill was a good Bill in the interests of the colony, and that, after all, was the whole matter in dispute. The hon. gentleman, starting from the point

that the Bill was a good one, said that members on the Opposition side voted against it from a purely party spirit. That was very unfair, because the hon. gentleman admitted in the same breath that sometimes supporters of the Government who voted against the Bill, did so reluctantly, because they would not like to displace the Government. The Bill was put forward as being a protectionist measure, but he could not regard it as such, and had never in the course of his reading come across a measure of that kind recommended as a protectionist measure. He had spoken briefly on the second reading, but still held the opinion he then expressed. His primary objection to the Bill was that it was calculated to create ill-will between this colony and New South Wales. It could not achieve the end in view unless New South Wales remained passive. If it was admitted that retaliation was possible, the arguments in support of the Bill fell to the ground.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the hon. member for Enoggera, on the second reading of the Bill, commenced by raking up some matters connected with the Bank of England, and then brought in the question of retaliation; and knowing the professions of that hon. member in regard to protection, he considered that the Premier would be perfectly right in having the hon. member, as well as the hon. member for Toowoomba, in his mind when he intimated to His Excellency the reasons guiding hon. members opposite in opposing the Bill. He had always looked upon the hon. member as a protectionist, but he could not continue to do so. He had himself given his adhesion to the policy of protection as a good economic policy, and on natural grounds for the benefit of the nation. In the Bill they had a measure of undiluted protection.

Mr. GROOM: No.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the hon. member for Toowoomba had said the Bill was "a Bill to secure Queensland traffic for Queensland railways," and he would have considered it a protectionist measure if it had been "a measure to secure Queensland trade for Queensland people."

Mr. GROOM: I did not say so.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL understood the hon. gentleman to say so. That was "a measure to secure Queensland trade for Queensland people;" and whether they call it protection or not, it was protection. What was the use of a man saying he was a protectionist and voting against a protectionist measure? A man's loyalty to a principle was proved by the way he applied it to a particular question. The hon. member for Bulloo seemed to show peculiar suspicion of what he thought was a hideous plot to get the Bill through without discussion. He would advise the hon. member not to be so belligerent and bellicose.

Mr. FISHER would not have spoken but for the reasons given by the Premier to His Excellency the Governor as to why the Bill was practically defeated. His position was perfectly clear. He did not believe all measures had been taken to settle the matter by conciliatory means. Temper had been shown by both sides. The measure should be withdrawn, and every means used to prevent friction between the two colonies. If the Commissioners or the Premiers of the two colonies could not settle the question, then, he believed, the good sense of the people would demand that someone should take office who would avert a war of tariffs. He had voted against the measure on principle. It was not a protectionist measure. Protectionist measures were for the purpose of encouraging local industries, but the Bill would check local industry.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Will wool stop growing on the sheep's back?

Mr. FISHER: If they put on a big tax, it must be paid for in wages, and that must retard the growth of wool. To do unnecessary work must be a loss to the State.

Mr. ALLAN did not wish to give any captious opposition to the Bill, but he did not consider it in any way a protectionist measure. It seemed to him a handicap upon the producer, inasmuch as people were to be compelled to pay a tax of £2 10s. a ton for exporting their wool across the border. The tax would not hurt the people of the adjoining colony so much as the people of this colony, who were producing the wool and paying wages. He wished it to be thoroughly understood that he was not in any way in sympathy with the action of the New South Wales Commissioners in pirating Queensland, but he did think the difficulty might have been settled in an easier way.

Mr. MACFARLANE maintained that the Bill embodied the principle of self-protection, and the question was whether they were justified in protecting themselves. They were not the aggressors, and if by passing the Bill they simply defended themselves against the aggressors, every loyal member should be in favour of the Bill. He had been perfectly astonished at the strong feelings expressed in favour of it in Ipswich. Ipswich had frequently opposed the squatters' and protectionist Governments; but in the present situation, almost without exception, every voter he had come into contact with had given credit to the Premier for the manner in which he had dealt with that grievance, and for not knuckling down to New South Wales. Parliament had voted hundreds of thousands of pounds for the construction of railways to the far West, and had voted £100,000 to protect the squatters against the rabbits; and yet they now turned round and showed their gratitude by voting against the Government. He had never been more proud of the Premier than when he put down his foot the other day. He had often been opposed to him, but on this occasion he had done the right thing, and had received the gratitude, not only of his (Mr. Macfarlane's) constituents, but of all the people he had come in contact with.

The HON. G. THORN had always been a unionist, although he did not believe in the new unionism, and regretted that the carriers had been taking produce to the stations from Charleville and bringing wool back at ruinous rates lately. This Bill would cure that, and ensure a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. He was surprised at the attitude of the Labour members towards the Bill, and had always contended that the new unionism had not raised wages at all. He could not reconcile the vote the hon. member for South Brisbane gave the other night with the fact that his constituents would greatly benefit by the Bill. The amount of traffic that went from Queensland to New South Wales railways was more like £80,000 than £40,000, because many of the old cattle stations on the Warrego had gone in for sheep lately. Queensland had built the railways, and should have the traffic. He was surprised at the simplicity of the hon. member for Bulloo in reference to the Melbourne *Argus*, because the passing of the Bill would imperil the very existence of Melbourne. The *Argus* expected reprisals to be made by New South Wales, and the Riverina trade that now went to Melbourne would go to Sydney. The more he studied the question the more he favoured the Bill, one reason being that he was a strong anti-federationist. He hoped the Labour party would assist in raising the carriers' wages, and allow the Bill to go on.

Mr. McDONALD was sorry that the hon. member was not a new unionist; and if he was such a strong anti-federationist, how could he support the present Government? The Bill would not raise the wages of carriers one iota. Any further tax would only have the effect of reducing them. In his district they had the strongest carriers' union in the colony, and the Pastoralists' Association had made every effort to reduce wages. At the present time they were advertising free teams all over Queensland. He and all members of the Labour party came here to vote for measures and not for men, and it did not matter who introduced a Bill; if it were for the benefit of the colony they would support it. The party had held no caucus, but each member had been given a free hand in respect to this measure.

Mr. HARDACRE contended that the Premier was unjust in saying that the Labour party opposed the Bill because the Government had introduced it. He was in favour of retaining all Queensland trade, but did not believe in the proposed method. They were all too apt to look at legislative measures from a North Brisbane point of view. It was constantly complained that the colony was being governed for the sake of Brisbane; and similarly this proposal was only to benefit the trade of Brisbane, and raise the value of Brisbane property. The Bill would undoubtedly injure some of the people living on the southern border.

The PREMIER said the hon. member, in trying to throw a slur on the Government, was rather besmirching the hon. member for South Brisbane, for the interests of North and South Brisbane were closely connected. With regard to the unions opposing that measure, a deputation had waited on him the previous day, in which there were several men connected with a particular constituency in which there were two unions, and they told him that the member they came to speak about had voted entirely against their ideas. The Bill had not much to do with protection, and he would not take up time discussing that subject, but he might state that a deputation from the Protection League had informed him that they entirely approved of the action of the Government in that matter.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS (Hon. A. H. Barlow) would address himself to the remark made by one hon. member that protectionists were opposed to the measure because they were afraid of retaliation. If protectionists were afraid of retaliation, there would never be any protection at all. One of the ablest men in New South Wales, who had unfortunately been rejected from its legislature, Mr. W. E. Abbott, wrote a letter, in which he said the Premier approached the subject of that Bill with the directness "characteristic of a savage or a man of executive genius"; and he (Mr. Barlow) believed that the Premier had taken the direct and proper course, and that the Bill would be approved of by the country and by the Committee. As to what had been done for the squatters, he would point out that nearly £170,000 had been spent in endowments on that part of the colony for the purpose of keeping out rabbits—£126,632 under the old system, and £42,497 since rabbit boards were created. Mr. Eddy, the Chief Commissioner in New South Wales, had distinctly given himself away when he stated that "if it were not for the South Queensland traffic the Bourke line might as well be shut up, as it was really created to a great extent to serve South Queensland." There was another line creeping up towards the Queensland border—the line from Narrabri to Moree. Where it would

tap the border was a matter for the New South Wales Parliament to decide, but once it did touch the border the whole of the Darling Downs agricultural produce would be very seriously affected, and the Bill before the Committee was a warning to the New South Wales Government in that connection. The Commissioners for New South Wales had made a great deal of fuss about what they asserted were the comparatively high railway rates charged in Queensland, which they stated were almost equal to their average rate of 1 62d. per ton per mile. But, as hon. members would see from a paragraph in the *Courier*, the rate from Cobarr to Sydney was 2 67d.; from Molong to Sydney, 3 31d.; from Tarrawan to Sydney, 3d.; and from Burragong to Sydney, 3 09d. per ton per mile. There could not be a doubt that the differential rates between Sydney and Bourke were a direct encroachment on Queensland traffic. It had been persistently asserted by some hon. members that that Bill was a tax. If it was a tax at all, it was only a prohibition against the use of an unjust and unfair advantage which was extended to certain persons in one part of the colony. The Bill was not introduced as a revenue measure; but in the division west of the Paroo and north of the 29th parallel, to which the New South Wales differential rate of £2 14s. 6d. applied, there were nearly 800,000 sheep, and it was not a fair thing that they should allow all the produce from that district to be carried by the New South Wales railways. As to the argument that carriers would be mulcted in the £2 10s. export duty, he did not think they were nearly so soft as that; before they started loading wool to carry it across the boundary they would take very good care to have all the papers and documents to enable them to pay the duty. He hoped the Bill would pass, because he believed it was a proper Bill. He was not the least afraid of any unfavourable consequences. He believed that when the Government were armed with that measure the New South Wales Commissioners would come to reason, and the Bill would remain on the statute-book to be used only in case of need.

Mr. DRAKE said that what he had said was, that he was afraid of retaliation, and did not regard the Bill as a measure of protection at all. The Premier stated that he had received a deputation from the Protection League, of which he (Mr. Drake) was a vice-president, and from which he had received a note; but some time before the league had considered black labour a protectionist measure, and required all true protectionists to vote for black labour candidates. That had nearly resulted in his severing his connection with the league. If they were going to regard every question the Premier wished to pass as one of protection, he would begin to regard it as too sectional for any real protectionist. If the Bill passed, New South Wales would probably retaliate, particularly if the Chief Commissioner was correct in stating that the Bourke railway might as well be shut up if the Bill passed. Sir George Dibbs was an avowed protectionist, and he might retaliate by imposing a stock tax and also a tax on all stock travelling through New South Wales. Those measures would be acceptable to the protectionists in that colony as protecting their graziers and farmers. Such taxes would be injurious to Queensland, and might very soon compel her to reconsider her position.

The PREMIER said that if the hon. member thought the Government of New South Wales would attempt such retaliatory legislation rather than attempt to get a similar advantage at the expense of Victoria, he knew nothing about the subject. Did the hon. member think that New

South Wales would benefit herself by keeping out Queensland stock? That showed he knew nothing of the stock business either.

Mr. DRAKE contended that she might not do it to benefit herself, but to put herself right in that matter. People did not always act in their own interests when they went to war.

The PREMIER said they were not all fools in New South Wales, and he did not think it would be such a sad thing for Queensland if New South Wales put a tax on their stock. That colony had declined already to do that, not because it would be doing an unfriendly action towards Queensland, but because it was against her own interests. The effect of such a tax would be that the stock would all be retained in this colony, and the Government would have to take measures, as they intended to do, to see that the whole of it was dealt with in Queensland. That would have exactly the same effect as the action the Government were taking with regard to the railways.

Mr. LEAHY wished to correct the impression the Secretary for Lands was under. What he had said on the second reading was that at about 35 miles north from the southern boundary the cattle runs along the border terminated. From 28½ degrees north to about the 27th parallel was a belt of cattle country, and to the north of that came sheep country. He had rather over-estimated the wool produce of the cattle country when he had given it as 37 tons. Hon. members on the other side seemed to make light of the reprisals which would most probably be made.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. member that the question is "That the preamble be postponed." On that he cannot refer to the debate which took place the other night.

Mr. LEAHY contended that as he was only replying to what the Premier had said, and as the Chairman held the scales of justice impartially, if that hon. gentleman had been out of order, of course he was out of order also.

The PREMIER: Obey the ruling of the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to point out that the question is "That the preamble be postponed." The preamble itself is not yet before the Committee. In fact there is no clause before the Committee. When a clause is before the Committee there will be something tangible to discuss.

Mr. MOREHEAD said that surely the preamble must be tangible. If it was to be postponed it must have an existence.

Mr. LEAHY had no wish to dispute the Chairman's ruling. He was referring to the preamble, which contained the whole argument of the Bill. The Premier had told them that the preamble was an entire departure, but that it laid down certain arguments—

The PREMIER said the hon. member showed he did not understand what had been said. He had stated that it had not been the practice lately to have preambles, but that the Bill was an exception to that custom. It was a very good thing to have a preamble if they could afford to state one, and he could well afford to state a preamble in that case.

Mr. LEAHY said that hon. members opposite had treated with contempt the remarks of the leading papers of New South Wales and Victoria, although when it had previously suited them they had quoted them as deserving of attention. He had been informed on good authority that the Government of New South Wales intended, if the Bill passed, imposing a stock tax, and also a tax on cattle travelling through to Victoria.

Mr. MURRAY said the Bill did not affect his constituency much, but had it been introduced for the purpose of protection he would have been strongly opposed to it. The necessity for dealing with the question had arisen through the blundering of previous Governments in being more anxious to secure the Northern and North-west trade, to the neglect of the border interests. Had the Southern and Western Railway been run further south, the Bill would never have been required. The Bill affected the Crown tenants in that part of the colony, who had secured their leases on the distinct understanding that they would be permitted to send their produce to the nearest and cheapest port. It appeared to him to be a breach of faith with those tenants. If it was intended to compel them to send their produce along Queensland railways, that ought to have been a condition in granting their leases. The Bill would also interfere in a great degree with the principle of federation, which it was very desirable to see accomplished.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD said that if the Bill was merely intended as a warning to other colonies to keep their hands off our railway traffic, there was some reasonableness in bringing it forward. It was of no use to threaten, unless one was prepared to strike; and when the striking came it would do a great injustice to a large number of the pastoral tenants. The practice of sending their wool to market by the cheapest route was to be interfered with in order that it might be brought to Brisbane along the Queensland railway. That might possibly benefit him individually, but he did not want to see those men put to disadvantage. Something was said by the Secretary for Lands with regard to the erection of rabbit-proof fencing. Was that fence erected to defend the people in that particular district, or was it a national undertaking to defend the whole colony? If the Bill were of a national character he would give it the same support as he gave to all rabbit legislation. The pastoral tenants in that part of the colony received practically no benefit from the extension of our railways. Years before the western line was extended as far as Roma and beyond, the whole of their produce went to New South Wales, and there was no outcry on their part for railway extension. There was a great deal to be said on the side of the Government; but the pastoral tenants on the border, who were so unfortunately situated geographically, had a right to consideration. Of course, the Colonial Treasurer might grant exemptions on the recommendation of the Commissioners; but was that a fair position in which to place any Minister?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They may be left out.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: If the Bill was to be worth anything it should be compulsory. The 8th clause said that a certain thing might be done on the recommendation of the Commissioners, and that provision apparently would have the effect of dislocating the backbone of the Bill. If the intention of the measure was that the colony should not lose the revenue to be derived from the traffic in question it should say definitely that the pastoral tenants must bring their produce to some Queensland railway or else they would be penalised. He had no desire to put any defeat on the Government; but he must see that the interests of his constituents were not jeopardised.

Mr. FOGARTY said he wanted to remove the erroneous impression from the mind of the Premier that hon. members on the Opposition side were prepared to vote against the Government irrespective of measures. Speaking for

himself, it was hardly correct, and probably when he was better known in the House that opinion would not be held of him. In voting against the measure, he thought he was voting in the interests of his constituents. Possibly he was not, but he had formed his opinion, and had the courage to stand by it. The method proposed was, to his mind, a very undesirable way of dealing with the question, as its tendency would be to create angry feelings. The strongest reason he had heard in favour of the Bill was that given by the hon. member for Fassifern, who stated that he supported the Bill as an anti-federationist. He had no doubt the Government were actuated by the best motives in introducing the measure, and that they were as honest in supporting it as he was in opposing it. The Premier stated that it would bring railway workshops to Toowoomba. That was a very old cry. A similar statement was made in 1887, by the accredited candidate of the present Premier, who stated publicly at Toowoomba that in the event of that hon. gentleman being successful at the polls, a portion of the Ipswich railway works would be removed to Toowoomba. That promise was not carried out. He believed the object of the Bill could be defeated by the people living near the border erecting their sheds on the New South Wales side. If the neighbours on either side of the border were friendly, as in the majority of cases they were, they would shear in rotation, and the expenses would be no greater than if they shored on the Queensland border. But the wool would not go to the port of Sydney so long as the Darling was navigable; the chief object of supplies and produce going in that direction was the cheap water carriage. It would also bring about a feeling the reverse of friendly between the mother colony and Queensland, and it needed not a prophet to foresee that there would be acts of retaliation between the two colonies, from which Queensland would be the sufferer. The Premier ridiculed the idea of a stock tax being imposed by New South Wales, possibly because it would have the effect of increasing the price of meat, as it was alleged to have done in Victoria. He had heard that very argument used in the train that day by a gentleman who evidently believed in the truthfulness of it; but, on subsequently looking over the papers, he found that meat was remarkably cheap in Melbourne at the present time. Why penalise the unfortunate squatters living in that particular locality? It was the principal industry in the colony, and one towards which he had a kindly feeling. If it were wished to make those men use the Queensland railways, let it be done in a legitimate way by lowering the freights. It was an open question which had been the aggressor in the matter, Queensland or New South Wales; each accused the other, and he could not say which was right. As an illustration of the way in which rumours flew about, he might say that only last Saturday he met a gentleman near Robinson's auction mart at Toowoomba, who told him that the produce merchants there were up in arms against him for having voted against the Bill. The gentleman mentioned the name of a large produce merchant, and on inquiry he found that there was not the shadow of a foundation for the rumours that were going about. It was also stated that large orders from Charleville had been cancelled in consequence of the opposition to the Bill. On inquiry into that he found that there had not been a single order from the Charleville district cancelled. That was unfair warfare, and people should confine themselves to the truth. He was no blind party man, and was quite prepared to support the Government on any measures which he thought were for the benefit

of the country. In proof of that he might state that in one of the three or four divisions which had taken place he had voted with the Government. As to his not representing his constituents, he had made them no promise on the subject, but he now promised that if a petition asking him to resign was sent him, signed by a majority of the electors on the present roll, he would do so within twenty-four hours after receiving it.

Mr. PLUNKETT wished to say a few words, as he had been prevented from speaking on the second reading, owing to the abrupt termination of the debate. That part of the preamble of the Bill which set forth that differential rates on the railway lines of the neighbouring colonies diverted traffic which should be conveyed over the lines of Queensland, and it was desirable to prevent that diversion of traffic, was in his opinion quite true, and the gist of the whole matter. In his opinion the Premier and the Government would not have done their duty if they had not taken action to conserve the interests of the colony they were called upon to govern. They knew that the trade of the south-western part of the colony had been pilfered by New South Wales for years, to the great detriment of this colony. The position seemed to him like that of a highwayman demanding a traveller's purse, and when met by a refusal denouncing the traveller as the aggressor. With respect to the remarks of the hon. member for Bulloo, as to repudiation on the ground that the lessees in that portion of the colony had had their rents fixed at a high rate because they were close to a market, if there was anything in that argument it should be met by a reduction of the rents. It was very unfair of New South Wales to treat a neighbouring colony as she had treated Queensland. They had treated the people in that part of the colony fairly so far as he knew, and property had its duties as well as its rights; and if they could give those men equal rates to Brisbane, the Queensland railways should have the preference in securing the trade. The Bill was a measure of protection and nothing else, and he could not account for professed protectionists voting against it. Not long since they had had a debate upon some means of finding work for the unemployed, and yet the Premier in introducing that Bill, which would give work to their own carriers, railwaymen, and draymen, was met with opposition from members who thought something should be done for the unemployed. The Bill should be gladly received by any member in the Committee who desired to see things improve and to find work for the unemployed. It had been said that it was a paltry thing for the Government to introduce the Bill, but a saving in these times of £30,000 or £40,000, or even £10,000, was not a paltry thing. Hon. members had made a huge mistake in voting as they had done the other night. He did not think the Premier was met at all fairly on that occasion. The measure was not introduced for his own good but for the good of the colony; and he thought the functions of any Government ought to be to do their best for the colony they governed. In that instance he thought the Government had acted on that principle. He believed the Chief Secretary regretted as much as anyone the difference that had arisen between Queensland and New South Wales; but he had looked to the interests of the colony when introducing the measure. The hon. gentleman had given proof that all his thoughts and ideas were for the benefit of Queensland. He (Mr. Plunkett) represented a Southern constituency, and so that it might be understood that he spoke with unselfish motives, he might say that if a stock tax was levied by

New South Wales it would for a little while affect the interests of his constituents. He did not think, however, that the New South Wales people came here and bought cattle simply for their love of Queensland. New South Wales apparently did not so much want federation as to absorb everything in the shape of trade that it could get. He was glad to see the hon. member for Enoggera taking up the cause of the squatters. It was the first time he had ever done so, and no one during the past few years had been more severe on the iniquities of the squatters than the hon. member.

Mr. DRAKE: I think you are wrong.

Mr. PLUNKETT: He thought they would be doing very wisely if they left selfishness and party feeling out of the question altogether, and worked together as one united body. He was not a squatter or a capitalist; but he had come there to try and do his best for the colony, and any measure which, in his opinion, was for the ultimate good of the colony would have his support, independent of any party.

Mr. BROWNE, as one of those who both spoke and voted against the second reading of the Bill, rose to deny that he voted through party motives. With the Labour party it was an understood thing, before the second reading, that every man was left a free hand in the matter. He had listened very earnestly to all the reasons in favour of the Bill, and felt more inclined to vote against it now than he did before. It seemed a most extraordinary Bill. One gentleman protested it was a tax, and would benefit the country. Another said it was not a tax. One gentleman protested strongly that it was a strong protectionist measure, and wondered how protectionists could vote against it. Then, again, another made an earnest appeal to the freetraders to support it, and pointed out how employment would be given to shipping men and men on the wharves. Another hon. member wondered how the squatters could possibly vote against it, on account of all the good it would do to them; another wondered how any of the Labour members could vote against it, considering the benefit they would derive under the Bill, pointing out how philanthropic the squatters were likely to be—that immediately they were charged an extra £2 10s. per ton on their wool they would give the carrier a similar amount. He had not got such a high opinion of the squatters as to believe that when they were smitten on one cheek they would turn the other. He did not think that they would hand over to the carrier another £2 10s. to carry their wool, nor did he believe that the passage of the Bill would give a great amount more work. The wool must be carried one way or the other; and if the squatters were going to be charged extra, he believed the result would be in the end that the unfortunate carriers would have to bear the burden of the tax. He had been waiting very anxiously, expecting for someone to get up and point out why the Northern separationists should vote for the Bill. There was only one reason he could see why they should vote for it, and that was, that it would create about as much dissatisfaction in the south-west as there was in the northern portion of the colony. There seemed, according to hon. members opposite, to be something in the Bill calculated to suit everybody. The more he considered the matter, the more he felt satisfied with the vote he had given on the second reading. He did not regret it, and gave it as an individual and not as a member of any party.

Mr. SMITH said the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Fogarty, said if a tax was levied on wool passing over the border, New South

Wales would inflict a stock tax; and in the same breath he said that if the Bill passed the people in the south-west of the colony would take their sheep over the border and shear them in New South Wales. If the stock tax was imposed by New South Wales, he presumed that it would be an effectual deterrent to any attempt to take sheep over the border to shear. It had been said that the present trouble had arisen from the railway being taken too much to the north-west instead of to the south-west. But they had to take things as they found them, and the question materially affected the Treasury. The whole object was to secure Queensland trade for Queensland railways, but no Government would penalise particular individuals to compel them to send their wool to Brisbane instead of to Sydney. The boundary for the purposes of the Bill had not yet been fixed, and he presumed all the stations that could send wool to Sydney much cheaper than to Brisbane would be left outside. He could understand how the Sydney Chamber of Commerce would have looked at the matter if the Queensland Commissioners had trespassed upon the New South Wales traffic, and wondered why the Brisbane Chamber of Commerce had not taken the matter up. As it was, they had to thank the Queensland Commissioners for calling attention to the subject. In the year 1891 they tried to settle the question amicably with the New South Wales Commissioners, but nothing was done. He could not understand why the Labour representatives should object to a Bill that would bring work to the labouring classes here. There was no money to extend the line southward now, although he believed the Government would extend it if they could. The New South Wales railways were a menace to Queensland at present, and if they refused to pass the Bill they would lose more revenue than they anticipated.

Mr. HOOLAN wished to know the exact position the Government were in regarding the Bill. The matter should be thoroughly understood. The Government claimed that the division of last week was a surprise, and otherwise tried to tone down the weakness of their position in regard to the Bill. The Ministry were saved from wreck by the casting vote of the Speaker, and the head of the Government decided that he would not retain office under such circumstances. But now they were going on with the Bill, and could that course be taken as a precedent to guide their future actions? A strong opposition was being formed, and some very close divisions might be expected. He might occupy the Treasury benches some day, and wished to know whether it would be right for him to continue there if he could only carry his Bills for revenue purposes and for the peaceful government of the country by the casting vote of the Speaker?

Mr. DANIELS maintained that it was unfair to tax the people in one particular part of the colony, and said he had been accused of voting against the second reading upon very narrow views. It was said that he was hurt because differential railway rates had been imposed in his electorate, under which wool was carried forty miles for nothing. It was said that, by passing that measure, they would assist to improve the condition of the labouring classes, as the retention in the colony of the south-western traffic would give work to a considerable number of people. If the Government would continue the Pittsworth Railway in the direction of Goondiwindi they would get that trade by legitimate means, and there would be no occasion for a war with the neighbouring colony. There was plenty of labour available, the railway could be made cheaply, and it would pay from the start, as it

would open up millions of acres of the grandest timber and agricultural land in the colony. They had millions of money for other purposes, and no doubt money could be found for that work. He would vote against the Bill, because it would, if passed, be the means of putting off for some time the construction of a railway through Goondiwindi.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: What would be the use of that railway after all the traffic has gone the other way?

Mr. DANIELS: To bring it back again.

Mr. DUNSFORD found it hard to believe that the massive intellect of the erstwhile "nationalist" Premier was responsible for that Bill. By introducing such a measure the hon. gentleman had earned the title of parochial Premier, because, looked at from an Australian standpoint, that was a parochial proposal. The hon. gentleman was also very inconsistent, as was apparent from the fact that while he had a motion on the notice paper which was intended to hasten federation, he was actually putting through a Bill which would have the effect of blocking it for a long time. The quarrel was not one between the Parliament of New South Wales and the Parliament of Queensland, because the Premier had never approached the Premier of New South Wales on the subject, but it was a quarrel between two sets of Railway Commissioners, and such a measure as that under consideration ought not to have been introduced until all other means of settling the matter had been exhausted.

Mr. McMASTER thought that, as a free-trader, he might have had some excuse if he had voted against the Government on the second reading of the Bill, but he could not understand how hon. members who had preached protection in that House for years could vote against the Bill. In the division on the second reading they had witnessed the most extraordinary spectacle of squatters and the leaders of the shearers' strike sitting and voting together in order to defeat a Government who were trying to get the country out of its difficulties. Among those who voted with the leader of the Opposition; the hon. member for Burke, were the hon. member for Cunningham, the hon. member for Balonne, and several other members who usually supported the Government. The hon. member for Cambooya asked that the railway should be extended, apparently not caring one iota who bore the burden of that undertaking so long as he could justify his vote, which was probably against the interests of his constituents. According to his argument the squatter on the border was to be protected, but every other taxpayer must pay the interest on the railways. If the western traffic were retained in the colony, as it ought to be, it would create employment, not only for men out West, but for men all the way from the station to the port—for shearers, carriers, railway men, and those engaged in the carriage works at Nundah, Ipswich, Toowoomba, and Maryborough. The Bill would cause a larger number of men to be employed on the railways in unloading it, carrying it to the wharves, and shipping it, and more sailors would be employed in taking the wool to London. It would help to make Brisbane, or whatever port the trade might go to, what hon. members were endeavouring to make Sydney. New South Wales was trying to divert trade to Sydney that should legitimately come to Brisbane, and why should that Committee assist in such a scheme? A great deal had been said about exhibiting a kindly feeling towards New South Wales, but New South Wales cared very little about kindly feeling so long as they got the money of the people of Queensland. If

the Government had sat quiet, knowing that the colony was losing even £20,000, they would be unworthy of their position. It was the duty of hon. members to back up the Government, and see that they kept what was their own trade, and that both ends were made to meet. There was no such thing as an out-and-out freetrader or protectionist. They had seen the hon. member for Toowoomba, who had always posed as a champion of protection as the only means of saving the colony, voting against the Bill, whilst he (Mr. McMaster), a pronounced fairtrader, had voted for it. No one had a right to injure the colony in order to carry out his own personal ideas. The Government had seen the necessity of introducing the Bill, and, as the hon. member for Fassifern had said, with back-loading the revenue to be derived would probably be more like £80,000 than £40,000. Everyone would benefit from that trade. Hon. members had laughed at his reference to Brisbane, but if Brisbane was prosperous the whole of the colony would be prosperous also. Those hon. members who were supposed to represent labour did not represent labour as much as he did. Not one of those hon. members was as genuine a working man as he was; and only that day a deputation had waited on him in another capacity to ask him to impress upon the Government the necessity of finding employment for those out of work. Yet the very men who were supposed to represent the labouring classes were voting to send traffic to Sydney, instead of allowing it to come to Brisbane. He was astonished at the action of the Labour party. If the Government were able to get money to spend, public works would go on, and the men now walking about the streets would find work. He was more surprised, however, at some other hon. members opposite voting against the interests of their constituents. He was not sufficiently acquainted with the interior to know whether any of the trade could go to any Northern port, but if not, then it should be brought to Brisbane. Brisbane had a great deal more right to it than Newcastle or Sydney. Sydney was so situated that it drew all the traffic of the colony to itself, and were it not for the coal trade it would not allow even Newcastle to exist. Queensland, however, had a number of ports, so that all the traffic could not possibly be diverted to one place. Certainly if the trade was secured to Brisbane, the Darling Downs would reap the greater part of the benefit, as they would supply the produce for the carriers and their stock which at present was obtained from New South Wales. It appeared to him that they had made up their minds to vote against and oust the Government at any cost, whether it would be for the good of the colony or not. How those who were supposed to represent labour could vote against the Bill, he was at a loss to know, except on the principle that they were against the Government.

Mr. HOOLAN: That is a very good principle, isn't it?

Mr. GRIMES thought the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Dunsford, had not read the correspondence between the Queensland and New South Wales Railway Commissioners, or he would not have said that every means had not been taken to settle the matter amicably. It was evident from the correspondence that every possible means had been used to effect an amicable settlement, or he (Mr. Grimes) would not have been prepared to vote for the Bill. The measure was being opposed on very narrow grounds. Some were afraid that it might lead to reprisals which would affect them in their electorates; others declined to support it from personal considerations. He was surprised at the opposition

of members representing farming constituencies on the Darling Downs, seeing how the New South Wales Commissioners were backed up by the Sydney Chamber of Commerce, whose evident object was to send to a certain portion of Queensland the food supplies that ought to be obtained from the Darling Downs. He was informed that day by one of the constituents of the hon. member for Cunningham that there was a strong feeling against that hon. member in Allora for his opposition to a measure that would give them an extended market for their breadstuffs. He (Mr. Grimes) was not surprised at the hon. member, however, seeing that he was one of the squatters interested in the part of the colony which would be affected by the Bill. Then there was the fear that the proposed tax might lead to a general export duty on wool, but he thought the good sense of the legislature would prevent that. He hoped the Bill would go through now that additional light had been thrown on the matter. If New South Wales made reprisals he would be amongst those who suffered, but he was prepared to make a personal sacrifice where the general good of the colony was concerned.

Mr. ARMSTRONG said he represented one of the largest farming districts in Queensland, and the interests of his constituents would be best protected by the passage of the Bill. The hon. member for Bulloo stated that it was a petty suggestion on the part of the Government, and that it would touch only a few people. If that was the case, why was there so much opposition? He looked upon the measure from a national point of view. It was one which would benefit the general body of the people, and though it might be detrimental to a small portion of the community, they could afford to be a little patriotic. They must look to the general weal, and we must do the same. With regard to the action being petty, he need only say if the action forced upon Queensland was petty, how much more petty was the action of New South Wales, which had forced it upon the colony? New South Wales was proud of posing as the mother colony of Australia. It was anything but a proud position to have forced upon one of her offspring the necessity of protecting itself against the tyranny of the mother colony. It had also been said, in the House and in the Press, that our Railway Commissioners had in this matter shown themselves to be inferior as commercial men to those of New South Wales. In reply to that it need only be said that it was far more honourable to do as the Queensland Commissioners had done, even at the risk of being called poor commercial men, than to follow the course adopted by the New South Wales Commissioners, and be styled clever commercial men.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. Tozer) said it had been surprising to him to hear from the members of the socialist party, as they liked to be called, that they were not always in opposition to the Government. In the pamphlet published at Blackall, with the object of starting what was to be called the People's Parliamentary Association, and which contained the names of one on the other side, one of the principal propositions was that on being returned to Parliament they should always oppose any Government that did not conform to their own views; and the leader of the party had confirmed that position.

Mr. HOOLAN: I always told you I am going to get there [pointing to the Ministerial bench], and I tell you so now.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said he gave the hon. member credit for consistency in that matter, and, therefore, the Premier was right in

assuming that his object was to always oppose the Government until he could get on the Treasury bench himself. That being so, it was amusing to hear hon. members on that side say that they were voting in accordance with their convictions. There had been several divisions since the session began, and the party seemed to have had an extraordinary accord in their convictions, because they had always voted against the Government. He (the Colonial Secretary) had taken a very active part in the protectionist movement in the colony, and for many years he had assisted in that movement in connection with the junior member for Toowoomba; and he was at a loss to know why they were opposed to one another on the question of that Bill. The hon. member, Mr. Groom, could not possibly be a consistent protectionist and vote against the measure. The hon. member did not say, on the second reading, he was going to vote against it. What he did say was that if the Government proved that the traffic was of sufficient importance to justify the Bill, some measures ought to be taken to secure that traffic to the colony. The hon. member stated that there was a difference between the opposing parties on a question of fact; the Government alleging that the traffic was considerable, and the hon. member for Bulloo that it was inconsiderable. But the Government had shown by facts, which could not be disputed—and which had been confirmed by the statement of Mr. Eddy that the very existence of the Bourke railway depended upon the Queensland traffic—that the question was one of very considerable importance to the colony. Such being the case, if any doubt remained in the mind of the hon. member, he ought to give it in favour of the colony in which he had so long been a resident, and he therefore claimed the hon. member's vote, not only as a protectionist, but on his own statement that steps must be taken to secure that traffic for the Queensland railways. From a protectionist point of view there were two ways of encouraging the industries of the colony. One was to put an impost on foreign manufactures, the other to discourage foreign competition by giving monopolies to their own industries or commerce. That was what the Government were doing; they wanted to monopolise Queensland traffic for Queensland railways. That was protection and self-preservation in the true sense of the word. It had been said that the object of the Government was to penalise their own people, but no attempt had been made to prove the assertion, and certainly the Government could have no object in penalising their own people. The object of the Bill was to erect an artificial boundary on the border such as might be determined by the exigencies of the situation. For the purpose of illustration, he would assume that it was a fence, and that the fence had a slip-rail in it of which the Treasurer had the key. In wet seasons it would be open to everybody; at other times it would be open to all who, from their geographical position, were entitled to go through. Take the case of the station of Tinnenburra, which was right on the border, and for which they could not expect to quote rates that would be an inducement to them to come to Charleville, the slip-rail would be open to them. The Bill itself made provision for all the objections raised by those who talked of penalising their own colonists. The object of the Bill was that if there was a preference it should be given to the colony which had so well protected those properties in respect of which they now sought the trade. The Secretary for Lands drew attention to one or two modes of expenditure by which that part of the colony had benefited, and he could draw

attention to one or two more. In the matter of public buildings that part of the colony had been well served, and recently the Works Department had been quick to reinstate the buildings cast down in Cunnamulla by the cyclone. At the time of the strike New South Wales held her hand, and gave no assistance to the squatters in that part of Queensland, while the Queensland Government, at the earnest request of the station-owners there, went to their assistance; and but for their action in assisting the stations in that locality, he did not believe they would now have any wool to send either to Bourke or to Charleville.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS of the Opposition :
Question !

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Under the circumstances, when the Queensland Government required the financial assistance that trade would give them, it was only fair to expect that, where they had the option, those station-holders, who had been so well protected by the Government of the colony, would make use of the Queensland railways. Those were reasons which should induce the squatters themselves to be patriotic, but many of the owners of stations there were not people who had taken part in Queensland affairs, but persons who were not resident in Queensland, and whose interests in New South Wales were such that they would take their trade to New South Wales even if they lost by so doing. It was necessary, therefore, that Queensland should take some steps for its own protection. So far from penalising their own colonists, those who would be affected by the Bill would not have to pay 6d. more to come by their own railways than they ought to have to pay to go to Bourke. Supposing the Queensland Government had not made the line to Charleville, what would those people have to pay to carry their trade by the Bourke line? And yet members stood up and said those people had not benefited by the extension of the line to Charleville. It was perfect nonsense to say such a thing. They had all benefited by it, and yet they were now trying to take advantage of the fact that New South Wales came up to pirate our trade. They were trying to set colony against colony, and some members of the House were trying to set one portion of the colony against another by suggesting that one of the objects of the Bill was to affect the trade going to Longreach. To state that the introduction of the Bill was an anti-federal movement was only to raise a bogey in favour of New South Wales. Where had New South Wales been on the question of federation? Had Queensland shown an anti-federal spirit when year after year they had sent their best talent at the expense of the colony to assist the cause of federation, while New South Wales stood outside and gave no assistance? What they wanted to do was to prevent their trade being taken away to suit chambers of commerce and commercial institutions in Sydney, and preserve it for the ports of their own colony. As a representative of the Wide Bay district, he said that that district and Maryborough were as much interested in the matter as other portions of the colony, because persons engaged in manufactures there would find their industries stimulated by the assistance the Government would derive from securing that traffic. The Wide Bay district was a large producer of cereals and other products, which might be sent out to the western districts, and be consumed by the carriers and others in those places. Many of the carriers themselves were men who had gone there from the Wide Bay district and left their families behind. The whole colony was directly interested in the

measure, and there was not a single member of the socialist party true to the cause of labour if he opposed that measure, which the Government had introduced for the purpose of assisting the colony, and, in so doing, assisting the cause of labour.

Mr. KINGSBURY thought they had wandered away, to some extent, from the subject before them, which had reference to the preamble of the Bill. The preamble of the Bill distinctly set forth that, as far as they could legitimately, they should prevent the diversion of traffic which should be theirs. The word "legitimately" was the keynote of the whole preamble, and wherever stations were so situated that it would inflict a genuine hardship upon them to come under the provisions of the Bill, the Bill would certainly not apply. No one could object to taking the preamble as it stood, and to preventing differential rates from diverting traffic which used to be, and should legitimately be theirs. Whether they were agreed as to the principle of the Bill or not, every member of the Committee should support the preamble. The preamble of the Bill was extended right into clause 8, in which there was a large amount of protection afforded to wool-growers, or squatters, who, through unfavourable seasons or unfavourable geographical situations, might be injuriously affected by the operation of the Bill. Amongst those who opposed the Bill on principle, he did not include hon. members who professed to champion the rights of labour, because they certainly did not oppose the Bill on principle. It was a Labour measure, if they ever had one, and the Labour men who voted against it would be, to quote from their own paper, "Simply siding with those who would swallow the largest chunk of the Labour platform, to defeat the Government." The battle of the Bill would range round clause 8, where they might consider further safeguards to prevent the Bill operating with harshness and severity upon persons affected by unfavourable seasons or unfavourable geographical position with respect to their own lines. The object of the Bill was to put such a tax on the wool-growers as would be equivalent to the difference between the rates which used to be derived on the Queensland lines and the ruinous rates which now prevailed on the New South Wales lines. The Queensland rates were fair and reasonable until New South Wales cut in for the trade, and they now admitted that without the Queensland trade the line from Bourke was useless. If they wanted a proof that the subject was one of sufficient importance for Queensland to battle for, they found it distinctly stated by Mr. Eddy himself that the welfare of the New South Wales lines depended upon their retaining the trade they had filched from Queensland by unfair means. But the Bill was not being opposed on grounds of argument. It had been said that the cause of the present social system was competition, and competition depressed wages; yet the men who said that would vote in favour of further competition. To meet New South Wales they must reduce their rates again. The New South Wales rate was 1½d. per ton per mile, and Queensland must reduce to ¾d. That was their argument; but they said, "Do not go in for retaliation." What would a further reduction be but retaliation? The New South Wales people had struck them three times in the matter of rates, and still the bogey of retaliation was held out. Who was it that told them that the Bill was anti-federal, and that New South Wales would punish them; that New South Wales was so very strong, and Queensland such a miserable crawler that she would be wiped out if she protected herself? The gentleman who used that

argument was the member for the reservoir—he meant, for Enoggera. Because that hon. member had found nothing in the books he had been reading on protection in favour of such a course of action as that, therefore there was no justification for such a measure. Possibly, if he had referred to the books on arbitration he might have found no argument in favour of ruinous and exorbitant fees being paid to half-fledged legal practitioners. The member for Bulloo said the Bill was a very bad Bill because it was a tax on wool, and he went on to say there was no wool in one district, that it was a cattle district. That was a fair sample of the class of argument they had been treated to—men who opposed the Bill through personal or party motives. As to the question of reducing wages, he saw a strong article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* with regard to competition and the rate of wages, which bore directly on that Bill. One of the leading merchants in Sydney, championing the cause of the up-country squatters and farmers, asked why they were crushed—because of the tremendous expense of their railway system. He said the railway system was crushing the producing industry, and went on to say that he had got from the Government Statistician and the Railway Department a statement of wages paid, and he found in the railway system of New South Wales that £1,200,000 was paid in wages, and that if the same rate prevailed there as in England, only £600,000 would have been paid. Competition would certainly force down the wages of the railway men, and if they wanted to keep wages up they must stop competition. He would be credited with the desire to see wages fall, but then he got credited with a great deal that he did not desire. He desired to see wages keep up to the maximum that any industry could afford to pay, and should be very sorry to see the railway wages reduced. But if all Queensland traffic was to be diverted into New South Wales, not only must they reduce wages, but between 100 and 200 men would have to be dismissed. The carriers of New South Wales would, of course, have a good time of it, but he did not see why they should consider them. They had to consider their own carriers and their own railway men. The Chamber of Commerce in Sydney did not care a button about the railways of New South Wales; all they cared about was the enormous importance to Sydney of the local wool sales which had sprung up there. He had statistics in his possession proving that during the last twelve months the amount of wool sold by public auction in Sydney was greater than the entire amount of wool shipped to the old country from Queensland. All the commission, all the handling of that wool was drifting to Sydney; but more than that, that wool had drawn to Sydney three direct lines of steamers—a German line, a French line, and a line from despised China. If they could establish wool sales in Brisbane or Rockhampton, there was no doubt about the advantage to the colony; and he did not see why it should not be done. But he did not see how it would be possible to hope for local wool sales if, for the sake of a fad, for the sake of federation, for the sake of not retaliating, for the sake of turning out a Government, or for the sake of anything else, they were willing to allow their trade to be seized by the grasping Railway Commissioners of a grasping colony. There was no logic or common sense in the whole proceeding.

Mr. FISHER said it had been said that the Labour party had no interest in the colony, and were not capable of giving a straightforward vote. So far as he was concerned, the question was a very local one. It was a question of

feeling between the Railway Commissioners of the two colonies and Ministers, and no argument had been adduced to make him support the Bill. Had the Ministerial majority been less numerous, such a Bill would never have been brought before Parliament. He voted against the Bill because he disapproved of an export duty, and he would rather be out of Parliament altogether than assist in carrying such a measure. Regarding the junior member for North Brisbane's play on words, if he thought there was any argument in that he was mistaken, and it did not appear to him that it would lead to any satisfactory result. He desired that the trade should follow its natural channel, and if those people were not sufficiently taxed already the proper thing to do was to tax them upon their land values, and the sooner it was done the better. The danger would not cease with the measure now before them, but would continue in other measures. Although it was said that the border line was not fixed, there was the same principle that only the people in a particular locality were to be taxed. The hon. member for North Brisbane said that he believed the highest wages should be paid that a product could afford; but he contended all unnecessary work must be paid for by that product, and therefore the wage-earners would receive less by that amount. If unnecessary work were done with the bare object of sending trade to Brisbane instead of Sydney, those who laboured would suffer in proportion.

Mr. ALLAN had not altered his opinion of the Bill in any way, but did not think it was right to have a second reading debate on the preamble. The preamble was always left till the various clauses had been discussed. He did not believe in the Bill, but should not vote against the preamble being postponed.

Question—That the preamble be postponed—put and passed.

On clause 1—"Interpretation"—

Mr. FOXTON pointed out that the clause differed in phraseology from the interpretation clauses of two Bills that had recently passed, which aimed at brevity in that matter. These clauses were perfectly intelligible to the ordinary reader, and the precedent was a good one, and should be generally adopted.

Mr. CALLAN thought, considering that a boiling-down works had been started at Charleville, that tallow should be included as station produce.

The PREMIER said that many other things might be included, but those mentioned in the clause were the only ones they intended to tax.

Mr. FOXTON moved a verbal amendment, which was agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 2—"Railway tax to be paid on produce crossing the border"—

Mr. DRAKE said they had been told in the course of the discussion that a certain amount of revenue, variously estimated at from £2,400 to £100,000, would be saved to the colony by the passing of the Bill. He presumed that hon. members had based their calculations on the supposition that the border to be considered was the present political border; but it would be seen from the 2nd paragraph of the clause that the border might be some other boundary, to be defined by proclamation by the Governor in Council. The amount of traffic that might possibly be diverted to the Queensland railways would depend upon where that border ran, and that had never yet been defined. The fixing of the border was a very great power to put in the hands of the Governor in Council, as they might run the line to suit certain persons or certain stations; for it might be anywhere

from the present border up to Charleville. The fact of the Governor in Council having power to create some artificial border which was not the present southern boundary of the colony altogether took away the meaning from the title of the Bill, which was "to secure Queensland traffic for Queensland railways." The matter was a very important one, and the Committee ought to know where the border would be.

The PREMIER said that was a most extraordinary argument from an hon. member who had consistently opposed the Bill from the first. The hon. member had argued that it was a wrong thing to support the principle that they ought to secure Queensland traffic for Queensland railways, and yet when he found means by which the Government, betraying all their principles, might, as he suggested, give Queensland traffic to other railways, he wished to prevent them doing it. The Government did not want to be counselled in that way by the hon. member. For all they cared he might, if he could get a majority to support him, strike out the 2nd paragraph of the clause, and make the border the present boundary between New South Wales and Queensland. The provision was, however, a proper one, and, taken in conjunction with clause 8, would provide for cases where it would be a great hardship to force men to bring their traffic to the railways, if, by reason of drought or other causes, it would be almost impossible for them to do so; and that could be done without departing from the principle of the Bill.

Mr. DRAKE did not see any difference in an argument whether it emanated from himself or any other hon. member, and would not be deterred from offering any observations to the Committee by any amount of abuse from the other side. The fixing of the border was really a very important matter. The Colonial Secretary had told them that the border was to act as a fence, and the Committee had a right to know where that fence was to be. As to his (Mr. Drake's) getting a majority to strike out the latter part of the clause, he merely threw out the suggestion that it was not advisable that the power to fix an artificial border should be given to the Governor in Council.

Mr. FOXTON understood that the Bill was introduced for the purpose of compelling pastoralists in a certain portion of the colony, which had been attacked by the New South Wales Railway Commissioners, to send their produce by way of Charleville. That portion was the part west of Mungindi, and he therefore thought that only that portion of the colony should be brought under the operation of the Bill. The district east of Mungindi could not possibly be affected by any differential rates which might be established on the railway from Bourke to Sydney, and unless some hon. member, who represented a constituency westward of the one he represented, objected, he would suggest that the border be specifically defined as meaning that portion between the colony of Queensland and New South Wales, west of Mungindi.

Mr. ALLAN said that the hon. member's motive was good, but the New South Wales Commissioners had not been pirating the country as far east as Mungindi. If they started, say, at Wooroorooka, east of which the trade was not touched, they would do all that was necessary. Clause 8 proposed to allow certain exceptions if the season or the geographical position was unfavourable, but that would involve a great amount of interviewing and red tape before anything could be done, and that could be obviated by fixing a starting point. He had every confidence in the present Ministry, but another Government might come into power which would make the Act apply to the whole border; and a long way

east of Wooroorooka and in places a long way west of Mungindi the Queensland Commissioners would not get the wool to Brisbane if they carried it for nothing, and that country was not being pirated by New South Wales at all. Why then should the people there be penalised? He had no personal interest, never having sent a bale of wool to New South Wales; but he did not wish to see friction arise between those along the border and the Government. The divisional boards were making roads and doing all they could to bring revenue to Queensland railways. The part that was being filibustered by New South Wales began about the 144th meridian, whilst Mungindi was about the 149th, and Wooroorooka about the 147th. If the 146th or 147th meridian was made the starting point, that would be sufficient to secure the Queensland traffic.

The PREMIER said that the Government could not accept any amendment of the nature suggested. The hon. member for Cunningham was wrong when he assumed that no trade east of Wooroorooka had been pirated. Last year 7,000 bales had gone to New South Wales from Mungindi alone.

Mr. ALLAN: The New South Wales Commissioners do not quote any rates for there.

The PREMIER said that if the Bill were not passed there probably would be an attempt made to secure the trade of that part of the country by extending the line from Narrabri. The Government were providing for future contingencies, and that was why the clause was put as it was. The object of the Bill was not to penalise anyone. The Government had the greatest consideration for men who were placed far from the Queensland railways, and who might be subject to droughts and floods that might prevent them getting to those railways. The Bill provided against that. If the boundary were to be fixed at once they would simply make it the whole boundary between the two colonies. They had to bear in mind that one portion of the boundary was that between Queensland and South Australia. He did not know that South Australia had acted in the same way as New South Wales. They had not had time as yet, although they were threatening to extend their railway from Innamincka towards the Queensland border for the purpose of tapping the trade. That might be good and patriotic on the part of South Australia, but Queensland did not intend to allow that. At the same time it might be hard upon some men who had come across the border from South Australia, and had done all their trade with that colony, and had no connection with Queensland or its railway system. It might be worth considering whether those men should not receive some consideration, especially as South Australia had not infringed on the Queensland trade in the same manner as New South Wales. It was only reasonable, therefore, that the Government should have power to define the boundary when they saw the system of encroachment commencing. At first the border would be defined as the boundary between New South Wales and Queensland. With regard to the other portion, the Government had not had time to make up their minds, and a little freedom should be allowed them.

Mr. MORGAN thought that if any starting point was to be fixed in the Bill it should not be further west than the junction of the Macintyre and Severn Rivers. The Government must be given some freedom in the matter, and regard must be had to the possibility of a hostile demonstration being made hereafter against our trade by South Australia, where rebates were now being offered on Queensland wool consigned

to South Australian ports. He hoped the hon. member for Carnarvon would not insist on having Mungindi or any crossing-place further west made the starting point, considering that the policy of New South Wales in extending their line from Narrabri was to get Queensland trade.

Mr. DRAKE pointed out that, according to the clause, the Governor in Council could define the boundary from time to time, so that there was no necessity to look so far ahead.

Mr. LEAHY thought the clause might be said to be almost the whole of the Bill. The Premier said he would like to do something to find work for the unemployed; but he would not allow New South Wales or South Australia to go on with railway works for that purpose.

The PREMIER: They may build railways where they like; but not for the purpose of getting Queensland traffic.

Mr. LEAHY said it had been stated by the Colonial Treasurer that the part of the colony where the Bill would come into operation was along the rich lands on the southern border. Then the Secretary for Lands said that the whole question was whether those gentlemen occupying country west of the Paroo should have an unjust advantage for the unjust competition of the New South Wales railways with our railways. From those words it would appear that the Bill was to come in force only to the west of the Paroo. Then the Attorney-General, referring to a letter read by the hon. member for Cunningham, said that Mr. Higginson and others had been in the habit, under certain circumstances, of sending their wool across the border, which was the proper way in their case, and that the Government did not intend to interfere with them. Therefore, the Bill could not apply there at all. And the Colonial Secretary had given the assurance that Tinnenburra would not be touched; so that the operation of the Bill was to be confined to the west of the Paroo. It was necessary to know what was going to be lost or gained by the Bill, but that question had been evaded by those who had spoken that night. The amount of revenue lost by the traffic going over the border had been variously estimated at from £2,000 or £3,000 to £80,000. The Attorney-General had said that he was going to state the exact quantity of wool going across the border, but the exact quantity had not been given yet. If the Government had the information in their possession and kept it back, they were not adopting a proper course. They should have given the Committee the fullest information on the matter. The Attorney-General told the House the other night that there were 784,000 sheep east of the Paroo and south of the 28th parallel—which was fairly correct—and he estimated the weight of the wool at 7 lb. per sheep, adding that he had not taken into consideration the number of sheep on selections. He (Mr. Leahy) knew that country pretty well; but to make assurance doubly sure, he went yesterday to the Lands Office and looked over the map and records, and found that there was not a sheep on any selection or agricultural holding in the district mentioned. As to the weight of the wool clip, he had been to one of the principal agencies in town, and learned that on the six stations of which they had a record—with from 60,000 to 100,000 sheep each—the average weight of the clip was 5 lb. $\frac{5}{8}$ oz. So that the hon. gentleman's calculations must come down by 40 per cent. Last year the whole of that wool went to Charleville, with the exception of 87 tons. The whole of it was the legitimate trade of Charleville; and the 87 tons were taken over the border by carriers who had

brought up stores during the drought and took it back at a cheap rate. It was also nearly correct that there were 580,000 sheep west of the Paroo, and south of the 28th parallel, but from that must be excluded the 220,000 in the western corner, whose wool went to South Australia, and for which the Queensland Railway Commissioners had not quoted any rates whatever. That left about 300,000 sheep, the produce of which went to Bourke, which would amount to 590 tons, and which, at the current rate of £2 to £2 5s. per ton, would be £1,180, that being the loss to Queensland. The Attorney-General had no right to put the quotation at £5 per ton. He might just as well have quoted it at £10, and it would have made double the amount; in any case it meant raising the freight by 250 per cent., and that was a thing that no member, especially agricultural members, would desire to see. To the east of the Paroo there were 118,000 sheep on two stations. If they added the 240 to the 590 tons before mentioned, they would get about 830 tons, and that was the whole of the wool going into New South Wales west of Cairwarro. Thurlgoona was a very big station, and with the exception of Thurlgoona only 272 tons went from that part of the country into New South Wales last year. That was east of the Nebie. He had been accused by the Attorney-General of misrepresenting matters, and he had made a mistake of 300,000 sheep in dealing with Thurlgoona, and that meant 600 tons. The mistake was not his own, however, as he had quoted the sworn returns supplied to the Warrego Rabbit Board without being aware that a part of the station was under the Maranoa Board. Allowing for the error he had made, the whole of the wool west of the Nebie would be 987 tons, and that, at the rates quoted, would give £4,000. He wished hon. members to understand that that was greasy wool, and if washed there would only be about two-thirds of the quantity; and it was fair to assume that if a ton had to be paid for according to the weight, those who had to pay it would submit the least possible tonnage to the tax. He had told the House that he had no quotations for the country east of the Nebie, but, putting the wool from there at 10,000 bales, that would bring the amount, at the rates charged, up to about £4,000. There was no use coming before the Committee and making rash statements. He had given the names of the stations he referred to, and yet no attempt had been made to controvert his figures as to the number of sheep on those stations, their distance from the border, or the quantity of wool they produced. The statistics he had given could not be disputed. The Attorney-General got boxed up in his calculations on the subject, by dealing with the returns of wool going to Charleville instead of the returns to Bourke. They had to come yet to the question of dead haulage, and hon. members had carefully avoided dealing with that question. With a dead haulage of from 110 to 160 miles in favour of Bourke, no reduction in rates which the Queensland Commissioners could quote from Charleville would compensate the station-holders for the amount of money required to cover that dead haulage. The result of the tax would be entirely different from that imagined by those who appeared anxious to impose it. It was possible to impose a tax which would bring no revenue to those who imposed it, and he was reminded by the Bill of the tax which one of the Egyptian rulers was said to have put upon date trees, with the result that those who owned date trees cut them down, and so escaped the tax. They could put such a tax upon Queensland wool in that part of the colony as would prevent it being carried into New South Wales, but it would not bring it to Charleville, for the tax would kill the industry.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Nonsense!

Mr. LEAHY: There was no nonsense about it, as the Secretary for Lands could tell the Committee that 400 square miles of country had recently been thrown up there, and if any of those about Brisbane were anxious to take it up, the Secretary for Lands would be only too glad to let them have it to get the rent. If the industry there paid at the present time, that country would not be thrown up, and the fact that it was not used showed that the industry did not pay, and could certainly not bear the tax proposed in the Bill. The Attorney-General promised to tell them what "legitimate" trade was, as he (Mr. Leahy) had laid some stress on the word. The hon. gentleman had fairly played into his hands, as his definition of legitimate trade was that trade was legitimate from one place to another, where, if no exceptional rates were charged, the trade was allowed to find its own channel. If the ordinary rate from Sydney to Bourke and from Brisbane to Charleville was £5 per ton, according to the hon. gentleman's definition the legitimate trade of a place 140 miles nearer to Bourke than to Charleville should flow to Bourke. The rate from Sydney to Bourke was £2 or £3, and as the trade of these places should go legitimately to Bourke, the result was that those people got the benefit of £2 or £3 per ton rather than the New South Wales Government, which would get it, according to the hon. gentleman's definition, if the rates were not exceptional, and were the same from Sydney to Bourke as from Brisbane to Charleville. Another definition the hon. gentleman had given was that if there were not exceptional rates the trade would flow where it listed. He agreed with that, and it bore out what he had himself said in every particular. That was what he wanted the term "legitimate" to mean in the Bill. The hon. gentleman said, further, that when someone cut into him he cut into them. New South Wales had cut into him; why did he not cut into New South Wales? Why did he not send the Defence Force down, and attack New South Wales? What had the unfortunate people that he (Mr. Leahy) mentioned done that the Government should want to cut into them? They had been struggling to make an honest living, and, in fact, could not do so. He would like to know what they were to understand about the Bill. Who knew anything about it? He had given figures that had not been contradicted. The Colonial Treasurer told them if it came to a question of belief he would sooner believe the Premier, because the Premier had better means of getting figures and information. The hon. gentleman might have better means; but he had not produced the facts and figures that he (Mr. Leahy) had done. He had obtained figures from the Railway Department, the Customs, the New South Wales railways, and the rabbit board, and he defied hon. members to challenge them. Hon. members had carefully avoided them, and the Attorney-General could not prove in any case that the loss was more than £5,000. He might multiply that by 5 or 10 if he chose, but he could not alter the facts.

Mr. FOXTON was sorry that the Premier had so far expressed himself in favour of proclaiming the whole border between New South Wales and Queensland as to prevent his accepting the suggestion that it should extend from Mungindi westward. The Bill was to meet the undue differential rates which had been fixed by the Railway Commissioners of New South Wales on the line to Bourke. It seemed to him that it was not necessary to anticipate what might occur in the future. If they went as far east as Mungindi with the scientific border it was proposed to create, they would overlap and intercept the whole

of the traffic which would go from any portion of Queensland to Bourke, and any traffic which crossed the border from Queensland to New South Wales east of that point would necessarily go to Narrabri. It should not be necessary to seek the assistance of such a measure as that in order to secure the trade from going to Narrabri, because Narrabri was exactly 350 miles from Sydney. Take Goondiwindi, where there was a great deal of traffic across the border of material value to Queensland. It was much about the same distance from Goondiwindi to Narrabri as it was from Goondiwindi to Warwick. Warwick was 160 miles from Brisbane, as against 350 miles which Mungindi was from Sydney, giving the Queensland railways an advantage of 190 miles. It should not be necessary for Queensland to seek the assistance of such a measure as that in order to secure the Goondiwindi traffic. Looking at the figures he had given, it would seem almost necessary for New South Wales to take the initiative in a matter like that, and pass a measure preventing produce going across into Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: The station agents will take care of that.

Mr. FOXTON: The Railway Commissioners should be able to meet the station agents when they had such an advantage on their side. The advantage given by that distance should be sufficient without hampering trade across the border, because whatever hampered it in one way would hamper it in another, and it was to the advantage of the district he represented that trade should not be hampered.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: They run from Tamworth to Wallangarra for nothing.

Mr. FOXTON said even then he thought that Queensland was on equal terms with the New South Wales line. At Wallangarra the figures were even more marked than those from Mungindi. That being so, and feeling strongly on the matter, notwithstanding what had been said by the Premier, he should not be doing justice to his constituents if he did not take the sense of the Committee on the question, as to the necessity for giving the Government power to include in their scientific border any portion of the boundary he had suggested. If the Government would meet him he would propose Goondiwindi instead of Mungindi; but he believed there would not be much difference. He would, therefore, move an amendment which would have the effect of making the second part of the clause read, "For the purposes of this Act the term 'border' shall mean that portion of the boundary line between the colony of Queensland and the colony of New South Wales westward of Goondiwindi." About 7,000 or 8,000 bales went across the border annually from Mungindi to Narrabri, not to Bourke, and it came from stations at a very much greater distance from Warwick than Goondiwindi, probably from the Balonne and Murilla. He moved that the word "that" be substituted for "such."

Mr. LEAHY said he had a prior amendment.

Mr. FOXTON, with the permission of the Committee, withdrew his amendment.

Mr. LEAHY moved that the words "fifty shillings," in line 17, be omitted, with a view of substituting the words "twenty shillings."

The PREMIER thought the hon. member had been allowed a great deal of latitude. The amendment he had moved cut at the very foundation of the principle of the Bill, and the Government had no intention of accepting it.

The principle of the Bill was to secure Queensland traffic for Queensland railways, and if £2 10s. per ton would not have that effect, the Government would take to themselves the power to increase the tax to £5. They meant to have that traffic.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 34.

Sir T. Mellwraith, Messrs. Barlow, Byrnes, Nelson, Philp, Tozer, Watson, Stephens, Midson, Duffy, Crombie, Chataway, McMaster, Lord, Armstrong, Kingsbury, Dalrymple, Burns, Smith, Corfield, Battersby, Plunkett, O'Connell, Grimes, Cribb, Foxton, Morgan, Macfarlane, Thomas, Smyth, Tooth, Thorn, Callan, and Dickson.

NOES, 19.

Messrs. Kerr, Hoolan, Hardacre, Dawson, King, Drake, Turley, Cadell, Leahy, Groom, Powers, Lovejoy, Browne, Jackson, Dunsford, Cross, Rawlings, Fisher, and Daniels.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. HOOLAN said the hon. member for Bulloo had somewhat mixed matters by moving the amendment just negatived. Though some of the Labour party had voted for it, they did not by that wish it to be implied that they accepted the principle of the Bill or any part of it; on the contrary, they intended to call for a division on the whole clause, as they disapproved entirely of the principle of the Bill. If those who represented the pastoral interest did not understand their position, the Labour party understood theirs; and though they did not desert the hon. member for Bulloo on his somewhat surprise amendment, they were not in any way committed to any part of the Bill. If a 50s. impost was bad, a 20s. duty was equally bad.

The PREMIER: What is the question before the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that clause 2 stand part of the Bill.

Mr. HOOLAN said he had not much more to say, and there was no occasion to call him to order. If the hon. gentleman wanted disputes in the Committee, he could very soon have them. The hon. gentleman and his colleagues took up enough time themselves, wandering all over the Bill; and they should be a little more courteous to those opposed to them. Matters had become so entangled by one amendment and another that it was necessary to explain the position of the Labour party, and all he desired to say was that they would call for a division on the clause and vote against it solidly.

Mr. FOXTON said he would now move that the word "such," on the 21st line, be omitted, with the view of inserting the word "that," it being understood that if that amendment were carried he would move a further amendment omitting all the words after the word "adjoining," and inserting the words "colony of New South Wales westward of Goondiwindi." That would define the artificial border which it was proposed to create by the Bill.

The PREMIER said the Government could not accept the amendment. He did not think it was too much to ask that the clause should be passed as it was, leaving it to the Governor in Council to say where the border was to be. If the Committee insisted on taking the matter into their own hands, then the Government would insist that the border should be the whole dividing line between New South Wales and Queensland.

Question—That the word proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 34.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Barlow, Byrnes, Philp, Nelson, Tozer, Watson, Stephens, Midson, Chataway, Duffy, McMaster, Crombie, Lord, Armstrong, Burns, Kingsbury, Dalrymple, Corfield, Battersby, Plunkett, O'Connell, Grimes, Cribb, Morgan, Macfarlane, Allan, Thomas, Tooth, Smith, Smyth, Dickson, Callan, and Thorn.

NOES, 6.

Messrs. Foxton, Drake, Cadell, Dawson, Fisher, and Rawlings.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The CHAIRMAN having put the question—“That clause 2 stand part of the Bill”—and declared the voices in the affirmative,

Mr. HOOLAN said that he had called “Divide.” He hoped the Chairman was not going to rule that out of order, as he had distinctly called out “divide” as the words left the Chairman’s mouth.

The CHAIRMAN: I put the question to the House, “Those who are of that opinion say ‘Aye,’ the contrary ‘No’”; and as there was no call for a division, I declared that the “Ayes” had it. The hon. member was standing outside the bar when I put the question.

Mr. ALLAN: I most distinctly called “Divide.”

The PREMIER said that a division had been called for; he had heard hon. members call for it.

The CHAIRMAN: I can assure hon. members that I did not hear anyone call for a division.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question again put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 32.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Byrnes, Barlow, Nelson, Tozer, Philp, Thorn, Callan, Dickson, Smith, Smyth, Tooth, Thomas, Macfarlane, Morgan, Cribb, Grimes, O'Connell, Plunkett, Duffy, Battersby, Corfield, Burns, Chataway, Dalrymple, Kingsbury, Armstrong, Lord, McMaster, Midson, Stephens, and Watson.

NOES, 24.

Messrs. Drake, Groom, Fogarty, Lovejoy, Daniels, Fisher, Browne, Rawlings, Powers, Leahy, Foxton, Hamilton, Allan, Cadell, Turley, Reid, King, Dawson, Hoolan, Harlaere, McDonald, Dunsford, Jackson, and Kerr.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 3 to 7, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 8—“Exemptions from payment of railway tax in certain cases”—

The PREMIER moved the omission of the words “on the recommendation of the Commissioners.” Some hon. members had taken exception to the recommendation of the Commissioners being required in granting exemptions, and on consideration he did not think the words necessary.

Mr. MORGAN presumed that those words were not included without due consideration, and their inclusion must be taken as evidence that Ministers considered they ought to be in the clause. He thought they ought to be retained. Why put it into the power of any Minister or set of Ministers to take action in this matter? The Commissioners were free from political influence—that was one of the reasons for handing over the management of the railways to them—or they ought to be, and they were the people who should recommend to the Government what ought to be done in the interests of the railways. At any rate, before the words were omitted some reason should be given for their omission.

The PREMIER said the reason he would give was that he knew the Bill would work in exactly the same way as if the words were kept in. The Treasurer would not act without consultation with the Commissioners. He had found, not by the Railway Commissioners specially, but by other commissioners as well, that an Act of Parliament bound them; and he would like to have them a little more under the control of the Minister than they were at the present time.

Mr. CALLAN said the Railway Commissioners were brought out for the purpose of working the railways altogether apart from political influence; and the effect of the amendment would be to bring them again directly under political influence. He thoroughly disagreed with it.

Mr. FOXTON said it was amusing to find that the hon. member for Warwick had at last discovered that the Commissioners were the people who knew what was best for the country in the way of railway management. Did the hon. member hold to that with regard to railway freights? He had heard the hon. member denounce the Commissioners, and say they were working for the benefit of the railways as a commercial concern, altogether ignoring the producing interests. What he liked about the amendment was that the Government, although they would take the advice of the Commissioners, would not be bound to follow it. The Government would be answerable to the House for their action.

Mr. MORGAN said he was afraid the amendment was being moved to please a certain section of members of the Committee. It was, in fact, the pillow on which they were going to sit, and he entered his protest against the omission of the words.

Mr. LEAHY expressed his intention to support the Government in the matter.

Mr. McMASTER said that one or two members, who were not at present in the House, had said that the Bill was a Commissioners’ Bill, and had voted against it for that reason. He objected to the omission of the words to please one or two persons, and hoped the Government would not insist upon the amendment.

Mr. ALLAN said he hoped the Government would adhere to the amendment. The Commissioners were not, in many ways, in as good a position to judge as the Minister. Their sole object was to increase the railway returns, whereas the object of the Government would be to see that fair play was dealt out to all alike. In any case it would decrease the amount of red tape with which the Bill was tied up.

Mr. FISHER said he fully agreed with the proposed amendment. Instead of giving the power to a body of men who were subservient to the Government, it placed it in the hands of a Minister who was responsible to Parliament for his action.

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

Clause 9—“Power to make regulations”—put and passed.

On clause 10—“Short title”—

The HON. J. R. DICKSON said there did not appear to be any provision in the Bill as to when it was to come into operation, and though it was somewhat late to open the subject, he would ask whether it was not desirable to introduce a clause providing for the suspension of the operation of the Bill in the event of amicable arrangements on the subject of the traffic being entered into between the

Governments of Queensland and the neighbouring colonies? He took it that the Bill would result in the neighbouring colonies approaching them in some way to bring about a settlement of the difficulty. With that idea he had drafted a clause which, if thought desirable, could be introduced after clause 9, and which was to this effect—

The provisions of this Act shall come into operation upon the passing thereof. Provided that it shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to declare by proclamation published in the *Gazette* that the foregoing provisions of the Act are permanently or temporarily suspended wholly or partly, such proclamation to be issued whenever an amicable arrangement is arrived at between the Governments of the neighbouring colonies and Queensland concerning the border railway traffic.

The PREMIER said the hon. gentleman was wrong in stating that no time was fixed in the Bill for the commencement of the operation of the Act, as that was dealt with in clause 2. By that clause, too, the Government had just the powers the hon. member sought to provide for by a new clause. If they issued a proclamation rescinding a previous proclamation with respect to the border of the colony, the operation of the Act would cease. If the Government chose to accept the responsibility of doing that, they had all the power the hon. member wished to provide for. He was not sanguine that any amicable arrangements would be made within the next six months.

Mr. ALLAN thought such an amendment should have been printed and distributed, as not more than two or three members had heard it read properly.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON had submitted the clause as a suggestion, as he saw nothing in the Bill to meet the matter. If, however, the Government felt that they had power to deal with the matter under clause 2, there was no need for the clause he had suggested. If any deficiency was found to exist in the Bill it could be remedied in another place.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL pointed out that under the Acts Shortening Act, where power was given to the Governor in Council to do anything by proclamation, there was also the power to revoke by proclamation, and that exactly met the case.

Clause put and passed; and preamble passed as printed.

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

Amendments agreed to; and the third reading of the Bill made an order for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to 11 o'clock.