

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 19 AUGUST 1896**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 19 AUGUST, 1896.

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

## NEW MEMBER.

JAMES STODART took the oath and subscribed the roll as member for Logan.

## CORRESPONDENCE RE CYANIDE PROCESS.

On the motion of Mr. HAMILTON, it was resolved—

That there be laid upon the table of the House copies of all correspondence which has passed with the Mines Department in connection with the saving of gold by the cyanide process.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

Mr. BROWNE: I would like to ask the Home Secretary, without notice, if he can inform the House when we are likely to receive the Vital Statistics from the Registrar-General this year?

The HOME SECRETARY: I shall make inquiries.

## PARLIAMENTARY BUILDINGS COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council, intimating that the Hon. J. Cowlshaw had been appointed a member of the Parliamentary Buildings Committee, in the place of the Hon. J. D. Macansh, deceased.

## CUSTOMS DUTIES BILL.

## SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: In moving the second reading of this Bill I want to point out that there is no attempt in it to make extensive alterations in the present Customs tariff. But the Treasurer finds that he can remit about £40,000 or £50,000 of the duties at present collected, and the Government think that the inclusion of the articles in the list now before the House in the free list will assist the important producing industries of the colony. We think it will give great relief to all agriculturists, pastoralists, and miners, and that it will also assist some of the manufacturing industries, without in any way

interfering with the manufactures that have sprung up under the different tariffs passed in this colony. Nearly all of the articles included in this list are now imported; few, if any, are now being manufactured in the colony, so that protectionist members can safely vote for the inclusion of all the articles now before them without in any way interfering with their principles. The Bill will certainly relieve all agriculturists, because all the implements included in the list are now being imported from the other colonies or from the United States of America. I think the heavy freight now being paid on these articles will be found to be quite a sufficient protection without the infliction of further duties, should any attempt be made to make them in this colony. The drugs and chemicals here included are used by manufacturers and chemists.

Mr. DAWSON: Why is not sulphuric acid included?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The machinery included will help our present manufacturers because all the articles here mentioned are at the present time being imported. The Treasurer by the Bill also takes the right to exempt new machinery, patent machinery, and to make the duty upon parts of machines imported the same as the duty at present paid on the finished article. For instance, the duty now payable upon bicycles is 15 per cent., and the duty payable on the parts of a bicycle is 25 per cent. A great many things now proposed to be made free of duty pay a duty of from 15 to 25 per cent., and the Treasurer takes the right under this Bill, should it be passed, to publish a list of articles to be free of duty, or of parts of articles which shall pay a duty equal to that now paid upon the finished article. The total cost to the Customs revenue of this free list will be about £40,000 or £50,000 if the articles included are imported at the same rate as last year. I hope the House will not object to this free list. Personally, I should like to see many other articles added to it, but we are limited to a certain sum, and I know that nearly every article in this list will benefit more or less our biggest industries. One hon. member asked me why sulphuric acid was not included. I suppose the contention is that it ought to be included, as a great deal of it is used for mining purposes. I conferred with the manufacturer of the article in Brisbane, and there is only one—though I am aware that there is a private manufactory of the article at Mount Morgan—and he assures me that he is now supplying sulphuric acid to the largest chlorinating works in the colony, at Charters Towers, at the same price as the same article can be imported from Sydney for free of duty, and he is prepared to supply any other mining company at the same terms.

Mr. CALLAN: They have not done it.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have a letter here on the subject from the manufacturer, addressed to the "Minister for Mines," in which he says—

"We have the honour to inform you that if the present duty on sulphuric acid is maintained we are prepared to supply the mining community of Queensland with sulphuric acid at the same rate as it can be landed at Brisbane free of duty from the southern colonies, as we are now doing, and will continue to do to the Charters Towers Pyrites Co., to whom we have every reason to believe we give entire satisfaction. Trusting this concession will be satisfactory to all concerned."

I may say that the owners of these works did not want to open works here at all; but the duty of £5 imposed upon sulphuric acid necessitated the starting works here, and they are now prepared to supply the article at the same price as that at which it can be got duty free from Sydney.

Mr. BROWNE: Then the duty is no good.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: With the exception of the works at Mount Morgan I do not know of any other chlorination works than those at Charters Towers in which sulphuric acid is used for that purpose.

Mr. JACKSON: What about Mount Morgan? Do they make their own?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: At Mount Morgan they have their own works for the manufacture of sulphuric acid. If these people break the bargain entered into at any time, we can always pass a short Bill to make sulphuric acid free. As I say, they only started their works here because of the heavy duty, and they would prefer to make the article in Sydney. I do not know that there is anything else that I need refer to. We have tried to deal fairly with all classes of the community, and especially with the large producing industries. I think the farmers, pastoralists, and miners may be said to have been fairly looked after. I know there are many anomalies in the present tariff that might be altered, but this Bill does not seek to reduce any duty, say, from 2d. to 1d. in the lb., but only to remit certain duties altogether. Personally, I should like to see the duty upon candles reduced to 1d. in the lb.; I should like to see a reduction in some other things too, but the Treasurer cannot afford to give away all the revenue in one year. We are giving away some £50,000, and that is a considerable concession for one year. Suggestions for the insertion of other articles may be considered in committee, and it may be found desirable to omit some of the articles now proposed to be included where that can be shown to be beneficial, but I do not think that any strong protectionist or freetrader can find fault with the articles proposed to be included in the free list. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. GLASSEY: It must be gratifying to the House to hear from the Minister in charge of this measure that the Government is in a position to remit taxation to the extent of some £40,000 or £50,000 this year. It is to be regretted that they are not in a position to remit much more than the amount named. I wish to say that the opinions I am expressing on this measure are entirely my own, and not the opinions of the party as a whole. Doubtless many members of the House will be aware that in this party there are some ardent freetraders, and on the other hand some are ardent protectionists. I am not by any means an ardent freetrader—my opinions rather lean to the side of protection—therefore it is well to make my position clear, and in what I say I will not attempt to commit any member of this party. I am disappointed with the Bill as a whole; very much disappointed indeed. When we had His Excellency's Speech presented to us on the 17th June we were led to believe that we were about to have a large remission of taxation; that the people were about to be relieved of many of the burdens which they have had to bear for so long; yet, when we come to examine the Bill, we find that there are only a few paltry matters dealt with, and so far as general relief is concerned it is not to be found within the four corners of this measure. I cannot share to the fullest extent the opinions expressed by the mover of this Bill. He says the Bill will afford some relief to the agricultural classes. I must confess that the relief is extremely meagre. He also says it will afford some relief to the mining community. Hon. members representing mining districts will be able to speak more fully on that question than I can, but I say that if the public mind is to be satisfied—and it ought to be satisfied—then it is very doubtful whether it will

be eased or satisfied with this measure. Small as the relief is, of course it is better than none. We are about to have the duty removed from castor and other oils, but I find the duty still remains upon the oil that is most universally used in every household—I refer to kerosene. On that item alone nearly £40,000 was collected last year. Notwithstanding that that oil is used in every household throughout the length and breadth of the land, the duty of 6d. per gallon, or 1½d. per quart, is still to be levied; no relief is to be had, and the Government come down with a paltry measure to remove the duty off castor and other oils. I may refer to another article which is to be found in every household, that is tea. Tea we do not grow and are not likely to grow.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We can grow tea.

Mr. GLASSEY: We can do many things. We could, if we were wise, have a democratic Government on those benches who would bring forward some progressive measures which would tend to assist the people as a whole. If we can grow tea, although I have taken some pains to examine the various agricultural districts I have not yet come across that district where tea is grown. We find that the taxpayers are called upon to pay no less than £81,000 or £82,000 annually as duty upon tea, and not a farthing of that is to be removed. Then there is coffee; I do not think we are likely to grow coffee to any extent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: There is plenty at Cairns.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: And at Mackay.

Mr. GLASSEY: There cannot be plenty, because I find from a paper which I hold in my hand that we imported last year 64,952 lb. of coffee on which 6d. a lb. was paid. Then there is chicory. I do not think we can grow that.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. GLASSEY: If we can grow these articles, how is it the people purchase the imported article?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: They buy it cheaper.

Mr. GLASSEY: From coffee there was collected last year £1,623 as duty, and from chicory £716. Of raw coffee there was imported 11,702 lb., on which there is a duty of 4d. per lb. The amount collected from that source was £1,861. I do not think we produce much cocoa or chocolate, but during 1895 we imported 103,369 lb. of that article, and the duty collected on that at 4d. per lb. amounted to £1,723. I do not think we grow much mustard, and I am quite sure that we manufacture very little. Of this article, which is one of general consumption, we imported last year 309,727 lb.; the duty is 3d. per lb., and small as it is, the amount collected was no less than £3,871. I wish hon. members would rise to the occasion and insist on the Government removing some of the taxation from the articles which I have named, and which are to be found in every household in the colony. Last year we imported 262,989 lb. of dried fruits, and the duty on that article, at 3d. per lb., amounted to £3,287. Then there are a few small articles which are designated by some persons as delicacies, and which are in use in most of our hospitals and similar institutions. Among these are macaroni, maizena, cornflour, maize meal, condensed milk, vermicelli, patent and other foods, which amounted in value last year to the alarming figure of £309,682. The duty on those articles is 2d. per lb., and amounted in the aggregate to £10,914. I think the Minister in charge of the measure will agree with me that there is extremely little rice grown in the colony, and that we are not likely to grow

much for many years to come. I am aware that they grow a small quantity at Cairns. They have attempted from time to time to produce it in that neighbourhood, but I think that up to the present it has not been a success. What do we find? That notwithstanding that this article is of universal use nearly 7,000,000 lb. were imported in 1895; the amount of duty collected, at 1d. per lb., came to £28,635. The Minister stated that he wished he was in a position to remove the duty on candles. I think it is possible to manufacture candles in this country with success, but up to date they have not been produced to the extent of the demand. The amount of duty collected on candles was £6,835, and on blue, £1,702. Starch is an article which we may fairly say ought to be manufactured in the colony, but it is not, and unless the Government are prepared to give some assistance and encouragement for the establishment of industries where these small articles might be produced, hon. members should insist upon the remission of the duties imposed on such as are of universal use and are not produced or likely to be produced in the colony for some years. On starch we collected in duty last year the sum of £5,678, and on starch in boxes, £2,075. Then we have the duty on mineral and other oils to which I have already alluded, which amounted last year to £40,381. On kerosene oil alone we collected £36,250. These are a few articles out of many where a removal of the duty now imposed would afford relief to almost every household in the colony. Yet not a word is mentioned by the Government as to the remission of taxation in that direction. If hon. members will support me when this Bill goes into committee I shall endeavour to include a number of other articles which should be brought into the colony free. While I rather favour protection as against freetrade, I by no means agree that duty should be collected on those articles which cannot, or which are not likely to be produced in Queensland for years to come. These should be imported free. But with regard to such articles as can be produced and manufactured in the colony for home consumption, and if need be for export, it is our clear duty to aid and assist their production and manufacture in the colony. On the other hand, where articles of ordinary and everyday use cannot be produced in the colony, the community as a whole are in my judgment acting in an extremely simple and foolish manner in permitting the taxation on them to continue. Some person may ask from whence then are we to get revenue? Some of my honourable colleagues in the early part of this session advocated taxation of another kind, and I do the same thing. We could fairly remove the duty from the articles I have mentioned, and others of equal importance and of general consumption—duty which in the aggregate would amount to £250,000 sterling per annum. The time has come when persons drawing handsome incomes from private sources, and those highly-paid functionaries of the State—I do not use the word in any derogatory sense—should pay an income tax, so that the people should not be burdened in the way they now are by having to pay the taxes on the articles I have mentioned. The Government is going to relieve taxpayers by remitting the duty on horseshoes, thereby inflicting a deadly injury on my hon. friend the member for Barcoo and other persons who follow the profession of making, fitting, and fixing shoes.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He always buys the imported article.

Mr. GLASSEY: I believe that is a libel on my hon. friend. I have known the hon. member too long to believe anything of the kind unless

convinced by the strongest testimony that he would do other than buy the raw material, and make and fit the articles as required. However, that is by the way. I see that chalk also is to be relieved from duty, and that taxation is to be removed from copper perforated, copper gauze, copper bar and scrap, and from cotton raw. I take strong exception to the free admission of raw cotton into the colony. Some years ago this House was induced, at the instance of the late hon. member for Logan, Mr. Stevens, to give a bonus of £5,000 for the manufacture of a certain quantity of cotton, and a number of persons were induced to go in for the production of cotton. How far that has been a success I am not prepared to say, but, from my observation and the information I have been able to gather concerning the production of that article, I am certain that there is no place in Australia better adapted than Queensland for the growth, and I hope some day for the manufacture, of cotton. If the duty is to be removed from the raw material it will strike a most fatal blow at the growth of cotton in the colony, and I would join hon. members who represent districts where this article is grown to a considerable extent—I presume that my hon. friend the member for Fassifern will join other hon. members—in endeavouring to keep a reasonable duty on cotton so as to encourage its growth and manufacture. I spoke just now of the duty being taken off “horseshoes”; I find now that I made a mistake; it is “horse hoes.” I observe that the duty is to be removed from iron pipes, water and gas.

The SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member not to go through the schedule in detail. This is not the proper place to do so; he will have abundant opportunity to do so later on.

Mr. GLASSEY: I was only glancing over them casually. I think an effort was made some time ago, during the extension of the Brisbane waterworks, on the part of the ironfounders of Brisbane and district to devise means whereby iron pipes might be manufactured in Queensland, and representations were then made to the Government that they might be manufactured here. I think there is sufficient mechanical talent and skill and ability in the colony to manufacture these articles, provided, of course, that they get some assistance, and I say that though the first cost might be somewhat higher if these articles were produced in the colony than what is paid for similar articles in other parts of the world, yet in view of the growth of our population, the increase of our young people, I believe hon. members desire that our people should be encouraged in some kinds of industry. One great outlet for our young is on the broad acres of the colony; yet we must not lose sight of the fact that if our young people are to be employed profitably it is the duty of those who are helping to mould the laws of the country to afford every encouragement with a view to the employment of our young people in various industries, and it is an unwise policy to remove some of those duties, though they may be slightly oppressive to those who purchase the articles immediately. It is not an unreasonable view to take that, if these young people are to find avenues of employment, we must endeavour to encourage the opening of such avenues by encouraging such works as I have mentioned and also opening up new ones. This matter will be discussed to a considerable extent, and I know that the hon. member, Mr. Annear, will take this opportunity of enlightening the House upon this subject while you are in the chair. If our ironworks are to be preserved, and new works are to be established in different parts of the colony—and I see no earthly reason why they should not—then hon. members ought to act with caution, and pause before they remove

any taxation that will have a tendency to destroy that industry or prevent its extension. I take up this position: Whatever can be done reasonably to establish and encourage industries which will provide openings for the employment of the people of Queensland, without unduly oppressing other portions of the community, ought to be done. We will be acting wisely and rationally if we endeavour to supply every human need in our power, and to remain as independent as possible, without having to purchase from other parts of the world. Some people say that the true doctrine is to "buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," but I do not altogether subscribe to that doctrine. There may be something good in it, but there is also something to be said against it. If the people in Australia generally are to maintain a higher social life than the people in some other countries—if they are to be better fed, better clothed, better housed, are to have decent sanitary surroundings, and some degree of leisure to enjoy these benefits, we will have to act cautiously, and not come into conflict in our industrial life with countries in which cheap labour is employed. I observed a cablegram in the *Courier* yesterday to the effect that Lord Armstrong was about to establish a branch of his great manufactory of war material in Japan. Possibly that may be a benefit to Japan, but if hon. members will refer to the consular reports which are on the table in the library, they will find that the growth of manufactures in Japan during the last ten years has been enormous, and they should consider before they decide to admit articles free which can be produced here. It is not unlikely that before long we shall have a very keen competitor in that fast-developing country and that other firms may follow Lord Armstrong's example, and there will be no part of the world to which they will cast such longing eyes, as an outlet for their surplus goods, as Australia. I should be sorry to see our people coming into competition with the men and women of that country, who work for such miserable pay, and it behoves us to act with the utmost caution so that we may not ruin the few industries we have. When the Bill gets into committee I shall endeavour to add to the schedule such articles as I have mentioned, that we will not be able to produce here for some length of time, but I shall be most happy to assist hon. members in imposing reasonable duties upon other things which will have the effect of protecting such industries as we now have, and which find employment for some of our people, and which I hope will increase and develop.

The TREASURER: The hon. member who has just spoken started with the proposition that the amount of relief proposed to be given to the taxpayers by this Bill is hardly worth accepting, and then he went on to show that he himself believes in enabling goods to be brought in free that will effect a very much larger reduction in the rate of taxation. Any hon. member who entertains such an idea as that must have paid very little attention to the financial state of the colony. We had a surplus last year of £73,000, and it is only to the extent of that surplus that we can remit taxation. If we reduce taxation in a wholesale manner we will get the country into the position that we have been trying to get it out of for the last three years; we shall not be able to pay our way, and where will we be then? But that is the way with the Labour party all through. They can never proceed by steps, or take things in their ordinary natural course; but each one thinks he can set the Brisbane River on fire straight away. I think it is a very proper and natural way to give relief so far as the state of the finances of the colony will allow, and so far

as we can afford in certain directions. The only part of the hon. member's speech worth referring to is that in which he touched upon the question as to whether we are giving relief in the right direction or not. All his disquisitions with regard to the items in the schedule were entirely out of place on the second reading; but the point I have mentioned is worth considering. Are we proposing to give relief in the proper direction in the interests of the whole colony or not? The hon. member says we are not giving relief in the proper direction.

Mr. GLASSEY: I did not say so.

The TREASURER: I understood the hon. member to say so. I think he advocated taking the duty off tea, cocoa, coffee, rice, and a lot of other things. This Bill proposes to help the colony by invigorating its industries and endeavouring to extend its products. That is the object we have been driving at, and I believe the House is aware that we have been going in that direction for a number of years at any rate. I maintain that is the proper course. It is not by relieving taxation on a few of what may be called "the necessaries of life" that you are going to benefit even the working man. This principle has been established for many years, and if hon. members would read authorities on the subject—if they would read, for instance, the Financial Statements of the various Chancellors of the Exchequer, they would get more financial economy and more financial wisdom than they will get from all the college books on the subject. They will find that such a principle has been recognised by the highest authorities for many years back. When I listened to the hon. member, knowing as I did that I could find good authority against his propositions, I immediately sent to the library for "Gladstone's Financial Statements," which are now considered as text-books throughout the whole world.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have it at home.

The TREASURER: Now, what does Mr. Gladstone say on this important subject? I looked up the passage, and found that somebody had been reading it before me, and put a mark in the margin. Speaking of taking off the duties on tea, coffee, sugar, and so on, articles analogous to those which the hon. member was dealing with, he says—

"I take my stand more especially on this consideration; the duties on tea and sugar, whatever else they may be, are simply revenue duties. They entail no complexity in the system of Customs laws; above all, they entail none of the evils that belong to differential duties; and I will by-and-by invite you to join the Government in adopting measures whereby you will be able to counteract and root out mischiefs of that peculiar and aggravated kind, as well as to give relief in the price of commodities."

Now mark this—

"But I do not hesitate to say that it is a mistake to suppose that the best mode of giving benefit to the labouring classes is simply to operate on the articles consumed by them. If you want to do them the maximum of good, you should rather operate on the articles which give them the maximum of employment. What is it that has brought about the great change in their position of late years? Not the mere fact that you have legislated here and there for the purpose of taking off 1d. or 2d. in the £1 from some article consumed by the labouring classes. This is good as far as it goes; but it is not this which has been mainly operative in bettering their condition, as it has been bettered during the last ten or fifteen years. It is that you have set more free the general course of trade; it is that you have put in action the emancipating process that gives them the widest field and the highest rate of remuneration for their labour."

Now that is the direction in which this Bill tends. We are helping the selector and the grazing farmer, and the men whom we want to see settled on the lands. The Bill will find employment for fencers to provide posts and material for fencing, and to set the fencing up.

So on through the whole of these duties. We want to enable farmers to bring their products to market at the minimum cost of production.

Mr. DUNSFORD: And you take the duty off birthday cards to do that?

The TREASURER: The hon. member cannot very well know what he is talking about, or he cannot have looked at the first article in the schedule.

Mr. DUNSFORD: Is free frozen game going to help the farmers too?

The TREASURER: If an hon. member has an interjection to make, it ought to be an intelligible one. That is the principle upon which this Bill is framed, and which hon. members will remember was embodied in the Financial Statement. We want to afford encouragement to our own industries, and to enable our own producers to bring their products to market for export or consumption at the least possible cost. The whole Bill tends in that direction, and I am quite sure that when hon. members have read it fully, and have made themselves acquainted with it, it will meet with the approbation of a very large majority at least of this House.

Mr. GROOM: Of course, it is well known that I hold very strong protectionist views, and I wish to put myself right with my constituents in regard to any action I may take with respect to this Bill. It has been represented to me by some of my protectionist friends outside the House that protection is endangered by this Bill. I have given the matter very serious consideration, and have come to the conclusion that there is nothing in this Bill which at all endangers the principle of protection as I understand it. Mr. Speaker has already wisely said that in considering the second reading of a Bill it is not in accordance with parliamentary practice to consider the details of the schedule, which may be very well and properly debated in committee. What we have to consider now is: What are the principles involved in this Bill? The Bill outside the schedule is a very short one, but it does contain a principle, which in this case is also embodied to some extent in the schedule. I take it that the principle in this Bill is an attempt on the part of the Government by extending the free list to give encouragement to industries by which people can be employed and the raw products of the colony manufactured. If that is the principle embodied in this Bill, then it is one which commends itself to my consideration, and in supporting it I do not consider that I am violating in one iota the principles I hold as a protectionist any more than freetraders have abandoned their principles in supporting, as they frequently have done, protection measures brought in by successive Governments. We have even had it admitted here, and sometimes by gentlemen sitting on the Treasury benches, that on great occasions even principle must be sacrificed when expediency is in view. Whether that is sound political morality is open to doubt; it is a question upon which there may be differences of opinion. In considering this matter we have to look to the circumstances in which the colony is placed just now. It is impossible for us to close our eyes to the fact that within the last four or five months we have witnessed in this city what has not been witnessed for years gone by—namely, wheat ships coming from the United States and landing their grain in our harbour to the extent of something like 5,000 tons per month. If anything can be done to encourage ships to come here to take away our surplus wheat instead of importing shiploads, then it must result in great benefit to the country. We have tens of thousands of acres of land which are wheat-producing, supposing the climatic conditions were always alike, but unfortunately our climate is at times against the wheat-producer,

and no legislation will afford any relief. What we require to do is to give such relief as to enable our agriculturists to compete with the older countries of the world, and we should so frame our legislation as to minimise the cost of production as much as possible. I recently read a book on food supplies in the west in which the enormous resources of the United States are dealt with so far as food producing is concerned; and Mulhall, the great statistician, affirms that one labourer in the United States can produce as much as five labourers in Great Britain, the reason being that by employing labour-saving appliances they minimise the cost of production. To such an extent is that done that the United States can grow wheat to as large an extent and as cheaply, with white labour, as it can be grown in India with its millions of cheap coloured labour. I allude to this now for this reason: During the debate on the Financial Statement in New South Wales a very extraordinary statement was made by the present leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lyne. I do not see in this schedule Wood's harvester and binder.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is free now, is it not?

Mr. GROOM: No, there is a duty upon it. The duty has been remitted in New South Wales, and this is the history as related by Mr. Lyne. A gentleman in the neighbourhood of Junee, on the southern line, has a field, I am proud to say, of 10,000 acres of wheat, and he wrote to the United States for a number of these Wood's harvesters and binders, the price in that country being £16 apiece. He was informed that they could not sell them to him as a private individual, and that his best plan was to apply to the agents in Sydney or Melbourne. On applying to them he was informed that the price was £45 apiece. Those are facts which cannot be too widely made known amongst our agriculturists. I should like to see that article included in the free list, knowing what some of our farmers are doing—how, for instance, the hon. member for Cambooya and others at a settlement known as Back Plains have during the last few years expended something like £12,000 upon machinery. If the farmers have to pay these excessive charges some effort should be made to see if a remedy cannot be found for that state of affairs.

Mr. TURLEY: Is the difference in value on account of the duty alone?

Mr. GROOM: That I cannot say. I may go so far as to say that it was asserted by Mr. Lyne that notwithstanding the remission of duty the price of those articles was the same. There was a monopoly of their sale, and the result was that the agriculturists had to pay a very excessive price. While I accept this Bill as a measure to afford relief to some of our industries, it might have gone a little further. Hon. members are aware that in recent years there have sprung up quite a number of jam factories, and one of the most interesting exhibits at the recent exhibition in Brisbane was the trophies of locally manufactured jam and preserves. There is a large jam factory in Toowoomba, but the fruit grown in Southern Queensland is not what is called of a "keeping" character. The climatic conditions have something to do with it. Apples which in New England can be kept for four or five months after being picked from the tree will not keep for more than a month or six weeks in our climate. The result is that the manufacturers have to look for sources of supply so that their employees may be kept going. Now, the gentleman in Toowoomba was in March last communicated with by Jackes Bros., of Armidale, who have a large orchard, and was offered two tons of apples, and they recommended him to take them in bags instead of in

cases. Not knowing anything about the intricacies of the tariff he consented; thirty bags were sent; but judge of his astonishment when the fruit arrived at the border and he was asked to pay an *ad valorem* duty of 25 per cent. The explanation given was that fruit in cases came in duty free, but in bags had to pay that duty.

Mr. DAWSON: That is one of the glories of protection.

Mr. GROOM: I do not think that at all. It shows the intricacies of the tariff, and the necessity of stating specifically in the schedule what we mean. The owner in the meantime paid the duty under protest and communicated with the Treasurer; and the explanation of the Collector of Customs was that green fruit in cases came in duty free, but in any other manner it was subject to *ad valorem* duty. I am glad, however, to say that when the case was submitted to the Treasurer he remitted the duty. That was a proper thing to do, and I merely mention the matter now to show that in preparing the schedule to this Bill that anomaly has been overlooked. I hope it will be rectified when we get into committee, because the incident put an end to the fruit business as far as the importation of apples from Armidale is concerned. It is well known that Armidale is a fruit-growing district, and if we can utilise their fruit by converting it into jam in this colony, I do not see why we should not do so. In our Southern district, with the exception, perhaps, of Stanthorpe, the climatic conditions are such, and the insect pests so numerous and dangerous to the fruit, that unless it is consumed or converted into a marketable commodity within a very short time, it cannot be used; and if we have a district at a short distance from us where fruit can be obtained for our jam factories, we should frame our tariff in such a way as will enable fruit to be imported on the same terms as it can be brought in steamers from the southern colonies. With regard to the remission of the duty on agricultural implements, to which the hon. member for Bundaberg has referred as being a relief to the farmers, I find that during 1895 our farmers paid *ad valorem* duty at 15 per cent. on 620 packages, amounting to £1,506, and on 110 packages brought from England and 413 from the United States *ad valorem* duty to the amount of £6,671, so that last year the farmers paid in duty on agricultural implements upwards of £10,000. It will therefore be admitted that this revision of the tariff will be a relief to them. The duty which it is proposed to remit in these cases is on articles which might be manufactured, but which people will not manufacture, in the colony, and that is a point I wish my protectionist friends to bear in mind. In 1871 I assisted the then Treasurer to a very large extent to frame the tariff which was adopted at that time, and I also assisted the Treasurer of 1888 to place high duties on these articles for the express purpose of encouraging the starting of factories in Queensland where agricultural implements could be manufactured. But outside a few ploughs, agricultural implements have not been made in the colony, and if the persons engaged in such industries are not enterprising enough to go in for the manufacture of the implements that are required, why should these duties still be retained, and the agriculturist be oppressed by them? Why should he pay 25 per cent. duty on articles which manufacturers have not enterprise enough to make in the colony? While I do not depart in any way from my protectionist principles, yet when our farmers have to economise in the cost of production in order to be able to compete with other countries, and manufacturers will not make the implements they require, even though

a very high duty is imposed on the imported article, we ought to relieve them of that duty, and on those grounds I am prepared to vote for the second reading of the Bill. I should like the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill to take into consideration a matter referred to in a letter which I have received. The writer says—

“There is a duty of 25 per cent. on trace chains and plough chains. Now, if a farmer or carrier requires a couple of pairs of chains, which cost, say, £1, he has to pay 5s. duty. This seems rather hard, and it is the poor man that has to suffer.”

That seems rather hard, and the tax falls heavily on the man who is not in a position to help himself. If manufacturers will not make these trace chains and plough chains, and we have to import them, why should the persons who require such articles have to pay a duty of 25 per cent. *ad valorem*? It is common sense that if we can relieve the agriculturist in any way, without seriously diminishing the revenue, and without unnecessarily burdening other persons, we should accede to their wishes. This writer further says—

“I see the duty is being taken off castor oil and machine oil. Why not take it off cod and fish oil for tanning purposes? If there were a duty of 50 per cent. on the articles named they could not be produced in the colony, and the Queensland farmer cannot compete with those of other colonies when he has to pay 6d. per gallon on oil.”

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is taken off fish oil in the Bill.

Mr. GROOM: I am very glad to hear that. I shall not attempt to deal with the schedule to the Bill. As the Speaker has said, this is not the proper time to do that. We have now to deal with the principle embodied in the Bill. That principle, in my opinion, is a sound one, and I am quite prepared to vote for the second reading of the Bill, but at the same time I hope the hon. gentleman will accept my suggestion with regard to the fruit question. If he can do that I think we can improve the measure in such a way that it will be acceptable to the whole colony. Before I sit down I should like to ask the hon. gentleman whether the Wood's harvester is to be admitted free.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I believe it will be under the Bill.

Mr. GROOM: I ask that question because I think I am correct in saying that the majority of the wheat farmers have had to pay £65 for those machines, which are obtainable in the United States for £16. The “Wood” harvester and binder is a most essential implement in wheat growing, and as we have every hope that the present good season will lead to a very considerable number of them being purchased, I should not like to see farmers victimised by having to pay £65 for them, when they can be obtained in the United States for £16.

Mr. ANNEAR: I was very much disappointed with the speech delivered by the hon. member for Bundaberg. The hon. member possesses the faculty of using words to hide his thoughts. I do not possess that faculty. I cannot use any other words than those which will express my meaning. One would have thought that the hon. member, being the leader of a party whose chief profession, especially outside, is to look after the working men, would have said what was his real policy as regards this question, but he evaded it from beginning to end. I cannot do the same as the hon. member. I was returned, and have been returned on four occasions, by the artisans and working men of this colony. I have never been a traitor to them, and I do not intend to be a traitor to them on this occasion. I must also express my surprise at the speech of the hon. member whom I call the father of protection in this colony, the senior member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom. From that gentleman I received

almost the first lesson I received on solid protection in this colony. He was my "coach" when I first came into this House, and I have felt deeply indebted to him ever since. The hon. member, like the hon. member for Bundaberg, gave us nothing definite in his utterances. What they gave us was "neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring," and when the working men, especially the artisans throughout the manufacturing towns of Queensland, read the speech of what they suppose is the leader of the working men in the colony they will be very much disappointed. I occupy a position similar to three Ministers. I am not "a protectionist gone mad"; I believe that we should protect, and protect only, that which we can manufacture in the colony; but to go as Victoria has done and put on a tariff of 60, 65, and 70 per cent., would be ruination to the colony. When I say I occupy a position the same as that occupied by three Ministers, I refer to the Home Secretary, the Attorney-General, and the Secretary for Lands. I class those three hon. gentlemen with myself as discriminating protectionists. They discriminate the articles which should be protected, and which can be produced with advantage in this colony. When we come to the Premier, the Secretary for Mines and Railways, and the Secretary for Public Instruction, we have three very ardent freetraders. Such being the case, I trust that the hon. gentlemen will take into their consideration the criticisms that will be passed on the measure, and that the Secretary for Railways in his reply will give an explanation of some of the matters to which I shall refer. I think that since I came into the House with other hon. members especially the hon. member for Toowoomba, we have had reason to be proud of the work carried out by the small modicum of protection which was imposed by Parliament. Let hon. members look at the depression that existed in this colony for some time, and if we had followed the same principle we followed since 1868 or 1869, when we began to import large quantities of ironwork for our public works, the effect would have been disastrous on the working men of this colony for the last five or six years. The material for the Indooroopilly bridge, the Brisbane bridge, and other bridges came to Queensland unmanufactured. Those works are a credit to Queensland. Every Queenslanders must feel proud to know that we have engineers and mechanics within our own borders competent to carry out such important works. Without the protection we have those works would have come from the continent of Europe and not from Great Britain. I find that when the artisans in the manufacturing towns such as Brisbane and Maryborough saw the report in the *Brisbane Courier* last Friday, which I believe was copied from the *Toowoomba Chronicle*, they were incensed at the large number of articles placed on the free list; but after the list was corrected and reproduced in the *Courier* last Saturday, it greatly allayed their fears and put them in a different state of mind. I shall not go through the schedule, but I must refer to these things because I wish to have an answer from the Minister before I give my vote on the second reading of this Bill. I have not met a man who does not agree that mining machinery which cannot be manufactured in the colony should be exempt from duty. Every member on both sides takes it to be a duty to do all that can be done to assist the great mining industry to what we hope to be a profitable development. It has been correctly stated by the hon. member for Toowoomba that a duty of 25 per cent. existed for many years on machinery used for agricultural purposes. Up to the present, with that duty, there is not a factory of any dimensions which has started to manufac-

ture those articles in the colony, and in justice to the farmers those articles which cannot be manufactured here should be admitted duty free. All bolts and nuts for coach-building purposes down to half-inch are admitted duty free because they cannot be produced at a profit here, but we have factories in almost every town of any dimensions that have introduced bolt-making machines, and have also introduced men to make bolts of larger dimensions, chiefly from Great Britain. A large number of men are employed, and a great number of youths also are apprenticed to this work, and if you admit bolts of every description free, the work will cease to be performed here. That is one instance to which I wish the hon. gentleman to give his attention when he replies. There have been men of spirit in the colony who have purchased machinery and erected buildings, and if this Bill is to be of such a sweeping character these men will not be able to compete with makers in Great Britain. The hon. member for Bundaberg referred to water and gas pipes, and the same remarks apply to them as apply to bolts in regard to their size. Encouragement ought to be given to the manufacture of larger sized bolts and waterpipes, but I think the way in which the schedule is worded will lead to fraud. The size should be fixed at which pipes should be imported free. Then pumps of every description are to be admitted free. There is a great amount of work in the construction of pumps for the sugar factories throughout the colony, in connection with triple effects, and they pay 25 per cent. duty. There are no kinds specified, but all are to be admitted free. I may also refer to the manufacture of brass cocks, which finds work for a large number of men and boys, and I am sure it is necessary that we should keep that industry here. But they are to be admitted free, which will have the effect of wiping out the brass trade in Queensland. At Walkers, Limited, a large number of hands are employed in brass work; the making of brass cocks occupies half their time. From May, 1895, to 30th June, 1896, about 1,000 brass cocks, ranging from  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch to 5 inches, were made in the Union Foundry alone, but, if they are to be admitted free, no firm will think of keeping brass-finishers to do what will be left of the brass work required in connection with the machinery they manufacture. In this foundry alone some of the boys have grown up to be young men; having served their apprenticeship, they are now earning journeymen's wages; but if these articles are admitted free their trade will be taken away from them. There is another matter in regard to which I trust the Secretary for Railways will give some explanation. Locomotives—no particular size being described—are to be admitted free, and in my opinion it will be a disastrous thing to interfere with the manufacture of locomotives in Queensland, because there are firms here which have spent thousands of pounds in the purchase of tools from England, and in the erection of buildings for the manufacture of locomotives. One firm in Brisbane has spent thousands, and has manufactured fifty locomotives satisfactorily, and they are equal to and in many cases better than those purchased in other parts of the world. They have made twenty-five at Ipswich, and at the present time Walkers, Limited, have a contract for thirty, and are spending between £8,000 and £10,000 in importing the necessary appliances and erecting buildings, not for this contract alone, but with a view of securing other contracts. I am sure that hon. members will see that this is the real policy of protection—to provide work for our own people. Why has America become a great country? It is because it profitably employs its own people.

If Queensland is to be a great country and we are to hold out inducements to immigrants to come here, we must not take away their means of employment. This question bears a far more serious aspect than appears at the present time, and the Bill applies to other works to which I shall briefly relate. Dredges and steam tugs for harbour works only are to be admitted free. The hon. member for Bulimba is a freetrader, but he is a protectionist so far as the interests of Queensland are concerned. When he was Treasurer the Government of which he was a member let several contracts for the construction of steam tugs and dredges, and he was also the Minister who let the contract for the locomotives in this colony, which is greatly to his credit. The artisans of Queensland look upon him as their friend, and I hope that he will rise to the same level upon this occasion; that when he sees anything about to be done which will injure the workmen of the colony he will come forward with his able assistance. Dredges have been made in Brisbane, and in Maryborough, and steamers also, and the dredges made in the colony are superior to those imported from Great Britain. That has been proved by the large expense which has been incurred in putting the imported dredges in proper order after having been at work for a very little while in the colony. There is another industry proposed to be dealt with in a manner which seriously affects the electors of the hon. member for Moreton, the hon. member for Woollongabba, and the hon. members for South Brisbane. It is proposed that casks made in Queensland, and sent out of the colony, may be returned duty free.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Why not?

Mr. ANNEAR: Because we have abundance of timber and a large number of workmen profitably engaged in the manufacture of these casks, and when they leave our shores let them leave altogether. We do not want them back again. I know the hon. member for Moreton will agree with me. There are scores of men in his electorate engaged in procuring timber for the manufacture of tallow casks alone, and there are two large factories near where I live in South Brisbane, and we have two in Maryborough, engaged in the making of casks all the year round. In my opinion, if these casks are to be allowed to come back here duty free half the men engaged in that work will have to be discharged. There is another item which will seriously affect the furniture-makers of the colony. It is provided that persons coming to Queensland shall be allowed to bring in furniture to the value of £100 duty free. I think that will be very much abused, because it will be very difficult to arrive at the value of the furniture.

Mr. McDONALD: What nonsense.

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. member talks so much nonsense, and so often, that he does not know nonsense from common sense. If he would restrain himself he would be thought more of by members of this House. With the hon. member for Toowoomba, I approve of placing agricultural implements in the free list, and also the mining machinery mentioned here; but I trust the Minister will fully explain that nothing will be done to injure in any way the artisans and workers of this colony.

Mr. BROWNE: There is no doubt the artisans of the colony have a very able champion in the hon. member who has just sat down. Speaking from an artisan's point of view, and as the representative of artisans, there is no doubt the hon. member expressed the opinions of many of them upon this Bill, but in this House we have to recognise that it is not artisans only who inhabit Queensland or make Queensland. Without saying one word against

artisans, I have always thought that the men following the great producing industries of the colony—farmers, miners, and others—should at least have the same consideration as artisans, and in a great many instances in a young country like this they should have a little more. I am not going to be led into arguments upon freetrade and protection in dealing with this Bill. If we once start those arguments we must go a little deeper than the matters referred to in this Bill, and I do not see how the question comes in here at all. So far as the Bill itself is concerned I think the Secretary for Mines was a little bit apologetic in introducing it. Like Biddy with her baby, the excuse he made was that it was only a little one. He said properly that it is a measure of relief; but it is only a small measure of relief. Hon. members know my opinions in matters of this kind, and especially with respect to the industry to which I belong, have always followed, and represent in this House. Every session since I have been a member of the House I have raised the question, and have brought before the Secretary for Mines on many occasions here and in his office the vexatious taxation imposed on the mining industry, and which I have contended should be relieved. In this Bill some of the items to which I have called attention are dealt with; but only the small ones. For instance, there are different classes of machinery exempted under this Bill, but if hon. members will look at the tariff as it stands, and notice the difference in the exemptions of machinery for agricultural and pastoral and other purposes, as compared with those used for mining, they would look for bigger exemptions here in mining machinery to bring about something like an equality with the other industries. But under this Bill the disproportion is made even wider than it was before. For mining a very small number of articles are put down, and they are very small articles, but for agriculture the number is large, and the articles comprehensive. In debating this Bill in committee, it would be very useful if hon. members could know just what duty has been collected on the items in the schedule. In the statistics supplied to us so much is put down for agricultural machinery or agricultural implements in one lot, so much for sugar machinery, and so on without any distinction as to the particular machines imported. There ought not to be a great deal of trouble or expense in supplying hon. members, before the Bill is discussed in committee, with a statement of the amount of duty collected on the different articles referred to. With that information we could see whether the duties it is now proposed to remove would afford any actual relief or not, and we would at the same time have some idea as to whether any great injury would be done by the removal of duty upon some articles not included here. Objection has been taken to the remission of duty upon many of these articles by the hon. member for Maryborough, but many of them are not made in the colony. Again, there are other things made here which the manufacturers say they can make as cheaply as they can be imported from the manufacturers of the old country free of duty. If they can do that, there is no injustice done them in removing the duties upon such goods. The Secretary for Mines referred to sulphuric acid as one of those articles, and I have brought it before the House on many occasions. The duty on sulphuric acid is equal to 200 per cent., as it can be got in the London market for £2 10s. a ton, and the duty placed on it here is £5 a ton. The hon. member for Maryborough said that in some cases the duties charged reached 50 or 60 per cent. of the value of the goods, but that is a case of a duty of 200 per cent. The Secretary for Mines has informed the House that the manufacturers of

that article are now prepared to supply the mining community at the same price as it can be got in Sydney, with freight of course added. If they are willing to do that, what need is there for the Government to collect £5 a ton duty on it? No matter what people's opinion may be upon the tariff, or how anxious they may be to supply goods cheaply, as long as there is a protective duty, as business men they will try to go as near as they possibly can to the price charged by the home manufacturer. If an outsider can sell sulphuric acid only at £16 a ton, a local manufacturer is not going to sell it at £8 or £9 a ton as long as there is a protective duty to enable him to charge a higher price for it, and no one would blame him for that. The few articles of mining machinery mentioned are, as I have said, very small articles, and there is no provision for exempting pumping and winding gear, winches, and so on—the sort of machinery that the industry most wants to get cheaply. Everyone knows that in the far North it is the practice of small parties of men to get together for the purpose of quartz mining, and time after time we have heard them condemned for using old-fashioned machinery. No doubt these men would like to get a few labour-saving appliances. No man cares to grind all day with a windlass when he can get a small engine and winding gear, but those people are greatly handicapped because in addition to the heavy freight there is 25 per cent. duty on machinery. We have been told here by protectionists, more especially by the representatives of towns which have bits of iron foundries that they can do the work as cheaply as other countries. I have known instances where they have done so when they felt inclined, but with a high tariff there is a great temptation to put on the price, and to a certain extent I do not blame them. I am not going to take up the time of the House. I have spoken as a mining man as others have spoken who represent the farmers, and I would ask hon. members to look at this question from a far Northern man's point of view. I am not saying anything about the duties we have upon agricultural produce coming into this country, but I have very strong doubts whether the protective policy has been any use to the farmers at all. We were told here two years since that potatoes on the Downs were selling at 15s. a ton, yet at the same time they were costing in Croydon £15 a ton, and being imported from other colonies. If protection is a benefit to the farmer, how is it they are not able to devise some means of supplying the far North instead of allowing colonies thousands of miles away to take possession of the market? I am speaking now as a working man, and that is the reason why I do not intend to go largely into the question of protection and freetrade. We can find in protectionist countries some of the lowest wages and the longest hours, and we can find low wages and long hours in freetrade countries as well.

Mr. LEAHY: Not as much as in the other.

Mr. BROWNE: I do not believe there is as much. I believe protected countries are the worst. I do not believe that either protection or freetrade is a panacea for all the evils of the working man; to tell him that either one or the other is going to bring about the millennium is only deceiving him. I will say no more on the Bill at this stage, although I may have a good deal to say when it gets into committee. I intend to support the second reading, believing that the Bill contains a modicum of what we have been wanting for so long, and I trust that several additions will be made to the schedule.

Mr. TOOTH: In speaking upon this Bill I wish it to be understood that I am speaking as an ironfounder. There are many items in the list that

possibly I do not understand, and therefore will not allude to. Unfortunately I think I am the only ironfounder in the House. I say "unfortunately," because I represent an industry which puts into the pockets of the working classes many thousands of pounds, and I am only sorry the industry is not more largely represented. I need hardly say that I am a protectionist pure and simple; not a protectionist so far as my own trade is concerned, and a freetrader in all others. I am a protectionist in all trades. My experience is that many people who call themselves protectionists are only protectionists in their own trades, and freetraders in all others. The *Courier* is about as ardent a supporter of freetrade as we have known, and although I do not believe in it, I admire its persistency. Whenever they can get a dig at protection they make it. In one of their recent leading articles they are very jubilant that printing paper is to be put on the free list. They say it ought to be there because it cannot be made in the colony. The inference is that if it could be made in the colony it ought to be protected. Even they show their hand to a certain extent. They are inclined to be protectionists in their own trade and freetraders in other people's. Four or five years ago the fiscal policy of the Government was a protective one, and that policy has stood the test of two general elections. Each time the Government have been returned by big majorities, a sure proof that their policy has been endorsed by the electors of the colony. I am not ashamed to admit that if I had turned my coat and said I was a freetrader I should not have been in this House to-day, and there are hon. members who if at the general elections they had declared themselves as freetraders would not have been here to-day. There is not the slightest doubt that protection has established many industries in this colony, and the large foundries have laid themselves out to manufacture articles which previously were imported. I can endorse what my hon. friend the member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, says, that there are firms which have laid out many thousands of pounds in importing plant and appliances to enable them to do work which formerly was done outside the colony, and they now find their money will be thrown away, the very articles which they have laid themselves out to manufacture being placed on the free list. I allude now particularly to locomotives. I presume that means locomotives for ordinary Government railway purposes. As an ironfounder I say we would not have so much objection if they put in "locomotives under 8 or 9 inch cylinders." That possibly would meet what the Government intend—that traction engines for tram purposes may be admitted duty free. By all means let them come in free—because the demand is so small that it would not pay any firm to lay down the necessary plant to manufacture them. If it was put the locomotives under 8 or 9 inch cylinders should come in free, I should not have the slightest objection to that, but I may say that I believe some of these have been coming in free. I know a firm who have imported what they called locomotives on which they paid a duty of 25 per cent., while other firms have imported exactly the same article, called them traction engines, and got them in free. When the Premier issued his manifesto before the last general election, and we were given to understand that certain alterations would be proposed in the Customs tariff, I was under the impression, as I believe others were, that those alterations would be more in the way of adjusting certain anomalies than in such drastic alterations proposed in this Bill. I will just give an illustration of what I mean by anomalies. Under this Bill "indiarubber

insertion" is to be admitted free. I think that if the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government will turn up the returns he will find that ever since the 25 per cent. duty was imposed on that article no "indiarubber insertion" has been imported. The reason is that importers called it indiarubber, and under that name it came in free. For the information of those who may not know what "indiarubber insertion" is I may explain that it consists of two layers of indiarubber with a layer of canvas, and, as I say, I believe it will be found that nobody has imported a single roll of that article under the name of "indiarubber insertion," though thousands of such rolls must have been brought into the colony during the last few years. That is the kind of anomaly that I thought this Bill was going to adjust. We were also told that certain articles of machinery which it had been proved could not be made in the colony were to be admitted free. I do not object to mining machinery, such as air compressors, etc., being put on the free list, as is proposed in the schedule. But I would here say a word for the importers of machinery. There are importers of machinery in Brisbane who, I have no hesitation in saying, have pretty well £100,000 worth of machinery on their premises. What are they to do? When they imported that machinery they did so in good faith, knowing that they would have to pay 25 per cent. duty on it, and they have paid that duty. Now, that machinery is suddenly to come in free within the next two of three months. Who is to stand the loss those importers will suffer? It will be almost ruinous to them. Since the Sugar Works Guarantee Act has been in force there has been a great deal of talk as to why sugar machinery is not made in the colony at a price nearer the home figure. Well, first of all, I have no hesitation in saying that the inspection here adds 10 per cent. to the price. If you will take the sugar-mills which have been manufactured in the colony during the last two years, and compare them with the mills made at home, I will guarantee that the inspection at home has been nothing like the inspection in the colony. The inspection at home is not worth a snap of the finger. My firm suffered by that many years ago. We imported a lot of hopper barges, and had them sent out in pieces, and though they had passed the tests and inspection at home they were condemned on their arrival in the colony. I venture to say that there is the same kind of rough inspection with regard to everything we get out from home. But it is very different here. I know that in the establishment of one firm there are no less than four inspectors, three of them living on the premises. One is a practical moulder in the moulding shop who inspects every casting. He may pass one in which there may be some little bore-hole or flaw, because as a practical man he knows that it is no detriment to the casting, but after it is put into the machines, and many pounds have been spent machining it, another inspector may come along and condemn it. That is one of the things the local manufacturer has to put up with, and if the inspection at home was as stringent I am sure the price would be at least 10 per cent. higher than it is at present. There has also been a great deal said about the duty paid on sugar machinery. I should very much like to have information as to the duty paid on the Nambour, Nerang, and Mulgrave mills, dividing the duty on the machinery proper from that on the fittings, and also from the building material. If we had that information we should then find out how the home people manage to send their machinery out here at the price they do. If I as an individual went to those people and asked them the price of a sugar-mill, they

would very likely invoice it to me at £20,000, and I would have to pay duty on that amount. But when they export themselves they would invoice it at their works in England, or wherever it may be, not at £20,000, but probably at £10,000, and would simply pay duty on the £10,000. There is another thing to which I would refer. Let me tell those hon. members opposite who claim to be the working man's friend that, if this Bill as it now stands is carried, the wages of men in the iron industry will have to go down. I have taken the trouble to find out what are the wages paid to men in that industry in the old country as compared with the wages paid here in my own shop, and I found that men who are getting 12s. a day of eight hours in our shops, and who are, I maintain, worth that amount, would get from 7s. 10d. to 9s. 10d. at home; that men who are paid 10s. a day here would get from 6s. 9d. to 7s. at home; that men who are paid 8s. a day here would get from 5s. 6d. to 6s. at home; and that our 6s. a day men, the ordinary labourer, would get from 3s. 7d. to 4s. 3d. I got these figures from a home ironmaster going through my shop. He saw what the men were doing, and these are the prices he gave me. Those men work eight hours a day, and if we want them to work another hour we have to give them 25 per cent. advance. If there is a breakdown job, and we want them to work through the night we have to give them an advance of 50 per cent. Those are some of the things we have to do here, but which they have not to do at home, and that is one of the reasons why possibly colonial-made machinery is dearer than home-made. Another very important fact is this: At home when a youth goes to a workshop his father has to pay a heavy premium—sometimes as high as £500—for him to be taught the trade; here we have to teach the trade without any premium, give the boy 8s. a week at the start, and pay him 30s. a week before he is out of his time. It is only when a lad is getting towards the end of his time that any profit is made out of his work. That is another reason why our prices are somewhat higher than the home prices. But there are hundreds of journeymen who started at 8s. a week, and worked themselves up till they became full-blown engineers who are capable of earning 10s., 11s., and 12s. a day. As soon as they can they get married, and begin to populate the country; and it is population we want, but unless we provide means for people to live it is useless to increase the population. A great many of the agricultural implements in the schedule are already made in the colony, and I have no hesitation in saying that those which have been made here are quite equal to the imported machines. If the Government really want to do something to benefit the agricultural industry, they will not do it by putting on the free list a lot of machines that hundreds of farmers have never seen. Give people the land—free if you like—that is the way to encourage the industry and help the farmers. There is one shop in Ipswich where hundreds of pounds have been spent in getting out appliances for making these agricultural implements, and men have been imported to make them. If these machines are put on the free list, all that expenditure will be lost. Another item is that of bolts. The hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, not being in the trade made a mistake in referring to them as coach bolts and nuts; he should have said all bolts. A lot of us have gone to the expense of importing appliances and men to make these bolts, and if they are allowed to come in free all our work will have gone for nothing. We can make them down to  $\frac{5}{16}$ ths of an inch diameter, but under that diameter it would scarcely pay.

The SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member not to go through all the items. He will have abundant opportunity of doing that in committee. The principles of the Bill are what should be dealt with now.

Mr. TOOTH: The hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, alluded to brass-ware—

The SPEAKER: I may have given a certain amount of latitude to the Chairman of Committees, because it is the only opportunity he will have of speaking on the question; but I must ask the hon. member not to transgress.

Mr. TOOTH: There is one particular article in the list, and I cannot understand why it is put in, because the same article is made of iron as well as of brass, and why one should be allowed to come in free and not the other I cannot understand. Another thing, I do not see why pumping machines should be put on the free list while other machinery is subject to duty. It seems to me that this Bill is neither one thing nor the other—it is neither protection nor free-trade, but a little of both, and unfortunately of little benefit to any but a few. I do not say that I will oppose the second reading, but I hope that when we go into committee to consider the measure, the Government will give some latitude to hon. members who understand the effect of the remissions in altering the list and removing anomalies.

Mr. DAWSON: I am very sorry the hon. member for Maryborough is not present just now, because it appears to me, so far as the debate has gone at present, and I can understand the feelings of hon. members with regard to the Bill, it will resolve itself into the question between the hon. members for Maryborough and the rest of the House. All other hon. members are in favour of the Bill; the only opposition comes from those hon. members who represent one industry in the colony. The attitude those hon. members take up seems to me to argue that there is only one class of working men in the colony—namely, the artisans; there is only one industry—namely, iron founding; and only one town in the colony—namely, Maryborough, represented by those two hon. members. The matter seems to me to be entirely beyond any one particular centre of population, and beyond any one particular industry, and beyond any one particular class of workmen or producers in the colony. It is one of those questions that has to be considered from all points of view, and the thing we shall have to determine, more than anything else, is how far we can remove a burden from the majority of the people without putting an unnecessarily heavy burden upon the remainder. The Government have made a very fair attempt at doing it in this Bill, and I would like to say, so far as the Bill is concerned, that there is no Labour party. It requires to be considered by us as members of the House.

The TREASURER: So it ought to be.

Mr. DAWSON: So far as this Bill is concerned there is no Labour party.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Bundaberg said the same thing. He said he spoke for himself.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. member for Maryborough dragged in something about the Labour party. The question that I have a particular interest in, in connection with this Bill, is so far as it touches the mining industry; and I would like to say at once that hon. members should not underestimate the importance of the items relating to that industry that appear in the schedule. Although there are not as many as I should like, and not so many as I anticipated, still I am perfectly satisfied with what is in that schedule to be placed upon the free list for the future. It is a matter of very great importance to the mining industry, or if not to the mining

industry in every district, at any rate it is to the mining industry at Charters Towers. The mining men there have taken a very active interest in regard to these items for several years—so active that they never lost one single opportunity of bringing them under the attention of the Government or any member of the Government they could get hold of.

The TREASURER: I think it ought to operate at once instead of the 1st February. It will not interfere with any importer.

Mr. DAWSON: I think so, too. In order to convince hon. members who may doubt the importance of these items to the mining industry, I may refer to a list I have here, and of which I think the Treasurer has a copy. In fact I think he had it before him when he drafted the Bill. They have already in active work at Charters Towers air-compressors to the value of £15,131, upon which they have paid a heavy duty. Since this list was compiled they have imported several others which are now in course of erection. The value of the rock-drills is £5,405, and since the list was compiled more are in active operation. Another item is steel rings. The average expenditure of one company there in this direction amounts to £298 per month. I would point out that mining at Charters Towers is not now so easy as it was in years gone by. The mines are very deep, and the very best class of machinery is required to carry on the industry. Some of the mines are down over 2,000 feet, and it is utterly impossible for men to be found to work in these deep shafts unless they have this particular machinery to assist them, and it is in order to carry these mines to a greater depth that the Government have found it necessary to place these items on the free list. They are a matter of very profound importance, and in fact if there were a prohibitive duty placed upon these articles for the purpose of pleasing some ironfounder, the natural result would be to close up deep mines, which I do not think would be a good thing for the colony, or profitable to the manufacturers, or the artisans, or the workmen. The more the mines are developed on Charters Towers the greater will be the demand for this particular class of machinery, and the sooner it is placed on the free list the better for the industry. That industry has brought in sufficient revenue, and has been sufficiently profitable to the taxpayers to justify a demand that it should receive attention. We do not look upon this as a concession at all, and when hon. members speak of the inclusion of a few things in the free list as a concession to the industry we absolutely deny it; we regard them simply as a recognition of rights that are being acknowledged after considerable agitation. Personally, I congratulate the Government upon putting these articles on the free list, but they might have gone a step further than they have gone. The mining industry is certainly the most profitable to the Treasury, and there are other articles which might be put upon the free list. The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill mentioned one which he thought should be on the free list, but which after mature consideration he decided not to include—that is sulphuric acid. I would like the hon. gentleman to reconsider his decision, because most assuredly that question will again crop up when the Bill gets into committee. The placing of that article upon the free list would be just as important to the industry as the inclusion of any of the items already on it. This particular chemical is the great essential for treating tailings in a mining district, and the cheaper the price at which it can be got, the lower the grade of ore it will pay to treat. If you make the cost of materials excessive by means of duties, all you succeed in doing is to make it impossible for any pyrites company to treat tailings under a certain

grade. The aim of the Mines Department and of the Government should be to supply these materials as cheaply as possible, in order that the lowest graded ore may be treated profitably. It means a good deal more than giving dividends to shareholders, because it must not be forgotten that a consideration of this kind shown to the mining industry does not absolutely find its way into the pockets of the shareholders of mining companies, because a certain amount of the profit they make finds its way back to the Treasury by means of the dividend tax. The higher the profit made by mining companies the higher the revenue derived by the Treasury through that tax. In this particular we are in a stronger position to demand a free list than any other industry. Sulphuric acid ought to be on the free list, and I hope that when the Bill is in committee there will be a sufficient number of members present to place it there. The hon. gentleman gave as one reason why he did not include it, a communication received from the firm manufacturing the acid at the present time, to the effect that they were supplying it to the Charters Towers Pyrites Company at a price as low as that at which it could be got from Sydney free of duty. If they can supply it at that price, what is the reason for the duty?

**THE SECRETARY FOR MINES:** Others use it besides those in the mining industry. All chemists use it.

**MR. DAWSON:** It is a very small amount that is used outside the mining industry. The bulk of it is used in treating tailings on gold-fields, in connection with the chlorination process. Though the manufacturers say that they can do this at the present time, we have no guarantee that after the Bill is passed, and their position is secured for another term, they will not raise the price of the article. In answer to that objection the hon. gentleman said that a short Bill could be run through to deal with that particular case; but he knows as well as I do that it is an exceedingly difficult and delicate matter for any Government to introduce and carry a Bill dealing with one item only of the Customs tariff.

**THE SECRETARY FOR MINES:** We would be justified in that if they broke faith with us.

**MR. DAWSON:** The difficulty is not between the House and the company, but between members of the House and the Government. This was brought under our notice in 1894 and 1895. Ministers were then quite ready, as I believe they are now, to admit that this item should be placed on the free list, but what they never forgot to point out was that it would be a difficult matter for the Government to interfere with any of the scheduled articles, as that would give rise to the whole debate over again on the whole of the Customs tariff, and that would not be a wise thing to do. I see no reason why that objection should not be raised in 1897 and 1898, and the Government having decided to interfere with the Customs tariff we should settle this particular question now, before this Bill passes. The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill said he had excluded those acids which were manufactured in the colony, but there is one acid mentioned here, sulphurous acid, which is manufactured in the colony. It is a combination of sulphuric acid and mercury, and is made in the colony; and if they have seen a justification for introducing a particular item on the free list because it is used in medicine in small quantities, why not introduce an article that is manufactured in the colony that is used daily on mining fields, and certainly does assist in increasing the revenue. I believe they have in the Mines Department documents from the Pyrites Company stating the amount of expenditure they would go to if this item was on the free list, what grade ores can be treated, and

what quantity of tailings cannot be treated until this item is put in the free list. I would point out also in connection with this matter that this company has a special contract with Elliott Bros., which is terminable at a certain date. We certainly intend to bring that matter forward in committee, and I would also point out for the information of those who are not mining members how this tax operates in another direction.

**THE SPEAKER:** I would remind the hon. member that he is now dealing entirely with matters that should be dealt with in committee. He cannot at this stage go into details. That must be reserved for the discussion in committee.

**MR. DAWSON:** I have mentioned the matter because the Minister in charge of the Bill specially referred to it. If I would not be out of order I might be permitted to indicate one or two things which the hon. gentleman will have to meet in committee. The Government, in framing this Bill, have not gone far enough in the principle which they lay down—that the reductions should be in the direction of assisting the producing industries without restricting the revenue. It might frequently happen that the very fact that an import duty is imposed prevents a surplus accruing. In connection with the mining industry, I could very well point out where an extension of the principle might be made with advantage, and it would not only diminish the prospects of a surplus but actually increase them. I should like to know why the hon. gentleman has not thought fit to include concentrating machinery in the free list?

**AN HONOURABLE MEMBER:** Vanners are on the list.

**MR. DAWSON:** Vanners are concentrators certainly, but there are numbers of other concentrators. Four-fifths of the concentrating machinery are Stansfields, and if these items for concentrating tailings were put upon the free list, if it were made easy for people to obtain machinery, they would get larger returns of gold, more men would be employed, more money would be circulated, and there would be larger dividend duties. I say if you increase the use of these articles by putting them on the free list you certainly do not diminish the prospect of a surplus, but increase it. I certainly object to the exclusion of all the engines and boilers that are used. There are more of those used than anything else. The hon. gentleman seems to have gone upon this principle: That the article that is used most should not be put upon the free list, and the articles that are used least should be on that list.

**THE SECRETARY FOR MINES:** Those are made in the colony; plenty of them.

**MR. DAWSON:** No doubt; and there are other things which are made in the colony which are on the free list. There are a number of things, as pointed out by the member for Burrum, which are made in the colony and used in the agricultural industry, which have been placed on the free list.

**THE TREASURER:** He was talking as a foundry man.

**MR. DAWSON:** It does not matter whether he was talking as a foundry or as a family man. He was merely stating what he knew to be fact. It is not the man or his occupation that you have to look at; it is whether the statements he makes are facts or not. These articles are made in the colony; and if the hon. gentleman makes that an objection with regard to boilers and engines, why is there not the same objection with regard to other implements? In conclusion, I would like to say that while I think what the Government have put upon the free list will do good, while I believe the things they have put there are necessary, while I believe they will be a very great assistance to the producing industries and to the

consumers also, I do not think they have adopted the best principle when bringing this Bill forward. Instead of confining themselves absolutely to matters that they can exempt altogether from duty, they might have gone through the tariff with a view to discover what articles they could reduce the duty upon without unduly restricting the revenue.

The TREASURER: We must leave something for another time; we cannot do everything at once.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. gentleman will find plenty to do on a future occasion without that, and I believe in the principle of doing as much as we can at once, especially when we have so much to do. There are items now paying from 15 to 25 per cent., and we could in many instances afford to reduce the duty to 10 and 15 per cent. The Government should have embodied the principle of reduction as well as the principle of exemption in their Bill.

The TREASURER: One of the clauses does that.

Mr. DAWSON: I am very glad, indeed, to find that that is so. I had entirely overlooked that provision, which makes the Bill still better. The schedule is certainly calculated to do a certain amount of good, and the clause which gives the Treasurer power to admit other articles free if he should see any necessity to do so increases the benefits of the Bill. Last year I had occasion to try to get a machine introduced into the colony free. It was the first of its kind, and was intended to start a new industry, but owing to the hard and stiff nature of the tariff then in existence it could not possibly be done. I am therefore very glad to see that an alteration made in this measure which will meet such occasions if they should arise. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: I think the general tendency of the debate so far is to commend the Government for introducing this Bill, and in that light I wish to tender them my sincere congratulations. The Bill may not be all that an extreme freetrader or an extreme protectionist may desire, but it seems to be framed upon the present condition and circumstances of the colony, and while it does not afford, perhaps, as large a measure of relief as freetraders might have expected, still it gives quite as much as could be expected from the financial position of the colony and the promise made by the Treasurer in his Financial Statement. Indeed, the hon. gentleman goes further than I expected he would have been able to do at the present time. On the principle that it encourages the introduction of material to be used in the production of the completed article in the colony, the measure should be hailed by protectionists as the truest protection that could be afforded. It will encourage the production of the completed article, which has hitherto been prevented on account of the high duty imposed on the component parts. Our tariff has not at all times received that deliberate consideration that it should have received when passing through this Chamber, and we have constantly presented to us the anomaly that, while parts of machinery are charged 25 per cent. duty, the completed article can be introduced at 15 per cent. I have had an opportunity of accompanying those who are technically acquainted with the construction of these articles to place their representations before the Treasurer, and the glaring anomalies they have presented in connection with this matter have been a surprise to me, not being conversant with technical construction, and I am glad to find that they have produced such an impression on the Treasurer as to induce him to deal with them in this Bill. Of course a measure of this sort, when once it is placed before a deliberative Assembly like this, composed as it is of ardent freetraders and ardent pro-

tectionists, is sure to provoke a protection and freetrade debate. But this Bill is one that need not necessarily arise any feeling of that sort. It should be considered in the light of doing what the Treasurer can fairly do in the financial circumstances of the colony to encourage in its true sense increased production and increased manufacture in the colony, and thereby ve enlarged employment to a considerable number of operatives. In that light I consider that the Bill should be hailed with satisfaction. With regard to this very extended schedule, it is highly improbable that even the Treasurer, having at his command large sources of information through the Customs, could present a perfect schedule, and I take it that he will not be adverse to receiving suggestions which will tend to make it more perfect in the direction in which it is framed. We have had some very excellent references this evening to articles which I shall not enumerate, but which, so far as the *ex parte* statements have gone—for they are *ex parte* until the Treasurer rebuts them in committee—have my sympathy, and I am inclined to promise my assistance to get them included in the free list. I have always proclaimed myself a freetrader, and my sympathies are undoubtedly in that direction, because I can see that protection, I regret to say, does not in itself achieve that success which its ardent advocates say it should achieve. It seems to me that commencing with small beginnings, industries which can only be started by protection are continuously demanding more and more State assistance, and it finally comes to this: That whenever the State withdraws its props or buttresses we are threatened with a collapse of the industry and the disbandment of a large number of operatives and mechanics whom we would regret to see unemployed. Freetraders equally with protectionists sincerely desire to see the operatives of the colony fully employed; we do not desire to see this colony a dumping-ground for European manufacturers while our operatives and mechanics are walking about unemployed; and if I could be assured, not by declamation, but by object lessons, that protection would lead to the continuous employment of our mechanics without any fear of molestation on the withdrawal of Government aid, I would proclaim myself a protectionist tomorrow. But the protectionist system will only last as long as the State cow yields its supply. When that is withdrawn, "chaos is come again." I have taken a great interest in watching the problem of protection. I accept the compliment paid me by the Chairman of Committees as having when in office done all in my power to confine local manufactures within the colony. No action of my political life gave me greater pleasure than to provide for the first time for the construction of our large dredge plant in Queensland. A respected and venerated late colleague also followed suit by giving the construction of a large number of locomotive engines to the local foundries. I was glad to see that done, and I will go so far as to violate the principles of freetrade by saying that if a very moderate advance on the cost of importation from England could maintain these foundries employing a large number of operatives, and they would be satisfied with that moderate protection, I for one would always give my vote in that direction in order to assist in promoting the social prosperity of the colony and the workmen engaged in our industries. Though I proclaim myself a freetrader, and am generally regarded with great suspicion by protectionists, yet whenever I have had an opportunity I have done more for the working men of the colony in introducing the system of local manufacture than so-called protectionists who have endeavoured by

a sideward to get in manufactures from abroad. I prefer work done in the colony, and if it can be done by a moderate increase in the cost of introduction it shall always, as long as I have a vote in public life, have my hearty support. But I think I must ask the hon. member for Maryborough, while I accept the compliment he paid me, to consider the different circumstances of the colony now from what they were at the time when I, being in authority, was able to distribute the patronage of the construction of some of our dredge plant, and a former colleague the patronage of locomotives. The conditions of the colony were very different from now. At that time the tariff of 1870 was in existence, under which a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* was imposed, but was reduced in 1874 gradually to 5 per cent.—on the 30th September, 1874, to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and later on the same year to 5 per cent.—so that at the time this plant was constructed by the artificers of the colony there was 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty. I say still that if the difference of 5 per cent. only existed between the cost of local manufacture and that of importation I would give my vote for the 5 per cent. preference, considering the many advantages we derive from local production. We have had instances of very valuable vessels and other articles on which there was a large amount of public expenditure coming out to the colony in an imperfect condition, notwithstanding their being certified to as having been duly and thoroughly inspected; consequently I think a moderate increase in cost on the locally-produced article would not be waste money, while it would at the same time encourage the operatives and mechanics of the colony. Since 1874 we have had changes in the tariff. In 1888 the tariff upon certain articles, including locomotives, was increased to 15 per cent. *ad valorem*. In 1892 it was increased to 25 per cent. So that when my hon. friend asks my assistance in encouraging the construction of locomotives and other matters of that sort under the tariff of 25 per cent. he is making a large request compared with what I did when the tariff was only 5 per cent. Therefore I feel relieved of the obligation to assist him to that extent. Still I would go to this extent: I feel very deeply for men who have invested a large amount of capital and imported a large amount of valuable plant for the construction of locomotives and other heavy articles of machinery on the expectation that the present State encouragement would be continued. I always like to put myself into the position of a man who has a grievance, and find out whether it is a substantial grievance or not. If I were interested in large foundry works, under those circumstances I should feel seriously affected by a sudden change in the tariff as is now proposed. At the same time it should be borne in mind that a very large firm on behalf of whom the hon. member for Maryborough speaks, which we recognise as one of the great iron foundries of Australia, came into existence in Queensland before the present 25 per cent. tariff was established. They possibly came in under the 1870 tariff, when there was a 10 per cent. duty, but of course they suffered diminutions since. At any rate they came in before the 25 per cent. tariff, and they prospered then, perhaps quite as much as since, and that should be taken into consideration. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that year after year labour-saving machinery is more and more coming to the front. While in 1874, and even in 1884, a large amount of work in connection with the agricultural, pastoral, and mining industries was conducted with manual labour, every year since there have been inventions of labour-saving machinery which it is necessary we should introduce if we wish to keep pace with the world outside, and for the sake of economy

of production; and in that view of the case I may say that the articles enumerated in this Bill are such as to command our attention and respect. Although the Bill commends itself to me, I have listened with interest, and not without instruction, to the excellent speech of the hon. member for Burrum, who certainly spoke upon a subject with which he was thoroughly conversant, and I sympathise with him to a certain extent, and would commend it to the Government whether, in the matter of locomotives and other large machines, which it is desirable we should make here, but which we cannot make without a plant costing several thousands of pounds, and without a specially trained class of artisans, it is wise at one blow to withdraw the encouragement the local makers are now receiving. The sudden change of policy in the mother colony has often given me great concern, and it is a question whether it would be altogether wise to impulsively withdraw the support which this industry has received and under which it has improved. While I am prepared to give my cordial support to the greater number of items upon this schedule, and am ready to support hon. members who may make claims for the enlargement of the schedule, I think in regard to locomotives that it would be wise for the Government to consider whether the cessation of this duty should be immediately attempted or not. There has been a large amount of work going on in our iron yards. Fifty locomotives have been constructed, and I am sure that the tender given to Walkers Limited will be a very great boon to Maryborough, and that a fine article will be turned out. This withdrawal will not benefit anyone, and if the support were continued for a longer period it might relieve them from their present difficulties. I know I must not touch the schedule now, but I may be permitted to refer to a few things, in order that the Minister may take note of what I desire to see added to this list for the sake of enlarging the benefit of the Bill to industries now established. The first I will mention is ingot tin, which is largely used in soldering the tins containing preserved and cured meat. The solder is a composition of lead and ingot tin. The lead comes in free, but the tin pays a duty of 25 per cent., and has cost one firm no less than £1,800. Ingot tin is manufactured in the colony, but you can buy it cheaper in London. Then, again, there are materials used by opticians, such as lenses, rough edged, which are ground in the colony to fit them into their sockets. The lenses are not made in the colony, but there is a large amount of work connected with fitting them into their frames to sell them to the public. Empty spectacle and eyeglass frames and spectacle and eyeglass cases might also come in free. Artists' colours are admitted free, but there are certain art materials—mediums—that might be added to the schedule. In connection with the pottery materials, which are to a certain extent provided for in the schedule, I am informed by the proprietors of a certain brick and tile works that they desire to introduce what is called "brick oil" for oiling the moulds to prevent the clay adhering, and finally I propose to ask that bark for tanning be introduced free. The bark we obtain in this colony is not of that character, so I am informed by tanners, which produces the best leather, or leather approaching what is produced in London, and as we desire to enlarge our production of leather which will compete with the manufactures of other colonies, I would ask that the best bark, which we import from Tasmania, may be admitted free. I do not believe there is any necessity to discuss this Bill at greater length. I recognise that in the list submitted to us the lines are not hard and fast, and so far as I can learn the Government

are prepared to weigh any proposals which hon. members have to make, and I trust that before the Bill passes through committee members on both sides will endeavour to make it useful to the country and extend its beneficial operation.

Mr. McCORD: As the representative of a large number of agriculturists in the Burnett district, I feel that I ought to make a few remarks on the second reading of this Bill. I see here forty-five agricultural implements enumerated, the introduction of which duty free will be of great assistance to agriculturists, and I feel sure that they will be able to recognise in this measure a great boon and assistance to them. I have heard it stated repeatedly that the great thing to push this country on is to settle people on the land; but what is the good of settling people upon the land if they are not supplied with the best implements to enable them to compete with the world's production. To enable farmers to succeed we certainly must have a better class of implements in use for farming than we have in my district, and any measure which will lessen the cost of such articles to the farmer must be considered a great boon. I feel that the Government have acted well in introducing this measure of relief. Agriculture carried on in the old fashion is slavery of the very worst description, and in my district I know men are farming to-day in the fashion of our grandfathers; and ploughing with the old one-horse plough is a very slow business, and one that our young people do not take to. With the use of the improved implements mentioned here, and which I understand, agriculture, instead of being a matter of slavery, would be a matter of pleasure, and our young men would take to it more readily. There are a few articles which are not mentioned here, but which it would be of the greatest benefit to include, and when we go into committee I will be prepared to suggest some in the interests of the agricultural industry, which I am sure the Government will readily accept. I see that the duties are to be remitted on barbed, galvanised, and steel wire for fencing; that will greatly assist grazing farmers and pastoralists in fencing in and securing their lands, and it will also give employment to a considerable number of men. As the representative also of a mining district, I am glad to notice exemptions that will be of great assistance to the mining industry, but I will be able to suggest in committee some additional items which I feel certain will be accepted. The hon. member for Maryborough stated that the foundries would be seriously affected by this Bill, and many of them have been at large expense in introducing machinery for the manufacture of tools which are included here, but I dare say that when the Bill is in committee, if the matter is properly represented to the Government, it will receive the attention it ought to receive. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MURRAY: I am one of those who hail with the utmost satisfaction the introduction of this measure, and that satisfaction will be shared by the country generally. Nothing could have occurred in this Parliament to promote the general interests of the country to the same extent as a measure of this description, because it will promote the producing industries of the country by admitting duty free the materials and machinery required to carry on those industries. To my mind that is essential, for we are almost solely a producing community, and we have the world to compete with us. It must be evident that the country able to put its products into the markets of the world at the cheapest rate will be the country that will survive, and the introduction of a measure to facilitate the carrying on of the producing industries is most essential. I was

sorry to hear the hon. member for Maryborough deplore the state of affairs that would exist in his district if certain articles are admitted duty free. He believes that a number of people will be thrown out of employment. I do not think such a thing can occur, and though a few small manufacturing industries may provide slightly less employment the promotion of our producing industries will give largely increased employment in other directions. There are some few articles that might be included in the free list. Seeing the rapid spread of grazing farms, I think that wool-presses should be admitted duty free.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are made here.

Mr. MURRAY: Some may be, but many others are imported. The free admission of wire and wire-netting will also have a good effect upon the trade of the colony. I am pleased that the measure has been introduced, and I know that my constituents will be pleased with it. It would have been an improvement if it had gone a little further, but I suppose we must be thankful for small mercies, and hope for more next year. I believe freetrade is the true policy for every young country. We are not in a position to compete in manufactures with the older countries of the world, which have all the advantages of the newest mechanical appliances and abundance of labour. I hold that our duty is to promote by every means the producing industries, and it is only by that means that we can become a prosperous community. I shall support the Bill, and hope to see several other exemptions introduced in committee.

Mr. SMITH: The Government in introducing this Bill are only carrying out what has been their pronounced policy—that is, to encourage native industries, to foster them, and enable people of all classes to settle upon the land. I look upon the measure as an indication of returning prosperity, the colony being in such a good financial position that the burdens of the people can be lightened. That is a boon which will be readily recognised by those who are endeavouring to make this one of the most prosperous colonies of the Australian group. I think, however, it would be well for the Ministry to consider the advisability of adding to the free list. The hon. member for Charters Towers has referred to sulphuric acid. That should be admitted duty free, although it has been said that a firm in Brisbane is supplying it to the miners of Charters Towers at the same cost as they can import it.

Mr. DAWSON: That is only to one company.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It can be bought on the same terms by any mining company.

Mr. SMITH: There is nothing to compel that firm to adhere to their promise, and therefore I would place that commodity on the free list. When the Government framed their last tariff it was quite as much for revenue purposes as for protection; although it had a protective tendency, yet it was not introduced for that purpose. There were several taxes imposed for the purpose of encouraging native industries, notably the tax of £1 a ton on flour. It is a question now whether that industry has not advanced to such a degree that we could afford to place flour on the free list. I certainly think that suggestion is worthy of consideration. I am what may be termed a fair trader; I do not believe in taxing a commodity to encourage its manufacture when the industry will not stand alone after a certain time. I am very pleased to see that the Government have risen to the occasion and brought in this Bill. It will be a great boon to the primary industries of the colony, and I trust that the few extra items that

have been mentioned will be added to the free list. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. CASTLING: I congratulate the Government on their proposals, and only rise to refer to what was said by the hon. member for Maryborough—that the admission of casks duty free would have the effect of throwing the whole of the coopers out of employment. I wish to say that such is not the case. All the casks that go south are for tallow. They are not used in the colony, because soapmakers can buy broken parcels locally, and the great bulk of the tallow goes home. About eighteen months ago the people at home had the casks taken to pieces, and they were bound up and sent out in shooks; but the attempt to use them again was a failure, and a return was made to the old system of making new casks, so that there is not the slightest danger of their coming into competition, or of the coopers suffering in any way from them. Of course they were in use for a short time here; but the cost of setting them up again after they came out here was so great, and the wood was so weak, that it did not pay. There is one other item I should like to see placed on the free list, and that is condensed milk. The duty on that is 2d. per lb., and I do not suppose the revenue from it amounts to much.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: About £7,000.

Mr. CASTLING: At any rate there are a great many poor people in the North whose cows, on which they depended for milk, have been swept entirely away from them, and they have now to use condensed milk. If the Government cannot place that article on the free list, I should very much like to see them reduce the duty.

Mr. STORY: It is evident that we can leave the interests of the farmers, the miners, the artisans, and manufacturers in the hands of hon. members who have already spoken. I, on behalf of the shearers, the selectors, the squatters, wish to tender my thanks to the Government for introducing this Bill. First as to shearers, I notice that sheep-shearing machines and all parts thereof are to be admitted free. That is very satisfactory, because on cutters and combs they were paying 25 per cent. With regard to squatters and selectors, the fact that wire, iron—plain, barbed, and galvanised—steel wire, and woolpacks are to be placed on the free list will be regarded as a very great concession. I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: The previous speakers this evening have gone away from the subject on to protection and freetrade. For the last six years protection has been the settled policy of this colony, and I do not think the Treasurer or any member of the House should touch upon the policy of protection without first going before the country. I understand that the anxiety of the Treasurer is to make free all articles that can be manufactured in the colony. There are some items on the proposed list which need protection, and I shall certainly vote against their inclusion in the schedule. I do not wish to vote against the second reading of the Bill, but I shall object to those items when we go into committee. For any member to trot himself out now as a freetrader is to go against his constituents, because members have been returned as protectionists. I certainly never saw any member go before his constituents as a freetrader, not even the strongest freetrader we have in the House—not even the Secretary for Railways. There are items in this list which seriously affect the colony, and on which I shall speak at the proper time. I do not think it is our place to go into details on the second reading of the Bill, and I think the Speaker has given too much latitude in that direction.

Mr. SMYTH: I belong to a class of people who want protection, but what they want is to be protected from the 25 per cent. duty. We do not want to pay a great deal more than we should pay to assist any industry in the colony. The farmers are to have the 15 per cent. duty on agricultural machinery remitted; I do not say anything against that; but I think it is only fair that the same consideration should be accorded to the industry I represent. A protectionist would stand no show of getting in for the mining constituency I represent or for Charters Towers. Talk about industries requiring fostering, does not the mining industry require that? Does it not require cheap machinery to enable those engaged in it to go into the bowels of the earth in search of gold? Before the duty was imposed on mining machinery £6,000 would go as far as £8,000 will go now. I am not a strong believer in imported machinery. We know very well the importers are handicapped in many ways, although, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Burrum, the workmen in England get lower wages and work longer hours than they do in Queensland. But the time is coming when all workers in the world will not work longer than eight hours a day. The hon. member for Burrum represents the iron-workers of Maryborough, and so does the last speaker. A freetrader contesting the seat for that town would almost lose his deposit. But I should like to know why there should be a tax on mining machinery when agricultural machinery is coming in free? We find that the printing press never paid duty. The Press was too strong to tilt against, and their machinery therefore was allowed to come in free. The Treasurer, in bringing in this Bill, has tried to do a great deal of good to many persons in the colony. Up to the present the mining industry has not received that consideration to which it is entitled. We have tried for a long time to get the duty of 25 per cent. taken off the machinery used in that industry, but without success. I should like to know what other industry pays 25 per cent. on its machinery. We are quite willing to share our gold with the makers of machinery, but we do not want to give them too much; we do not want to give £1 5s. for £1 worth of machinery. The mining industry employs more men than any other industry in the colony, and on a less area of ground. The little goldfield I represent has a population of 14,000, and most of the people are employed on a square mile of ground. We never go cap in hand to the Government.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about deep-sinking?

Mr. SMYTH: We have had something for deep-sinking, but we are not an octopus. We do not go crying to the Government for a bridge here, a hospital there, and a culvert somewhere else. We have been supporting the Government for years by paying a larger contribution to the revenue than any other class in the community. We have been paying 30 per cent. on candles, which is purely a class tax. Miners cannot take kerosene or gas into a mine, and we have been pleading for a considerable time for a reduction of the tax on candles from 2d. to 1d., but have not got it yet. We are getting some machines free—some that cannot be made in the colony. I believe something was said about pumps. They should come in free, because pumping machinery, which is patented, is imported. At one mine in which I am interested there is a pump that cost £3,000, and we had to pay 25 per cent. duty. That is not assisting the mining industry; it is crushing the industry. I see that boilers and engines are not on the free list, but I think that duty might be reduced to 10 per cent. A great deal of capital flows out to the colonies, and a great deal

comes out in the shape of machinery. That is one way of getting capital, and if we can get it indirectly we may as well do so. Therefore I should like to see the duty on engines and boilers reduced. I do not see why a few persons in the colony should be protected to the detriment of the majority. I suppose the persons who use the machinery are about eighty to twenty compared with those who make it, and those few people want to be protected 25 per cent. while all the rest suffer. In New Zealand a heavy tax was put on blocks. There was only one man in that colony employed in making blocks; all the rest were imported, and the people who used them had to pay a heavy duty to satisfy that one man; yet the industry did not prosper. Taken on the whole, the agriculturist, the miner, the squatter, and all others who are developing the country receive fair consideration under the Bill, and I shall give it my support. I believe the hon. member for Maryborough will find that there are more freetraders in the House than he imagines. I am not a freetrader; I am a fairtrader, and I believe that certain industries should receive some assistance, but not to the extent of 25 per cent.

Mr. DANIELS: I am not going to make a very long speech on this Bill; but as we have drifted into a discussion on freetrade *versus* protection, I may say that there is nothing in the Bill but what the most advanced freetrader or the most advanced protectionist can support. To my mind it is brought in with the intention of allowing our industries to go ahead a little faster. One very important item I would like to see included is galvanised iron for building purposes. There is not an industry but what requires a certain amount of galvanised iron; and though we may appear to lose £14,000 or £15,000 by taking off the duty, I believe we should really gain by the remission. A lot of farmers, instead of thatching their stacks, would put up sheds and keep their produce in good order; there would be greater traffic on the railways, and more labour would be employed. If I could have got galvanised iron cheaper in the past I would have built sheds, and hundreds of farmers would do so if they could get it £2 a ton cheaper. Wire and wire-netting and iron are on the free list; and why not galvanised iron, which affects everybody in the colony? I give the Government every credit for bringing the Bill in, and I intend to support the second reading.

Mr. LISSNER: I was going to address the House several times, Mr. Speaker, but you probably did not see me. I believe in every measure the Government brings in, and I have much more pleasure in supporting the Government this time than ever I had before. It was an extraordinary speech made by the hon. member, Mr. Annear, who said that the Government were pledged to protection, and that we ought to go to the country or somewhere else before we bring in a measure of this sort. I should like the Government to remain in power, and I would like to run the balance of the term in Parliament. I am not pledged to protection particularly, and I do not think the Government is either. I am pledged to support any measure that is good for the country, especially for the majority of the people, and I believe this is the very measure we wanted, and I have much pleasure in supporting it. There has been very little dissension on the Bill anyhow. Even the leader of her Majesty's "A.L.F." party, who was about the most severe in his criticism of the measure, what did he do? He got up and he sat down again. He growled about certain things as usual, but nobody takes much umbrage at what he says, because we are used to it. I was used to it years ago, and if anything, he is much more pleasant than he used to be. He smiled

even when he was growling. He wanted the Government to take the duty off coffee. In the electorate I represent people are going to make fortunes out of coffee. He also wants to take the duty off rice—he wants to encourage the Chinamen to get fatter than they are. He wants to take the duty off starch, but there is not much starch in the whole lot of us. I think the Government in bringing forward this measure will help the industries of the colony in every shape and form. The squatter gets woolpacks and wire-fencing, and the shearer gets shearing machines free.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What does the miner get?

Mr. LISSNER: Ask the hon. member for Gympie. Deep sinking and no gold at the bottom. As far as the exemptions in connection with the mining machinery are concerned, I think the Government might very well include a mill called Krupp's ball mill for dry crushing. It is a mill that cannot be made here under any circumstances, and would be of very great use where there is very little water in connection with cyanide. Several of these mills are working admirably at Mount Morgan. They want very little water and have produced a very large quantity of gold. There is another mill working at Croydon, at the Glencoe mine, and they are quite satisfied with it, and recommend the introduction of other mills. I hope they will be exempted.

The TREASURER: There is a clause which provides for them.

Mr. LISSNER: I hope it will not be forgotten. I think the country is satisfied with the Bill, and so am I, and I shall support it.

Mr. FOGARTY: I do not doubt but that the Government are actuated by the best of motives in introducing this measure. I agree with some of it, but disagree with a considerable portion. It will probably be a benefit to the agricultural industry, but there are other industries, and I have a great deal of sympathy with the speech of the hon. member for Maryborough. He struck the key-note, and the complaint he made extends as far as Toowoomba, where there is an establishment known as the Toowoomba Foundry Company, the pay-sheet of which is something like £4,000 or £5,000 a year, and which can produce a number of articles mentioned in the Bill as good as the imported article. Such being the case, it is our bounden duty to protect our own people, and keep our money within the confines of the country. Of course I represent a farming district, but I have a great deal of sympathy with the mining industry, and when any measure is introduced that will assist that industry I shall give it my support. Still, we must recognise the fact that we must all pull together, and if that principle is acted upon we shall not have the hon. member for Bowen and the hon. member for Gympie advocating the removal of the duty upon flour.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What is the good of it?

Mr. FOGARTY: It is an immense good. I do not think it requires a prophet to foresee that in the very near future we will be in a position to export flour; when we reach that stage then the duty can be removed, but until then it should be retained. I am sure that if protection had not been granted to the sugar industry at first it would never have attained the huge proportions it has attained since. The industries of the colony must be protected in exactly the same way as a mother protects a child until it reaches an age when it can battle with the world for its existence. If the State does not protect and develop industries in their infancy they will never be a success. I am sorry the Treasurer cannot see his way clear to remove the £2 duty

upon galvanised iron, which would be a very great boon not only to the farming industry but to the whole settled population of the colony.

Mr. SMYTH: A large firm is coming here to start a factory.

Mr. FOGARTY: I am pleased to hear it, but I trust that the Treasurer will see his way clear to remove this duty.

The TREASURER: We are going in that direction.

Mr. FOGARTY: I think that instead of the Bill coming into operation on the 1st February next year, it should come into operation immediately it receives the Governor's assent. I shall have a great deal more to say in committee. I am in communication with people who are directly interested, but owing to the late stage at which the Bill reached our hands I have not been able to receive replies. Directly the Bill was circulated, I lost no time in sending copies to the manager of a very important industry on the Darling Downs. I tried to get a copy of the Bill from the Secretary for Mines on Thursday evening, but my application was unsuccessful, and I much regretted the absence of the Treasurer, for I should also have approached him.

Mr. W. THORN: What has that to do with the Bill?

Mr. FOGARTY: It has a great deal to do with the Bill. We should endeavour to ascertain the feelings of those we represent. I was returned by the artisans and farmers of my electorate, and it is my duty to consult those people. By exchanging ideas I may possibly get some information that may be of value to this House. That is the reason I was so anxious to obtain a copy. However, immediately the Bill was circulated I mailed a copy to the manager I have been referring to, and I expect to hear from him to-morrow. I am sorry this debate has been hurried on in this way. The information published in the Press did not bear the official endorsement of the Government, and though I talked the matter over with my friends in Toowoomba, they said there was no use in seriously considering the matter until we got the Bill from the hands of the Government, as we know that the Press often jumps at conclusions. I have not heard from my people yet, but I am satisfied I will do so, and I will then be in a position to show that a number of articles included in this Bill can be manufactured in the colony as good as they can be imported. If that is so we should remove from the free list the articles I have in view. I know the Treasurer would be only too pleased to have the money circulating amongst our own people, and in that feeling probably the whole of the members of the House will share. The whole amount involved, £50,000, is not a very large sum, and if we are in a position to remove taxation to that extent—

Mr. KERR: On flour.

Mr. FOGARTY: I hear the hon. member for Barcoo ironically interjecting "flour," but it is possible that flour will yet be grown in his district, and I believe it will be grown successfully there. I remind the hon. gentleman that the industry he represents, the pastoral industry, is a very important one, but the farming industry is quite as important. With respect to the mining industry I have no hesitation in saying that when it is a thing of the past farming will still go on.

Mr. BROWNE: What are you giving us?

Mr. FOGARTY: If the hon. member for Croydon will turn his attention to the history of the past he will find that what I am stating is correct. In time goldfields are exhausted, but good agricultural land is never exhausted, and for that reason the agricultural industry is probably the most important in the world. The more

you remove from the soil the more remains; the higher the system of cultivation the greater the yield, and the yield with favourable seasons and scientific farming will continue increasing. What I suggest is that the protectionist section of the House should put their heads together, and it is just possible that their deliberations may result in some good. They may be in a position to approach the Treasurer and point out to him where improvements may be made in the Bill, and if he is satisfied that they are improvements I have no doubt he will accept them. I know that the attempt will be made to make considerable alterations when the Bill comes to be discussed in detail. There is a very important branch of industry established in the neighbourhood of Brisbane—I am speaking now of the Graziers' Butchering Company's industries—and they have approached different members of the House pointing out their inconveniences, and, as I know, they make out a remarkably good case.

Mr. LEAHY: Did you give them any tip?

Mr. FOGARTY: I do not know the meaning of the word, which is probably more congenial to the hon. member than to myself. I do not deal in tips. It is proposed to admit iron piping free, and I would ask why gas-meters have not been included? I know that the gas companies in most places are huge monopolies; but it would not be a boon to them, but to the householder who has to pay for the gas-meter. I hope the Government will take that small matter into consideration, as the people in the district in which I reside would consider it a boon. One of the directors of the Toowoomba Gas Company drew my attention to the matter on Monday, and I promised on the first opportunity to draw attention to it here. This is probably not the proper place to refer to these matters; but I mention them as giving a forecast of what I intend to do when the Bill reaches a certain stage. I need hardly say I am a protectionist. I have been one all my life, and will probably remain one to the end of the chapter. I have a good deal of sympathy with the complaint made by the hon. member for Maryborough, and I take this opportunity of publicly complimenting him upon the speech he made in connection with this matter. It was a most powerful speech, and one that must carry conviction to the mind of any unprejudiced person. I shall certainly vote for the second reading of the Bill, reserving to myself the right to endeavour to amend it in the directions I have indicated.

Mr. KERR: It is refreshing to hear the two members for Drayton and Toowoomba congratulating the Government upon the removal of the tariff on agricultural implements, and saying that if it touched anything else they would be against it. The hon. member who has just spoken is very much against the removal of the tax upon flour, and he said that I, as a representative of pastoralists, ought to be satisfied, as the pastoralists are getting a great deal. The hon. member must remember that there are more than pastoralists living in the Barcoo electorate, and the people in the North-west and Central portions of Queensland are very much against the tax of £1 a ton on flour; they consider it a burdensome and unjust tax. Why should they have to pay a tax of £1 a ton on flour simply to bolster up and protect the farmers in the electorate which the hon. member represents? It is all very well for the hon. member to tell us he is a protectionist, but he must allow that other members hold different opinions, and I am bound to say that if the hon. member lived in the North or in the Central district he would be a free-trader. It is not my intention to take up much time, but I wish to direct the attention of the

hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill to some items upon which an *ad valorem* duty is levied which could be easily removed, and which should be removed. Every member has been speaking of his constituents, and I may mention the shearers, who we are told are considered by this Bill. Well, the amount of money that will be saved in the year will be very small. We know that the pastoralists supply all shearing machinery, and the shearer only supplies the combs. I would also mention trace chains, which are largely used by the carriers, and which cannot be manufactured in the colony.

The TREASURER: Steel wire rope is used now.

Mr. KERR: I have seen a good many teams yoked up, but never saw it used. Then we have hames, not one of which is manufactured here, yet they are taxed heavily. I think that the Minister in charge should take these matters into consideration in addition to other items which will be mentioned later on. There is a large list of chemicals to be admitted free, but I do not observe that cream of tartar is amongst them. That is very largely used in the bush by travellers, and should be in the free list. I shall support the Bill, but hope to see it considerably amended in committee.

Mr. HARDACRE: I am very pleased to see this Bill, as it is a step in the right direction, but I would like to see it go a great deal further than it does. I do not suppose we can expect anything heroic from the present Government in the way of legislation, like that which has recently taken place in New South Wales to lighten the burdens of the people. It has amused me to see the number of members, both protectionists and freetraders, who have supported and condemned this Bill, and I have been trying to find out what the policy of the Government really is. It seems to be a freetrade policy so far as it goes, and I cannot understand how the hon. member for Maryborough can follow a freetrade Government. He said he was returned as a protectionist, yet he continues to support a Government which places on the free list a very large number of items which can be made in the colony. If he was returned as a protectionist he should respect his pledges, and at once come over to this side and endeavour to turn the Government out. In the words of the hon. member, it appears to me this Bill is "neither fish, flesh, fowl, or good red herring."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Which do you want it to be?

Mr. HARDACRE: I want to know what the Government intend by it. It seems to be a very good pro-trade-free-tectionist measure. We have three members of the Ministry who are discriminating protectionists, and three others who are discriminating freetraders. There is no doubt this Bill will place on the free list a large number of articles which can be made in the colony. The first item I notice is "bones." With seven millions of cattle in the colony surely we can produce enough bones. Then we have copybooks and school books. Can we not manufacture those? We have again castor oil seed, while we know that the castor oil plant grows luxuriantly and is becoming a perfect weed. There is sulphur mentioned on the free list when we know there are millions of tons of it in the colony.

Mr. SMYTH: Where is the sulphur found?

Mr. HARDACRE: There is any amount on some of the goldfields; sulphur that can be extracted.

Mr. SMYTH: It will not pay to extract.

Mr. HARDACRE: Then give it more protection. Then we have sulphate of iron. Surely we can manufacture sulphate of iron in the colony! We have also cut flowers. Surely we can grow plenty of flowers in the colony! Then

we have fish, frozen and fresh. Surely there are enough fish in our seas without having to import them? If the Government are to be a protectionist Government, and supported by the hon. member for Maryborough, they ought not to place these things on the free list; and if they are not a protectionist Government, the hon. member for Maryborough should either come over to this side of the House or resign his seat. A good deal has been said about protection and freetrade. Protection is a system of robbing a large number of people to give profits to a few manufacturers—a system which places taxes on a large number of things to the discouragement of their manufacture for the purpose of encouraging the manufacture of a few things—a system which enables individuals themselves to tax the community. It takes from the people far more than goes into the Treasury, and is, in fact, like tolls, a relic of the dark ages—a relic of barbarism. The best protection we can give to the people is to get off their backs, or, in other words, to ease the burden of taxation which is imposed on them through the Customs. That burden has been largely increased by the present Government. I should like to have seen this policy—if it is a policy—of lightening the burdens of the people introduced before they put the tax on tobacco. If they want to take off taxes, why did they put on taxes? The Government have done scarcely anything else since they came into office in 1893 but impose taxes.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What is freetrade?

Mr. HARDACRE: Freetrade is a system that gives encouragement to industry by removing the obstacles to the production of things which can be best produced by a particular community. Have we not had protectionists on that side of the House saying that the remission of duties here proposed would encourage production? I should like to see the whole of the taxes we get through the Customs swept away. Then we should see the colony prosperous, and industries would spring up, because it would be easy to produce things. The taxes obtained by this means have discouraged more industries by a hundred-fold than ever they have given rise to, and they ought to be abolished. All our principles of taxation are entirely on a wrong basis, and we should sweep away the taxes now imposed, which discourage industry, inflict burdens on and impoverish the people, and prevent the proper development of the resources of the colony. Our taxation has grown simply because we have borrowed large sums of money for railways, bridges, and public works of various kinds, which have enhanced the value of land and enriched landowners, and instead of getting our taxes from those who have benefited by this public expenditure we have taxed everything the people eat and wear through the Customs. We should endeavour to get our revenue from those lands which have been greatly enhanced in value by public expenditure.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is now exceeding the limits of debate; he must confine his remarks to the question before the House.

Mr. HARDACRE: So far as this Bill is concerned, it has my entire approval. I am rather pleased to see that some good has come out of Nazareth. I am rather surprised to find that cream separators are omitted from this free list, but I suppose it is an oversight.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are free now.

Mr. HARDACRE: I looked over the free list in the Act of 1892, but could not find any mention of cream separators. However, I am glad to hear that they are free.

The TREASURER: This Bill says that the parts also shall be free.

Mr. HARDACRE : I am very pleased to hear it. I am also glad to notice that the combs of shears are to be placed on the free list. That is a matter which was mentioned to me when I was in the Central district, and I was asked to call attention to it if any measure of this kind came before the House. I cannot find on this free list sheet packing, which is used for frozen meat. I believe there was an agitation some time ago to get it admitted free, and I should like to see it placed on the free list. So far as it goes the Bill will receive my approval, and I am only sorry that we have not a larger measure of the same kind.

Mr. HAMILTON : I think Ministers should go to bed to-night very happy. Each member, no matter on what side, has tried to emulate the previous speaker in praise of this measure.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : What about the hon. member for Maryborough?

Mr. HAMILTON : There are exceptions to every rule, and they accentuate the praise lavished by members on each side, especially on the other side. I recollect some time since how every member in this House used to vie with the other in proclaiming himself a protectionist; now it appears that the protectionists are all dead; and I am glad to see that the manifesto of the Premier, in which he stated that he intended to revise the tariff by placing articles in the free list, has been adhered to, I know from experience that mining members who saw the Minister regarding these articles found very little to suggest, and any suggestions they made were received with every consideration by the Minister, and were acted on in most instances. The hon. member who just sat down and the leader of the Labour party growled because the Ministry put taxes on some articles, and howled because they did not put taxes on others. The hon. member for Bundaberg stated that this paltry £50,000 which the people were relieved of was simply a bagatelle, and suggested, as an improvement, that the duty should be taken off coffee, thus affecting the farming industry seriously, because coffee is a tropical industry; it will probably be one of our greatest industries in the North. Also, in the interests of the Italians he suggests that it should be taken off vermicelli and macaroni. It has been stated by one hon. member that the duty is taken off agricultural articles more than off articles used in the mining industry. That probably arises from the fact that in previous Parliaments the duty was taken off more articles used in mining by the same party who placed explosives used for mining purposes on the free list—an exemption which has resulted in a saving of £37,424 to the industry. I notice that last year mining machinery contributed £2,000 to the revenue, while sugar machinery contributed £12,000. While I am gratified to see so many articles put on the free list, I should like the Government to go further and take the duty off other machinery. But they have to respect vested interests; they recollect that there are two parties in the House, and they are going slowly. Their action has decreased the cost of production to the farmer and the miner to a considerable extent. The hon. member for Charters Towers, referred to sulphuric acid, more than half of which is used in industries other than mining, and if we can get it as cheaply from persons who make it in the colony as from elsewhere we should do so. The Secretary for Mines has a letter from the company referred to, promising that if this duty is levied, to supply it as cheaply as it can be landed from Sydney. The Premier has taken the duty off a great many articles used in the pearl-shelling industry, and his action has been received with great favour by those concerned. I am surprised at the remarks made by the hon. member for Toowoomba in regard to the mining industry.

He appeared to turn up his nose at the industry and said that mines were worked out in no time, but he must recollect that some mines have been working since the time of the Queen of Sheba, and are not worked out yet—in fact, are just beginning to be developed. Ministers, from what I have seen, are glad to accept suggestions. This free list is not like the laws of the Medes and Persians, and we may possibly have a supplementary list in which the views expressed by hon. members will be carried out.

Mr. CROSS : The hon. member for Leichhardt, quoting the words of an hon. member opposite, remarked that the Bill was “neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring.” I differ from him in that. I think it is an excellent red herring drawn across the track of freetraders and protectionists who have been engaged in a political ballyhooley the whole afternoon. I sympathise with the hon. members for Maryborough and Toowoomba. I do not intend to initiate a discussion on the respective merits of freetrade and protection, but I say that the Bill contains a principle which goes in the direction of assisting some of the manufacturers of this colony, and to that extent it is a welcome piece of legislation. I do not care what constituency an hon. member may represent, if he has the interests of the colony at heart, he must recognise the important fact that any policy which would foster and encourage our industries is the policy that should receive the unanimous support of this House. Hon. members on the other side claim to be freetraders, but if it came to an alternative whether I should support a genuine freetrade policy—not a bastard policy such as we have had—or a policy which seeks to prevent the cut-throat competition of the products of low-paid labour. I should certainly give my support to the latter. No country is in a safe or sound position which does not set about organising its industries upon such a basis as will enable it to produce what it can consume and have a surplus to exchange for commodities it cannot produce or manufacture. If freetrade were carried out in its entirety it would mean that we would have an absolutely free tariff, and those hon. members opposite who talk about freetrade would find themselves in a very serious position, for no colony can carry on without some source of revenue. This Bill recognises the principle that revenue must be derived from some source, and at present it is largely derived from Customs. The protection we have had has been like the freetrade we have had—neither one thing nor the other. The hon. member for Cook referred to the manifesto issued by the Treasurer some time ago, in which he promised to relieve the agricultural industry of certain burdens. Of course, like a good many election promises, it served its purpose; but it has not been carried out, and the only reason why the Government have brought in this Bill is the lucky circumstance that there was a surplus of some £73,000. I am certain that if there had not been that surplus this Bill would not have been introduced. The Bill is based upon the principle of robbing Peter to pay Paul. If Peter had not been robbed in the first case by excessive taxation, Paul would not have had his money returned in the shape of a remission of duties. The hon. member for Burrum has been a consistent supporter of the Government ever since it came into existence, and I was exceedingly glad to hear him acknowledge that the present Government is a continuation of the old party of 1888. He said that if the Government desired to help the farmers they should give them free land, and not this sort of thing. Many farming implements are made here, and if they were placed upon the free list that industry would soon be wiped out.

Mr. McMASTER: You want to tax the land.

Mr. CROSS: The hon. member for the Valley is making one of those interjections intended for electioneering purposes. I do not want to tax land at all; what I want to do is to appropriate the unearned increment given to the land by the people, which is a different thing altogether. I also want to tax absentee landowners, who derive large revenues from the lands of this colony and spend them abroad. I do not think there is much difference of opinion upon that subject on either side of the House, because I have had conversations with hon. members on the other side, who have stated that they are in favour of taxing absentees. Of course, if the matter came to a division, the whole of them would vote with the Government as usual. I do not think such great wonders will be worked in regard to the agricultural industry as have been predicted as the result of its generous treatment by this Bill. I do not think it is suffering for the want of a reduction of a few pounds in the cost of farming implements. If that were all that was the matter it would be a very happy state of affairs, but this Bill will not wipe out the difficulties. The Secretary for Mines stated that the amount of revenue released under this Bill will be less than £50,000, and that will be spread over several industries. There is the pastoral industry, an old friend of the Government that has not been forgotten, the farming industry, the shipping industry, the mining industry, the daily newspapers, and various other things, so that the amount each will benefit will not be a great deal to blow about. If the Ministry proposed to assist the farmers to the extent of, say, £250,000, or only half the amount with which they assisted the sugar industry last year, that would have been something substantial, and would have given the industry some ground for faith in the intentions of the Government, but the amount of taxation which the farming industry will be relieved from is a mere bagatelle compared with their real trouble. Considering the claims which members have made to have other things included in the free list, the Treasurer will be bound to refuse those requests, or adjust the incidence of taxation. If anything like half the articles which hon. members on both sides have asked should be placed on the free list are granted, the surplus of £73,000 will be more than wiped out. If the duty on corrugated iron, for instance, is remitted it would mean a further remission of £13,225, making a total remission of duties under the Bill of £63,000, leaving about £10,000 to provide for all the other articles which hon. members want to get in free. Hon. members cannot possibly expect that anything like the number of articles they want to see free will be made free; and I believe that the congratulations and happy family spirit manifested to-day will be completely changed when the Bill is in committee, and the Government will wish they had never introduced it. It opens up a very wide question indeed, and I am sure the Government's intentions in the remission of duties are limited to the extent I mentioned. If they carried out their principle of assisting production much further, they would find our financiers in a very serious position. No Government of the kind at present in power can honestly desire to assist the producing industries to the extent they should, without laying down another proposal simultaneously to adjust taxation on quite a different basis. I shall not occupy the time much longer, but I would like the Minister to remember the statement of the hon. members for Charters Towers in respect to the mining machinery. I am not speaking personally, as there is little mining machinery used in my district, but his statement was that four-

fifths of the machines used for concentrating are Stansfields and other makers.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: All vanners are free.

Mr. CROSS: Yes; but the hon. member mentioned the Stansfield machine, as distinct from the vanners.

Mr. DAWSON: Yes; but they do the same work.

Mr. CROSS: The hon. member says they do the same work, but that four of others are used for every one of the true vanners that are to be admitted free. That is an important thing in connection with the mining industry, and the Minister ought to deal with the question. I am not familiar with the details of the present tariff, and I do not therefore know how far alluvial miners are going to be assisted; but as they undergo a good deal of hardship, and consume a large amount of dutiable articles, they ought to be considered. The proper time to inquire how far they are being assisted will be when the Bill gets into committee. I look forward to a brisk and lively discussion upon this Bill in committee; but, on the whole, I have no objection to support the second reading.

Mr. KING: I thought that when a measure of this sort came before the House we would get the opinions of the protectionists and freetraders properly drawn out upon it. Speaking to hon. members privately I have found some of them staunch protectionists and others extreme freetraders, but in dealing with this Bill they do not appear to be either. Some of them profess protection as long as the matter affects themselves or their districts, but directly it does not affect themselves they are freetraders. For instance, the junior member for Drayton and Toowoomba admitted that he was a protectionist, but before he concluded his remarks he tried to impress upon the Minister in charge of the Bill that it would be a splendid thing to take off the duty now imposed upon galvanised iron.

Mr. FOGARTY: Because we cannot produce it yet.

Mr. KING: I believe we can produce it. Like other hon. members, I congratulate the Government upon introducing this Bill. Though I may be politically opposed to an individual, I like to give credit where credit is due, and when we have a surplus of £73,000, and the Government are prepared to remit £50,000 of it back to the general taxpayers, I think that is a step in the right direction. But if the Government accepted the suggestions of all hon. members I am perfectly satisfied that they would want to remit not £50,000 but £150,000 back to the taxpayers. The hon. member for Barcoo would like to see the £1 a ton on flour remitted. I may here say that I am neither a protectionist nor a freetrader, but, like the hon. member for Bowen, I am a fairtrader. I believe in protecting our industries in their infancy to enable them to get a good footing and a firm hold, but I do not believe in protecting them up to a prohibitive mark. Some hon. members have mentioned kerosene, galvanised iron, and gas meters. No doubt it would be a splendid thing if the Government were able to remit duties on those articles, but the items which are going to be admitted duty free are a good instalment. The farming industry in particular has got a fair amount of concession. I should like to see more, but I am satisfied so far as the exemptions go. The pastoral and mining industries have also been considered, and, as the hon. member for Charters Towers pointed out, £5,000 would be saved to Charters Towers alone. That is a good lump sum for one community to have distributed amongst its working people, and will do an immense amount of good. I believe in taxing those things which we can produce up to a certain

point, and admitting free those things which we do not produce, and I think that principle is being pretty well adhered to. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. JACKSON: I cannot join with some hon. members in the encomiums they have passed on this Bill, but incline to the views of the hon. member for Bundaberg, that it does not go far enough in remitting duties on the necessaries of life. From the point of view of the mining industry, I would prefer to have seen a reduction in the 25 per cent. duty on machinery to one-half and no exemptions. That would have benefited the industry much more than the few exemptions now proposed. The Premier, in reply to the hon. member for Bundaberg, quoted Mr. Gladstone as saying that taking off those duties did not do as much good to the working people as taking off duties on materials employed in the way of trade. Although the authority is a very eminent one, we do not know when that opinion was expressed. The tendency at present in England is in the direction of a repeal of the "breakfast" duties, and that that is the direction we should go in Queensland. But Mr. Gladstone has also laid down the doctrine that it is proper and fair to have an absentee tax. If that is a proper principle to apply in England, I do not see why it should not be applied in Queensland, and that is one of the planks which the Labour party have always advocated. We believe in remitting duties on necessaries, and in order to make up the revenue we would propose an entirely different form of taxation. I have been rather amused to hear some of the farming representatives—like the two hon. members for Drayton and Toowoomba—arguing from the protectionist standpoint. The senior member told us that he had helped to put the duty on agricultural implements to assist the foundries, and his colleague afterwards let the cat out of the bag by informing the House that they had a foundry at Toowoomba. They have gone on the principle of "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," and the poor miner has fallen between the farmer and the ironfounder. The two members from Maryborough have also spoken, and seem to imagine that the whole world centres around Maryborough.

Mr. ANNEAR: They do not object to the mining machinery being in the Bill.

Mr. JACKSON: No, but what the mining representatives want is to have the duty reduced upon quartz crushing machinery, engines, boilers, and ordinary articles used in connection with batteries, such as stampers, stamp shoes, and concentrators. I do not say we want the duty remitted altogether, but at the very least to the extent of 12½ per cent. That would be protection enough to the foundries. My objections to the principle of this Bill are two. First, that our farmers, as they have to sell in the markets of the world, should be allowed to buy in the markets of the world. I do not object to some protection to our primary industries; farming, for instance, which is about the only primary industry we can protect. We cannot protect the mining or pastoral industries. The sugar-planting industry, for instance, cannot be protected now. I do not know where the mining and pastoral industries come in under this Bill at all. They benefit very little by it. There is a long list of odds and ends, but I contend that the consumer will scarcely benefit. It will be the middlemen who will get the greatest benefit from a great many of the articles put on this list. The Secretary for Railways, who has charge of the Bill, when he was electioneering in the Herberton district, told the people that the Government intended to reform the tariff in the direction of remitting the duties on machinery and on the necessaries of life as

far as possible. I believe the hon. gentleman qualified his statement by the words "as far as possible." We can see how far they propose to remit the duties on machinery. It is to a very limited extent indeed, and it will benefit the mining industry to a very small extent. As regards the taking off duties on the necessaries of life, I want to know where that comes in. The hon. gentleman has not fulfilled his promise to the people of Herberton. Of course he may have been overruled in the Cabinet. According to some hon. members who have spoken, the Cabinet is divided; but, as the Premier has been cast as a freetrader, he ought to have been able to carry his point, and have remitted more duties than he has done. We used to hear a great deal at one time about the Northern influence in the Cabinet; but in spite of the great outcry of two or three protectionist members on the other side, I am rather inclined to think that the Northern influence in the Cabinet is much less than ever it was. I think the duty on sulphuric acid ought to be taken off. I remember making a note of some figures that I once saw—I think it was in one of the newspapers—with regard to sulphuric acid. There is a duty of £5 a ton on it. The Secretary for Railways has told us it was the intention of the one firm that manufactures this acid to supply the mining industry with the acid at the same rate at which it can be delivered from Sydney. I do not know whether that attitude will be maintained after this Bill has been passed. I hope it will, but at any rate there are other people beside miners who use sulphuric acid, and they ought to be considered as well as miners. Besides, we only have the word of this firm that it is their intention to act in such a manner. Up till lately, if not at the present time, this firm has been charging £16 a ton for sulphuric acid. It costs £9 a ton in Sydney, and they have charged £5 for the duty and £2 a ton carriage in addition. I think it takes one ton of sulphur, which costs £4, and one cwt. of nitre, which costs £1, to make five tons of acid, and three men can produce twenty-five tons per week at a capital outlay of £3,000, so that it is easy to calculate what profit is being made out of sulphuric acid. I just quote this to show how protection works.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member would be more in order in giving that in committee than at present.

Mr. JACKSON: I have finished my remarks on that point. Of course, it is very hard to keep away from details, even in the House, on a Bill of this sort, because really the principle of the Bill is connected with the details. However, I shall try to keep off the details as much as possible in any further remarks I have to make. I have to answer one or two criticisms made by hon. members. The junior member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, quoted America in defence of his protective doctrines. He said, "Look what America has become through its protective system." If the hon. member was advocating intercolonial freetrade—

Mr. ANNEAR: Protection against the outside world.

Mr. JACKSON: I am very glad to hear that, and I will go with the protectionists if they will advocate the policy of intercolonial freetrade. I understood the principal objection to federation comes from the Southerners, because the southern colonies would send their produce into Queensland. However, I hope the hon. member will abide by what he says, and that other members who are protectionists will no longer urge the protective argument against federation in this House. The high duties in the United States were put on after the war of 1812, to give the

manufacturers a helping hand owing to the depression then existing. After the first war there was a confederation formed. Each State had its own protective tariff, and it was in consequence of the protective duties in the different States that the federation of the United States, as we have it now, was formed. I do not think that the protective duties were originally started altogether with the idea of bolstering up the industries. I think there is a general impression that the mining industry is so prosperous that it can well afford to stand the exorbitant duties that are imposed on mining machinery. I would like to prove to the House that it is not so, and that there is a very wrong impression abroad as to what the earnings of miners are. Possibly hon. members, looking through the reports of the Mines Department, will see that the average earnings of the miners are quoted as being £302; but if we exclude Charters Towers and Mount Morgan, the average would be reduced to £159. The average earnings of quartz, or mineral miners, as distinct from alluvial miners, amount to £114; but hon. members must not run away with the idea that these are the earnings which go into the pockets of the miners, because the miners have to carry a good many other individuals on their shoulders. The best way to find out what the earnings of the miners are, and what is the value of the mining industry to Queensland, is to take it in another way. There are about £2,000,000 worth of gold produced in Queensland annually, and there are, roughly speaking, 10,000 miners. If we divided the £2,000,000 by the 10,000 miners we get an average of £200 per man. But there are some 9,000 male adults on the goldfields, besides the 10,000 miners I have mentioned, and supposing 5,000 of those assist the miners, as woodcutters, etc., it is evident that we must divide the £2,000,000 by 15,000. That would give an average of £150 per man. But the capitalist has also to get his share. If he is reckoned with we shall find that the earnings of the quartz miners will go down to at the very least £100. Then take the alluvial men—and I want particularly to speak on their behalf, because the present tariff on the necessaries of life falls particularly heavily on them. There are some 2,900 alluvial miners, including Chinamen, employed in Queensland, and of these about 1,918 are white men. The yield of gold last year was £28,792; that divided by the number of alluvial miners gives an average of only 15s. per man. Of course the removal of the duty on machinery would be no benefit to those men. There are a fair proportion of them in my own electorate, but I am not speaking specially for the alluvial miner. I am speaking as much in the interest of the bush workers generally, because our tariff works out badly as far as they are concerned. There are heavy duties on sauces, tinned fruits, and tinned fish. A bushman wants something with his damper; and if he has tinned fruits or tinned fish, he has to pay a high duty on those articles. That is the way our tariff works in favour of the townsman as against the bushman, and I should like the Treasurer to look at the matter from that point of view when revising the tariff. The proposed exemptions certainly favour the farmers and squatters rather more than they do the bushmen and miners. At the same time I do not object to those exemptions. On the contrary, I am rather glad to see them, as I am in favour of assisting those industries as much as possible. I believe that town industries will spring up and be established on a firmer basis under a freetrade system than they would under protection. Protection robs Peter to pay Paul. It presses on the producer, and though it may bolster up the towns it does so at the expense of

the country. I shall have a great deal more to say on the measure in committee, and shall co-operate with the mining members as much as possible to get the list of exemptions extended. I suppose it will be impossible to make any change in the way of getting duties reduced; but that we must exempt altogether under this Bill, that being the position taken up by the Government. These exemptions will not do very much good to the mining industry. Quartz-crushing machinery is the principal kind of machinery employed on goldfields.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They say they are satisfied.

Mr. JACKSON: I have never heard them say so. I have never heard anyone on a goldfield say that a 25 per cent. duty on machinery was a fair one. The views of the hon. member for Gympie on that subject and mine exactly agree. If the duty were taken off quartz-crushing machinery it would probably double the population on our goldfields in a very few years. At present any individual or company wishing to lay out £4,000 in the purchase of machinery have to pay £1,000 more to the Government in the form of duty, which makes the total outlay £5,000, and they have to make a profit on that amount. That means that poor mines cannot be worked at a profit. If the tariff were reduced it would enable a great many poor mines to be worked at a profit which are not worked now. Such a course might possibly hurt the foundries for a short time, but I do not know. In conclusion, I would say that my great objection to the protective system is that it does not protect labour. If it did there would be more to be said for it from the standpoint of Labour members, but it simply protects the monopolist. The labourer only gets freetrade prices, while the monopolist gets protection prices.

Mr. PETRIE: At this late hour I do not intend to prolong the debate, but I cannot let the second reading of this Bill pass without saying a few words. I call myself a protectionist, and have been connected with the Protection League for some years, but I am not one of those rabid protectionists who go to extremes. I believe in doing a fair thing to everybody, if possible. Much has been said with regard to our mining industry, an industry which we all wish to foster as much as possible; but the senior member for Gympie was certainly in error when he said the mining industry had received no concessions whatever. By the removal of the duty from dynamite and materials used for deep-sinking they got a very great concession from the Government. I must commend the junior member for Maryborough and the hon. member for Burrum on the speeches they made in defence of the protection of our industries. Judging from the various speeches delivered, the Government must feel in a rather peculiar position. They have pleased and displeased the protectionists, and they have pleased and displeased the freetraders, by this Bill. I myself congratulate them for bringing forward the measure. There are certain articles proposed to be added to the free list that I most decidedly object to, and I hope that in committee, with the help of other members who share my views and want to see local industries assisted until they are able to stand alone, I shall be able to carry my views out in that direction. The abolition of some of the duties will assist our industries and stimulate production. But it is a difficult matter to please everybody. We shall have to assist one another in committee to amend the schedule in such a way that local industries shall not suffer. Some have gone to considerable expense in importing machinery to do certain kinds of work, and when they have done that they should have some kind

of regard shown to them. It is difficult to say what opinions many members of the House really hold on this matter. At the time of the elections the same man would be a protectionist or a free-trader, just as he thought he could catch votes. Latterly protectionists have been asleep, but they are awakening again, and their power will be felt in coming elections. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, reserving to myself the right in committee to mend matters as far as my principles are concerned.

Mr. W. THORN: I intended to reserve what I have to say on this Bill until we get into committee, and I rise now mainly for the purpose of giving the assertion made by one speaker, that there are no protectionists in the House, an emphatic denial. One hon. member said the farmers were bolstered up. I can assure him that but for the farmers of the colony Queensland would be done. As far as the Bill is concerned I do not care much for it. I would much rather have seen it dealing with the tariff the other way about, and increasing the tariff on certain articles. It seems to me that this is the thin end of the wedge. The hon. member, Mr. Annear, told us that on the Ministerial bench were three staunch freetraders and three protectionists, which is no doubt a good thing for the colony. There is one article mentioned in this list that, if I had my way, should pay not a 25 per cent., but a 50 per cent. duty. I refer to bicycles. For a number of years we have been trying to settle people on the land. The tendency of the spread of the use of bicycles will be to drive them off it. The hon. member for Barcoo says it is stopping the sale of horses. It is also stopping the sale of farm produce.

Mr. McDONALD: How terrible!

Mr. W. THORN: That hon. member rides a "bike." I hope the next one he buys he will have to pay a little more for. As the hour is late I will not speak further, but I can assure the House that I am a protectionist and will always uphold protection; and I hope that when the Bill gets into committee the views of protectionists will be given a fair and impartial hearing by both sides of the House.

Mr. STEWART: I think it is a great pity we had not this proposal before us when the Financial Statement was delivered, because this proposed remission of taxation may compel us to make an entire readjustment of our financial operations. The Government is in the happy position of having a surplus. This happens so rarely in Queensland that they apparently do not know what to do with it. They are somewhat in the position of the boy who gets a sixpence and is in a hurry to go and spend it. I do not think they should be in such a hurry, because it is quite possible that before long they will require all the revenue they can get. I wish the House to understand at once that I object entirely to the present system of taxation, but, seeing that we cannot change that system at present, we have to make the best of it. The Government has £50,000 to dispose of, and distributes that sum principally between the farmers, the miners, and the squatters. I have not the slightest objection to any particular principle in the Bill, but I think that the Bill, as a whole, is a mistake. We ought to know what financial proposals the Government intends to make in the event of there being a deficiency in the revenue next year, and it is possible that there may be a deficit instead of a surplus. During the past year we derived £13,000 revenue from butter. It is possible that next year, if we have a good season, there may not be a farthing of revenue derived from butter. We got £12,000 from potatoes; next year, with a good season we won't get a penny from that source. We got £3,000 from cheese, and £38,000 from flour and

wheat. We hear continually that they can grow wheat on the Darling Downs and in the Central division.

Mr. McDONALD called attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. STEWART: I believe wheat can be grown in both those districts, and that it will be grown there in the near future. Will the Government impose an excise duty on flour, butter, cheese, and potatoes, as it did in the case of tobacco, when these articles fail to produce the required revenue? Last year we got £36,000 from fruit. Very shortly we shall be able not only to produce all the fruit we require but to export fruit in large quantities, and it will be interesting to know from what source the Government proposes to supplement the £36,000 it now derives from fruit.

Mr. McDONALD called attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. STEWART: Another article from which we derive a large revenue is rice, which produces £28,000. I believe it is possible to grow enough rice in the North not only for our own requirements but also for export. Somebody observed that rice is the principal food of Chinamen. A large number of white people use rice, and I think it would be better for most of us if we ate more rice and less of some other article of food. The Government gets from the few articles of food I have mentioned £138,000 of revenue every year; and as it is possible to produce every one of these articles within the colony, I ask from what source the Government proposes to derive that revenue when these sources have dried up, as they inevitably will do. In the matter of taxation it is always "Exempt me, and tax the other fellow." The farmer says, "Never mind taxing me; tax the miner." The miner says, "Tax the farmer, and let the miner go free." The pastoralist says, "Tax the miners, and the farmers, and the general working men of the colony, but leave the pastoralists untaxed." We must get taxation from somewhere, and I think everybody should bear his fair share of the burden. We have the Downs representatives advocating a tax on wheat, but objecting to a tax on machinery. They desire to be protected against the rapacity of the local blacksmith, but they also desire to have the privilege of levying blackmail on that individual. I do not think their position is at all logical or reasonable. If they want protection themselves they ought not to object to others being protected, and if they want freetrade in machinery they ought not to object to freetrade in other things. Self seems to be the only consideration, and the benefit of the country at large does not seem to be considered. The hon. member for Maryborough spoke very forcibly on behalf of his constituents, and, although I very seldom agree with the hon. member, I agree with him in this matter to a certain extent. The manufacturers of machinery at Maryborough have been very hardly dealt with in this matter. It is quite a common cause of complaint from the other side against the Labour party that we desire to go too fast—to take a leap in the dark, and revolutionise everything in five minutes; but here we have one of the most tremendous leaps in the dark that ever took place in the colony proposed by this very Conservative Ministry, which objects, as a common rule, to take more than half a step forward at the time. Here is an industry which has been accustomed to a protective duty of 25 per cent. for years, which has given constant support to the party now in power, and they propose to take that protection away from it without

any warning. I do not think that is fair or reasonable to those who have put capital into that industry, or who work in it, or who have learned trades, or in whose minds the belief has been fostered that they would be able to earn a living at these occupations within the colony, and I think they are entitled to some consideration. In 1888, before Sir T. McIlwraith took the tariff in hand and made additions to it, the duty upon machinery was 5 per cent., and the *ad valorem* duties were  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The duty upon machinery at present ranges from 15 per cent. to 25 per cent.; and as this is the age of compromises, the Government might well have adopted a middle course, and instead of sweeping away the whole of the duty it would have been more likely to be beneficial to the colony if they had reduced it by half. The sudden wrench and shock to the industry would not have been so great, the number of men thrown out of employment and the amount of capital left idle would not have been so great. We imported machinery last year to the value of £157,358—£69,000 worth came in free, and £87,000 worth paid duty. It would have been more equitable if, instead of that amount paying duties varying from 15 per cent. to 25 per cent., a smaller duty had been levied upon the whole amount. During the same year the output of metal works in Queensland was £350,123, but the statistics are not very clear. It is very possible that, if these duties are taken off, that output will be very materially reduced, a considerable number of men will be thrown out of employment, and a large amount of capital will become unproductive. One hon. member remarked that it ought to be our ambition to produce as cheaply as possible for the markets of the world, but I do not believe that we ought to make a factory of the colony and strain ourselves to rush our resources upon the markets of the world. Our chief duty ought to be to make ourselves as far as possible independent of other countries. While fostering particular industries, such as the pastoral, the agricultural, and the mining, we ought to go a little further and encourage the lads who are now growing up to maturity to lean towards handicrafts, and give them opportunities of becoming skilled workmen in the mechanical arts. We cannot always continue to be mere sheep-breeders, wool-growers, farmers, and gardeners, and as for the mining industry, as has been pointed out here this evening, it is almost certain that some day that industry will come to a dead stop. I was under the impression that it was not usual for more than one member of this House to speak within the House at one time, but it appears that I was mistaken, as a large number of members appear to be indulging in conversation. If they are very busy I will be pleased to wait until they have finished. I was under the impression that hon. members came here to do the business of the country, and though I am conscious of my own imperfection, still as the representative of a constituency I think I am entitled—

Mr. LISSNER: I am sorry for it.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. member may be sorry that I represent a constituency, but I do not know that he has anything whatever to do with it. I may think that the people who elected the hon. member were very bad judges, but I do not interfere with their choice. We should give the rising generation an opportunity of learning other trades and occupations, and if we go in for the policy enunciated by the hon. member for Normanby it will be absolutely impossible for us to do that. We require blacksmiths, carpenters, saddlers, shoemakers, tailors, and all the rest of them, and we should make an attempt to render ourselves as independent of people outside as

possible. It is quite possible that a day will come when Australia will be shut off from the outside world by the action of some foreign power, and I ask hon. members what our position would be suppose that day came next week? Compelled as we are to import our wheat, our potatoes, our butter, the very staff of life, I would ask hon. members to seriously consider what our position would be if our ports happened to be blockaded. We would then be face to face with starvation, but it would be too late to lock the stable door after the steed had been stolen. The time to consider these matters is not when the enemy is at our gate, but when he is very far away. We ought at least put ourselves in such a position that when it came about we would be prepared for it, and would not be dependent upon any outside power for our sustenance in the hour of trouble. I find that a very large proportion of our taxation—about £400,000—is derived from food and clothing. We have heard a great deal to-night about lessening the cost of production. I know of nothing to lessen the cost of production so much as the cheapening of the food of the people. Why is England able to produce so cheaply? Simply because the price of food has been going down, and down, and down, and in Australia the same thing will hold good. If we cheapen the cost of production by taking the taxation off food and clothing we will help the industries of the colony as much, if not more, than by taking the taxation off implements and machinery. I have no objection to those articles coming in untaxed, but it ought to be our ambition in the first place to free the necessaries of life from taxation. It was one of the great ambitions of Mr. Gladstone, who was quoted by the Premier in this debate, to give the people of Great Britain a "free breakfast table." He wanted to make their food entirely free. That was a very laudable ambition, and though unfortunately he was prevented from carrying his desire into effect, I have no doubt that when they get an intelligent Government in Great Britain—a Government upon democratic lines, such as it is likely they will have within a few years—the people of that country will be provided with a free breakfast table. If it is desirable that the people of Great Britain should have it free, it is just as desirable that we in this colony should be placed in the same position. The incidence of taxation presses more heavily than it ought upon certain classes of the community. Not only, as I have before remarked in this House, does property not pay its fair proportion to the revenue, but certain sections of the taxpayers pay a great deal more than they ought. Even light is taxed in this colony. There used to be in England in the olden times what was called a "window tax." The result was that a large number of houses were built without windows, and the necessary result of that was that the houses were unhealthy. Here there is no window tax, but a tax on light in the shape of duty on kerosene and candles. Those two items together bring in £43,000 per annum. I would like to ask how much the population of Brisbane contributes towards that tax?

The SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member that at present he can only deal with the general principle of the Bill. The question of the remission of the duty on kerosene and candles he must leave to be dealt with in committee.

Mr. STEWART: I desire to point out that the people living in the bush contribute perhaps nine-tenths of those taxes.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must confine himself to the principles of the Bill and leave the details until the committee stage is reached.

Mr. STEWART: It occurred to me that there was an anomaly in the way that tax was levied. It is rather unfortunate that we did not have these proposals before us when the Financial Statement was delivered. If we had it is very probable that Statement would have been further debated, and if I am in the House next year I will endeavour to get from the Government the whole of their financial policy at the time the Financial Statement is being debated. We ought to have a definite statement from Ministers as to what they propose to do if there is a failure in the revenue during the next financial year. We get £90,000 in interest from the Queensland National Bank at present, but if the proposal to reduce the rate of interest to 3 per cent. is carried we may expect to get £30,000 less next year. That being so, I think, with the present gloomy financial outlook, it is extremely unwise for the Government to make proposals for the remission of these taxes unless they are going to impose fresh taxation in the shape of a property tax, an absentee tax, or a tax upon unearned increment. I only want to be assured that the Government will not be landed in the old financial mess and will not require to go in for a further policy of borrowing. I cannot at all congratulate the Government on the fact that taxation is going to be remitted, unless they have some scheme which has not yet been promulgated.

Mr. McDONALD moved the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed; and the resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

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