

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**FRIDAY, 16 DECEMBER 1898**

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, 16 DECEMBER, 1898.

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

## THE ACCIDENT TO THE HON. E. B. FORREST.

During the debate on the Slaughtering Bill, The HON. A. H. BARLOW said: I hope hon. gentlemen will pardon my breaking a Standing Order, but I should like to inform them that I have just received a telephonic message from the doctor of the Brisbane Hospital acknowledging a telegram of sympathy I sent to the Hon. E. B. Forrest. That gentleman informs me that Mr. Forrest is getting on exceedingly well, and that he is most grateful for the sympathy of all his friends.

## MINING BILL.

## THIRD READING.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I move that the Bill be now read a third time.

The HON. C. H. BUZACOTT: I know it is unusual to raise a discussion on the third reading of any measure, but I cannot but feel that the time at the disposal of this House in which to consider the Mining Bill has been altogether insufficient, and that controversial questions have been determined without proper consideration. Yesterday afternoon the President made a most excellent and exhaustive speech, as it appeared to me, on one of the clauses—a speech which, I am sure, swayed the House, and completely upset me, as far as my judgment was concerned, for the moment. I felt sure there was an answer to the President's argument, but the question having suddenly been raised, I felt myself utterly incompetent to reply to it, although I did so as far as I was able at the moment. It was a clause of the highest importance to the measure, and I have reasons to believe that if our omission of it is

insisted upon it will be the means of our losing the Bill. Therefore, I say, the House has assumed a very great responsibility, and I am going to show that they have assumed it on evidence which is not supported by facts in one important particular. It was stated that no such clause—the *primâ facie* clause, I may call it—existed in any Act except in that of New Zealand. I was strongly of opinion that it existed in the Victorian Act, but on the spur of the moment I was unable to dispute the argument in that particular. But I heard that after I left the House an hon. member who, I am sure, would not knowingly make an incorrect statement on any account, affirmed that the *primâ facie* clause, although enacted in Victoria in 1890, was repealed in 1897. It was true so far as this: that the Act of 1897 repealed the clause of 1890 in the schedule but it re-enacted it in the text, and that clause stands as the law of Victoria to-day. Section 129 of the Mines Regulation Act of Victoria runs thus—

Any accident occurring in a mine shall be *primâ facie* evidence that such accident occurred through some negligence on the part of the owner.

I am not going to occupy the time of the House, but I do feel, as one of the members of the House, that I was utterly incapable, in the short time permitted for the consideration of this Bill in committee to consider its provisions as they ought to be considered, and that it goes from this House in a most imperfect state. Very probably it will be as well, rather than the Bill should be lost, that it should come back to us when its defects, or some of them, may be removed. I have said this because I feel that a great deal of responsibility will rest upon this House, and that if the omission of that particular clause is insisted upon the Bill will be lost.

**THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL:** The Hon. Mr. Buzacott has very properly said that it is not usual in this House to raise any discussion on the third reading of a Bill. He has directed attention to a clause which is undoubtedly contentious, and which may, of course, excite controversy in another place; and it may come back again to us with a message that the other House will not assent to its omission. But it is highly inconvenient to discuss a question of this kind on the third reading. Besides we have no business to anticipate what the other House will do with any of the amendments we have sent down. We have sent them down in good faith, as an expression of the concentrated opinion of this House, and it is for the Assembly to deal with those amendments as they think fit. If they choose to agree with them it is all right; if they disagree they will give us reasons for their disagreement. If they give us such reasons it will be time enough to consider them when they come up here.

Question put and passed.

The Bill was then passed, and ordered to be returned to the Assembly.

#### BISHOPSBOURNE ESTATE AND SEE ENDOWMENT TRUSTS BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

**THE HON. A. H. BARLOW:** I need hardly remind the House that this is not a Government measure, but I have been requested by the authorities of the Church of England to submit it for your consideration. The facts of the case are very simple. The Church of England in Queensland has an estate where the Bishop resides, called Bishopsbourne, at Milton, upon which there is a mortgage of £3,000, at 4 per cent., which was borrowed to pay off a previous mortgage at 7 per cent. The church also have a see endowment fund—that is, a sum of money, the interest on which was to be applied to the support of the Bishop and the payment of his

salary. That amounts to £13,279, which produces barely 3 per cent. per annum, so that they are paying 4 per cent. on their mortgage and getting 3 per cent. on their endowment fund. They ask Parliament to allow them to amalgamate the two funds—that is, to lend themselves the money out of the see endowment fund to pay off the mortgage on Bishopsbourne, thereby becoming their own mortgages and saving 1 per cent. interest. There was also a sum of £500 set aside by the late Bishop Tufnell for the purpose of maintaining the buildings at Bishopsbourne. That fund, I am sorry to say, has dwindled away, through depreciation, to the nominal amount of £255, which produces £3 10s. a year of interest. It is manifest that that cannot go very far towards keeping up such a building as Bishopsbourne. A liability has also been incurred for repairs to Bishopsbourne amounting to £279. As various extravagant statements have been made about the spending of this money for repairs, I have a letter here under the signature of Mr. Orme, the secretary of the diocese, in which he says that the amount which was expended in repairs at Bishopsbourne was £237 3s. 8d. That does not agree with the statement in the Bill, but I suppose the remainder must represent outstanding debts. Parliament is asked to amalgamate those trusts to the extent I have explained, and to apply the funds in the first place to the payment of the costs, charges, and expenses of getting this Act; secondly, to pay off the mortgage; and, thirdly, towards paying off the expense of the repairs to Bishopsbourne, which were mainly owing to the ravages of white ants; and the balance of the money will go towards the payment of any moneys which at any time may be required for the proper maintenance of the Bishopsbourne Estate. Then comes this important proviso—

Provided that unless and until the see endowment fund or the moneys arising from the calling in, sale, transfer, or disposal of the properties or investments for the time being representing the same are applied for the purposes hereby authorised, and so far as such application shall not extend, the same shall be held by the corporation upon the trusts, and with, under, and subject to the powers and provisions in and by the said hereinbefore recited indenture contained and declared concerning the same.

That is to say, that when they have done the things which they ask by the Bill to be allowed to do, they shall stand possessed of the remainder upon the original trust. I think this is a very equitable thing to do, and the proposal has received the practically unanimous support of the Synod. The Bishop and clergy desire it, and I believe the people of the Church of England desire it. I am not a member of the Synod myself, but the proposals of the Synod are fully detailed in the report which has been laid before you. The following resolution was passed by Synod on the 8th June:—

Moved by the treasurer of Synod, Mr. J. W. Stack seconding—

That parliamentary powers be sought for the unification of the see endowment and Bishopsbourne Estate trusts.

Then came this resolution on the 10th of June—

Moved by the Archdeacon of Brisbane, the treasurer of Synod seconding—

That the council be and hereby is authorised to give effect to the resolution passed for the unification of the see endowment and Bishopsbourne Estate trusts.

And on the 22nd June the following resolution was passed by the Diocesan Council:—

Moved by the Archdeacon of Brisbane, Mr. J. W. Stack seconding—

That a sub-committee consisting of the Bishop, the bishop coadjutor, Canon Matthews, the chancellor (Mr. Arthur Feez), the treasurer of Synod (Mr. Edgar W. Walker), the Rev. G. H.

Frodsham, Messrs. W. H. Groom, L. E. Groom, H. C. Luck, and the mover, be appointed to draft a Bill for presentation to Parliament for the unification of the see endowment and Bishopsbourne Estate trusts.

I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed; and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### VICTORIA BRIDGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### COMMITTEE.

Preamble postponed.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed as printed.

On clause 3—"Bill of mortgage over bridge lands"—

The HON. C. H. BUZACOTT: The clause provided that the board "may" execute in favour of the Treasurer a bill of mortgage. What would happen if they declined to execute it?

The HON. A. H. BARLOW: The wording of the clause was "may and shall execute." He thought that was sufficiently explicit.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4, 5, 6, and the preamble passed as printed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### BRITISH PHARMACOPEIA ADOPTING BILL.

##### COMMITTEE.

On clause 1—"Adoption of British Pharmacopœia"—

The HON. W. F. TAYLOR: It was a question whether that clause allowed sufficient time for the Bill to come into operation. The 1st of January was rather too soon. Certain preparations of the new pharmacopœia were not yet to be had in Brisbane, and it might be as well to postpone the Act coming into operation until the 1st July.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Say the 1st of May.

The HON. W. F. TAYLOR: Yes, that would do.

The HON. G. W. GRAY: The chemists and druggists were not unprepared for the Bill, because for the last six months they had been publishing the fact that the new pharmacopœia was coming into operation. Consequently they would not be hampered with a lot of old stock. There was, however, no objection to meeting the hon. gentleman's views by making the Bill come into operation on the 1st May.

On the motion of the HON. W. F. TAYLOR, the clause was amended by omitting the word "January," and inserting in lieu thereof the word "July."

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment, and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### COPYRIGHT REGISTRATION BILL.

##### COMMITTEE.

The several clauses and the preamble were passed without discussion.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the third reading was made an order for Tuesday next.

#### SLAUGHTERING BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The Acts at present in force which it is proposed in this Bill to repeal are both antiquated and obsolete; and a new Act to regulate the slaughter of stock,

the sale and inspection of meat, and the inspection of places where stock are killed and sold, is very necessary. This Bill has been framed in the direction of obtaining a thorough inspection of slaughter-houses, the establishment of public abattoirs, and the proper regulation of all matters connected with the slaughter and sale of meat. The meat that we export is inspected, but the meat intended for home consumption is left unattended to; and we want to have the stock intended for slaughter so inspected that diseased stock are not killed for home consumption. The 7th clause provides that—

The Minister may, out of any moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose, establish, maintain, and manage such and so many public abattoirs as are, in his opinion, necessary for slaughtering stock, and may permit the use of the same by all persons upon payment of the fees and observing the conditions prescribed by the regulations.

That is what is really wanted—proper inspection at the abattoirs; and if that can be arranged it will be a very good thing for Queensland. Then it is proposed that—

An inspector may at all reasonable times enter, inspect, and examine any slaughter-house or butcher's shop, and may inspect and examine all stock and all utensils, machinery, apparatus, works, and things at a slaughter-house or butcher's shop or used in connection with stock or meat, and all places, things, and vehicles kept or used for the storage, sale, carriage, or delivery of meat or stock.

Unless something of that kind is done we shall have to go on as we have been doing for a considerable time, and allow stock to be slaughtered and meat distributed that might be diseased and unfit for human food. By clause 9 power is given to take action when any slaughter-house or butcher's shop is in an unclean or unwholesome condition, when any stock at a slaughter-house or elsewhere are diseased, and when any person is found to be affected with disease, so that any meat is likely to be contaminated. Another thing, an inspector may order the supply of water to be discontinued if impure or unwholesome and a supply of fresh water to be used; and it is provided that any vehicle or utensil used for the purpose of carrying or handling meat may be ordered to be cleansed, disinfected, and rendered wholesome. In clause 10 it is provided that before an inspector can order the removal or isolation of any person affected with disease he—

shall satisfy himself, by reference to the health officer of the district in which the slaughter-house or butcher's shop is situated, or to some duly qualified medical practitioner, that the disease with which any person is affected is one or other of the diseases mentioned in the second schedule.

That simply means that the inspector cannot act on his own authority, but must first get the opinion of a medical man. The powers and duties of inspectors are set out in clauses 11 to 14. It is provided that—

Any person who thinks himself aggrieved by any order or decision of an inspector, other than an order to cleanse, may appeal therefrom to any two justices sitting in petty sessions on giving to such inspector the prescribed notice in writing of his intention so to do.

Such justices are to hear and determine the matter of the appeal, and their decision is to be final. Objection has been made on other occasions with regard to the powers of inspectors. I do not want to give inspectors more powers than they ought to have; and in this Bill their actions are brought under proper review, and if the decision of an inspector is unsatisfactory to the party interested, he can appeal to any court of petty sessions. Owners are to give notice of any disease they may find existing, and they must keep separate the diseased stock from any stock not diseased. Clause 16 provides that—

The owner of a slaughter-house or butcher's shop shall on request furnish to the inspector any personal assistance and information which he is capable of

furnishing to the inspector to enable him to discover or endeavour to discover any source of contamination, infection, or disease to which any stock or meat may be exposed.

That is a very good section. Then clause 18 provides that—

No person shall knowingly sell or expose or keep for sale any stock or meat infected or affected with disease or which has been near or in contact with any person, stock, or thing infected or affected with disease, or which has been condemned by an inspector.

And clause 19 provides that—

No person shall use or render down or otherwise prepare for use for the food of any swine any carcass of stock infected or affected with disease, or which has been condemned by an inspector, or any part of such carcass, or any meat, blood, or offal obtained from such stock.

It has been thought by many that anything is good enough for pigs, and that might be all right if it did not react on those who eat pork or bacon; but as that danger exists, I think it is a very good thing that we should regulate, as far as possible, the feeding of pigs. The only other part of the Bill is that which gives the Governor in Council power to make regulations for the purposes set out in the twenty-six sub-clauses of clause 20. I will just call attention to the list of diseases in the second schedule. They are divided into two classes—one affecting human beings, and the other affecting stock and meat. Those affecting human beings have been defined by the Board of Health, and the others have been settled by Mr. Irving and Mr. Quinnell, who are supposed to be authorities on those matters. I do not hesitate to say that a Bill of this character is of great importance to the community, and that it is quite time we had legislation on the subject. We have been working under obsolete and absurd Acts of Parliament, which have not given us any powers to do what is required. My only astonishment is that legislation on the subject should have been delayed so long. I hope the Bill will receive that favourable consideration which I really think it deserves; and I move that it be now read a second time.

The HON. W. G. POWER: I do not know much about this business, but I would like to call the attention of the Postmaster-General to the definition of the word "owner." In clause 15 the owner has a great many duties imposed upon him, and it is a well-known fact that in towns the owner of a butcher's shop is not very often the occupier. I think the word ought to be altered in committee to "occupier."

The HON. C. H. BUZACOTT: There seems to be some delicacy amongst hon. members in rising to discuss this measure, and I do not wonder at it. At this period of the session it is rather an unfair thing to bring before the House a Bill of such importance—a Bill which trenches upon personal liberty to the extent proposed. When I first read the Bill I came to the conclusion that we should have the satisfaction of seeing almost every stockowner in the colony sentenced to two years' imprisonment before long; and altogether I think the Bill is one which ought not, at this particular time of the session, to have been introduced. If the Bill passes the best thing the Government can do next year is to introduce a Bill repealing the Local Government Act and the Divisional Boards Act, and making Brisbane the "hub" of the colony, the centre from which all power must radiate—to take from the people of Queensland all the rights and privileges they now enjoy under those Acts, and compel them to do, as they do in Holy Russia, exactly what they are told to do by the public officials. I give every credit to the Hon. Dr. Taylor, who is particularly anxious to conserve our health by means of this sort; but I think it is too much to propose

to take away the freedom of the people of the country in the way this Bill proposes to do. But the Bill really hinges on clause 7. What is wanted are public abattoirs for the metropolis. The Municipal Council of Brisbane and the various local authorities round about have had powers conferred upon them to carry out works of this sort, and they cannot be persuaded to do so. They allow private slaughter-houses to go uninspected, and they want the unfortunate taxpayers of the colony to provide them with abattoirs for Brisbane. I know the clause says the Governor in Council may establish abattoirs where he thinks fit, but as a matter of fact—and that is what I complain of—he will establish them nowhere but in Brisbane. If the Governor in Council intends to establish abattoirs wherever they are required, from the southern border to the Gulf of Carpentaria, he will have his hands very full. I maintain that this matter should be dealt with by the local authorities, and that not until they have refused should the Government step in and supersede them. The Bill is not in harmony with our system of local government; it is a heritage from the old convict system of New South Wales. With regard to inspection, I admit that the central authority is entitled to inspect, and therefore in as far as the inspecting clauses of the Bill are concerned I do not intend to oppose them except where excessive power is given. But I certainly do object to the construction of slaughter-houses and abattoirs being entrusted to the Government of the day. I have heard no argument whatever adduced in favour of it except the unwillingness of the local authorities of Brisbane to discharge their responsibilities. I maintain that at this time of the session an extremely contentions Bill of this sort should not have been brought forward; and really it seems to me to be so undesirable in every way that I feel almost inclined to move that it be read a second time this day six months. There is a clause a page and a-half long authorising the Governor in Council to make regulations, which means that the Governor in Council is entrusted with arbitrary power to do exactly as he thinks fit. Under British institutions we look to restrain and control the Government. We do not want to hand over our lives and liberties and everything we possess to the Government in the way this Bill proposes to do. I repeat that at this late period of the session we cannot consider the measure so fully as its importance requires, and I hope the House will decide to allow it to stand over for further consideration.

The HON. A. C. GREGORY: I do not think this Bill is so very formidable as to justify us in leaving it over until next session. The greater part of it is in existence now; it codifies and brings together several enactments with some new points which, when the Bill gets into committee, we shall do well to consider. I may briefly refer to one or two matters now. The term "owner" in clause 5 must be altered to "occupier," because we cannot make the owner, who may be 1,000 or 20,000 miles away, responsible for things in which he has no part. Clause 9 contains some of the powers introduced into the Dairy Produce Bill of last session; subsection (d) enables an inspector to order the removal or isolation of any person affected with disease. But to do that the inspector must, according to the following clause, obtain authority from a duly qualified medical officer. The omission of that qualification was a weak spot in the Dairy Produce Bill, and I am glad the suggestion then made has been borne in mind. Again, a person feeling himself aggrieved has a right to go first to two justices; that also is an improvement. When we come to the part relating to the duties

of owners we find that the owner of a slaughter-house or butcher's shop is liable to punishment for not giving notice of disease. We shall have to alter that to occupier. The clause relating to regulations is a very voluminous one, and it is needless to comment upon it at this stage. If anything is amiss with it we can easily amend it in committee. Taking the Bill as a whole, there is not sufficient contentious matter in it to justify us in postponing it; we may fairly pass it into law during this session. I therefore think the Bill should pass its second reading.

The HON. J. DEANE: There is a great deal to be said in favour of the Hon. Mr. Buzacott's argument. It is right that we should leave the regulation and inspection of slaughter-houses to the local authorities as much as possible, and that the Central Government should not interfere until the local authority has neglected or refused to do its duty. At Charters Towers there is a very excellent man appointed by the local health board, who is very attentive to his duties, and who sees that no diseased animals are slaughtered and offered for sale by the butchers. So careful is this Bill of the health of both men and animals that clause 19 provides that swine must not be fed on diseased meat. That applies right enough to Brisbane and other large towns, but in the country the usual way is to take a rifle and shoot a diseased beast, and nobody goes to the trouble of preventing swine from eating them. I do not think any inspector we can provide will alter that state of things. I only point that out to show how difficult it will be to carry out the provisions of the Bill. The 4th paragraph of clause 22 provides that every person who refuses or neglects to obey the order of an inspector shall be liable to a penalty of £100. It is well known that inspectors have at times been appointed by the Government who are incapable of giving proper orders, and who have been known to give very absurd orders. I should advise the striking out of that subsection, because a later part of the clause gives ample protection. If an inspector makes an order and it is not attended to he can apply to the Minister, who will insist on its being carried out. I have no doubt from my knowledge of the business that any slaughtering firm would carry out an order if it was reasonable, and would only refuse where they considered it unreasonable. It would be scarcely fair to mulct them in a penalty of £100 for refusing to obey an unreasonable order. I believe the Bill on the whole will do good, but I hope it will only be put in force in places where the local authorities decline or neglect to carry out the inspection of slaughter-houses. There is one thing the Bill will do; it will give employment to a good many men of the ne'er-do-well sort. The Government have been making billets lately for a great many men in this way. We have inspectors for everything imaginable. I see it is being advocated that inspectors should be appointed to inspect weighbridges so that cane-growers shall not be robbed. My experience, however, is that people are very well able to look after themselves without so much interference on the part of the Government.

The HON. W. F. TAYLOR: There is no doubt whatever that the inspection of meat killed for human consumption is very imperfectly and carelessly carried out. It is only necessary for anyone to visit the various slaughter-yards in the vicinity of Brisbane to become convinced of the fact that more supervision is absolutely necessary. No doubt the local authorities have failed absolutely to perform these duties. I can speak from actual experience with regard to Brisbane, and no doubt the same conditions exist in almost every community throughout Queensland.

The Hon. J. DEANE: No.

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The HON. W. F. TAYLOR: I hope the hon. gentleman is right, and that the people of Charters Towers are an exceptional people who insist upon getting good food. I hope the meat there is conveyed in clean carts by individuals who do not wear the same shirts and trousers for months together. I have seen carts in Brisbane conveying meat, and they have been covered with filthy pieces of calico, a driver or two has been lounging on the meat during a hot day wearing the dirtiest clothes imaginable, and smoking and spitting about. If the Hon. Mr. Deane says that the same conditions do not exist on Charters Towers, then he has a cleaner and more moral community to deal with than I have. I should be very glad indeed if other local authorities would take example from this model community. I am glad to see such a Bill as this introduced, and I hope it may become law. Though some of its provisions are very drastic, and perhaps harsh, yet I would point to the fact that there is provision for an appeal to two justices whenever a person thinks himself aggrieved. That is a great improvement upon the Meat and Dairy Produce Bill which was brought before us last year, in which the provisions were exceedingly harsh, the only appeal provided for being to the Minister, who was to be the sole judge. Although the inspector under this Bill has a good deal of power, it is not an arbitrary power, and consequently I do not think any hardship will accrue. Hon. members who take the trouble to visit some of the slaughter-yards around Brisbane will very soon come to the conclusion that rigid inspection is very necessary. Many of them are badly situated, the water supply is poor, and the drainage in many cases very bad. The consequence is that you cannot go within two or three miles of them without having your nostrils offended by bad smells. So much so is that the case, that the people in the neighbourhood are constantly agitating to have these yards removed. Some years ago I was asked to visit and report upon the slaughter-yards about Brisbane, because some of the yards had become so obnoxious to the residents that they were determined, if possible, to prevent a renewal of the licenses. One or two yards I found tolerably clean; every effort had been made to render them as clean as circumstances would permit, but one yard I remember was as bad as could possibly be imagined. Nothing to which I could give utterance would convey to you any idea of the disgusting filth that was found in that yard. Pigs and rats were wallowing about in blood and offal and entrails; there were flies innumerable, bones and pieces of putrid carcasses were strewn about; and the stench was unendurable. How it came about that the people in the neighbourhood were not killed with some dreadful epidemic I cannot explain, except on the supposition that the human being can become immune to almost anything. By a gradual process they may make themselves immune to what would kill outright the ordinary person. Hon. members can imagine in what condition the meat from that yard would be. I spoke very strongly on the subject at the time, and I have reason to believe that some effort was made to mitigate the nuisance, but these efforts are only made spasmodically, and only when the time for renewal of the licenses comes round. At that time the owners have a little clean up, and the inspector goes over the ground and reports that he found everything satisfactory. In the shocking case I mention, a municipal inspector had reported that he found everything in tolerable order. So much for municipal inspection. I do not mean to say that you cannot get proper municipal inspection, but for some reason or other we never have had it. We hear occasion ally of a raid upon the bakers for short weight

or upon the milkmen for watering their milk, but the ardour of the inspector cools and nothing further is heard for a considerable time. The Food and Drugs Act is a most excellent measure, which, if properly administered, would go far towards causing pure food to be supplied, but for some reason or other the Act has never been properly enforced, and the consequence is that we are still living in the same happy-go-lucky style that we were twenty years ago. From what I have said I think hon. members will see the absolute necessity for the establishment of public abattoirs. I know it is impossible to have them in all small communities, but that is no reason why we should not have them in the larger communities. If the community is to be protected from the distribution of unwholesome meat we must have properly constructed slaughtering-places. It is utterly impossible for private slaughtering-yards to be conducted in the same efficient manner as public abattoirs. Owners cannot select suitable sites, and the great difficulty is the want of a pure water supply. If these slaughtering-yards are located on the banks of creeks, the drainage contaminates the water, and the people object. Consequently those who slaughter meat are debarred from having their yards where they can get a good supply of water, and thus it is impossible to keep them clean. It would be possible to have the abattoirs in the very centre of the city, given a good water supply, and they would be no greater nuisance than the butchers' shops. I grant that the butchers' shops are kept as clean as the owners know how, but they are not kept as clean as they might be, nor is the meat protected from all sorts of possible contamination. There is no reason why meat exposed for sale should not be covered with mosquito-netting to keep the flies off. We all know that flies convey contagion, and only recently we read of a case in which a man was bitten by a fly, which inoculated him with anthrax, and he died within a few days. There are a great many matters of detail which the inspectors will go into, and which will certainly secure to us a better supply of meat—a supply of a more clean and wholesome sort. This Bill, of course, does not extend to the whole colony, the 2nd clause providing that the Governor in Council may declare its provisions to be in force in any particular division of the colony. If the Governor in Council is satisfied that a local authority is doing its duty it will not interfere. No doubt Charters Towers will be made an exception in this respect, and probably Rockhampton also. That town will be well looked after so long as the Hon. Mr. Buzaocott is there; but I certainly hope he will advocate as strongly as possible the erection of public abattoirs. A great deal of the success of the measure will rest with the inspectors. The great objection to a somewhat similar Bill introduced last year was the difficulty of obtaining inspectors; but I am glad to say that that difficulty is being rapidly overcome. A number of young men have been educated at the Stock Institute, and are now fairly competent to judge of the condition of meat. They can "spot" a beast suffering from tuberculosis or other familiar disease, and thus safeguard the public. The Hon. Mr. Gregory has referred to the provision which gives power to remove individuals suffering from disease who are found to be engaged in slaughter-houses and butchers' shops. That of course can only be done, as clause 10 states, after a medical man has examined the individual and certified to his condition. As far as the list of diseases is concerned, there is no objection to them. I think, however, that phthisis should be included. It is not a nice idea that a person

suffering from consumption should be allowed to kill and handle meat, and I have no doubt that he would be a source of danger to the public. On the whole I am glad that the Bill has been introduced, and notwithstanding the lateness of the session I think it is very desirable that it should come into operation as soon as possible.

The Hon. A. NORTON: There is a great deal in this Bill that requires more consideration than the limited time at our disposal admits of. It is unfortunate, therefore, that it was not introduced at an earlier stage of the session. It will be at once apparent that the Bill is not the simple little thing it looks, but that it deals with several important subjects. For instance, the question of the establishment of public abattoirs is a matter that requires serious consideration, and that in itself would have been enough to justify the lengthy discussion likely to take place over the measure. In South Australia they have abattoirs at which the stock intended for city consumption is slaughtered, and their arrangements are such as redound to the credit of the people. If I am not mistaken, the abattoirs there are under the supervision of the municipal council. At any rate, I think in all these cases the municipal authorities should be made responsible for the good conduct and management of abattoirs. It has been stated by the Hon. Dr. Taylor that the local authorities do not show that interest in these matters which they should show, but I think it can hardly be said that arises from the fact that those matters are entrusted to them. It is because they are not compelled to do their work. If the Government by the appointment of inspectors can compel individuals to carry out their work properly they can also compel the local authorities to do the work they ought to do. I believe it is a proper thing to establish abattoirs, but if we establish abattoirs here, are we to compel those who have slaughter-houses now to use them? It would be very hard if some of the butchers who have expensive establishments were compelled to abandon them without compensation to use public abattoirs. I take it that if the Bill is adopted the effect will be that abattoirs when established will be used by all the butchers in the neighbourhood, or where large establishments already exist they may be licensed. As the Hon. Dr. Taylor has pointed out, there is a great deal of uncleanness at a number of these establishments, but that does not apply to all of them; and I think that if a little more supervision were exercised all the respectable owners would take care that their premises and the surroundings were kept in as clean a condition as anyone could wish. If we are going to endanger, as I may say, the interests of men who have large sums of money invested in slaughtering establishments, I think we are bound to consider whether they are not entitled to some compensation. I know some of these men, and I know them to be straightforward in every way and entitled to the fullest consideration. It is provided in clause 8—

An inspector may deliver or cause to be delivered any sample of meat to an expert for examination or of water to an analyst for analysis.

The expert or analyst shall, upon receipt of the sample, with all convenient speed, examine or analyse the same and shall give to the inspector a certificate of the result.

It seems that the business of the analyst is not to examine meat, but merely to deal with water, and if that is all he has to do his duty is very insufficient. As to the experts, I would like to know what is an expert. There is nothing here to show what are to be his qualifications, but I presume he is not to be a veterinary surgeon or it would say so. I think the Government should

be particular in defining what are to be the qualifications of an expert. When the present inspectors under the Diseases in Stock Act want to ascertain what disease a beast is really suffering from, they have to refer the matter to a vet; and I think some inducement should be offered to vets to come here, seeing the small number there are in the colony. But by appointing inspectors who are not vets to do this kind of work we preclude vets from coming here, and by appointing so-called experts without defining their qualifications we run the risk of making a failure of the Act when it is passed. Under the definition of slaughter-house I find—

Any building, enclosure or place commonly called a slaughter-house or slaughter-yard, and any building, enclosure, or place used for killing stock, or for the preservation of meat, or for a boiling-down establishment, or for the preparation or manufacture of tallow.

This is the first time I heard of tallow being manufactured—I have heard of it being prepared; and I think the fact of that expression being in the definition shows that the Bill was drafted by some gentleman with very little knowledge of the subject. There is a good deal in the Bill of which I approve very much. I believe that all slaughter-houses, all butchers' shops, all carts used for the conveyance of meat, and everything of that kind should be kept perfectly clean. I do not think any regulations could be too strict or too strictly enforced as far as that is concerned. What has been said already as to the dirtiness of some of the vehicles which carry meat is perfectly true, and while some butchers are specially clean, others are quite the reverse. But though the stench at some of the slaughter-houses, and places other than slaughter-houses where meat is kept, is almost intolerable, we need not go to slaughter-houses to find that kind of thing. Very near the boundary of the city is what is known as the Milton drain, and the stench arising from that is as intolerable as anything I know. Only yesterday as I walked down the Fernberg road to Milton Station the stench from the drain was perfectly sickening, though I was a quarter of a mile from the place. That is an abomination that should not be allowed to exist. It is no use to complain of butchers' shops being dirty when we allow the human food contained in tradesmen's carts to be contaminated by the foul air coming from that filthy drain. I notice a very peculiar provision here with respect to persons affected with disease, and also with respect to stock. Provision is made that when disease appears in any stock upon the slaughter-house—I do not know what "upon" means—notice is to be given to the inspector; and it goes on to say that such stock is to be separated from the other stock. How can you separate the stock? Take, for instance, the case of stock affected with pleuro-pneumonia. When does pleuro-pneumonia cease to be pleuro-pneumonia? Is it pleuro-pneumonia after the fever has gone, and the lung has become hepatized? In that state I do not think it is unwholesome in the slightest degree, but when fever exists it is unfit for human use. The same clause deals with persons found upon the slaughter-house or butcher's shop to be affected with disease, and says that the owner shall, as far as practicable, isolate, and keep isolated, all persons so affected with disease. That is to say, any person suffering from disease who goes into the shop is apparently to be seized by the owner and kept in quarantine. Is it reasonable to ask the owner of a shop, if he finds a person diseased, to shut him up? I can understand him sending for a medical man, and having the person removed; but it seems preposterous to give a man in that position power to shut up, not only any employee, but also anybody who goes into his

shop. If anybody suffering from prickly heat, for instance, goes into the shop, is he to be shut up by the owner; and what is to be done with him after the owner has isolated him? Is he merely to be sent home after being seen by the inspector? If so, he might as well be told to go home at once, instead of being shut up and isolated. I do not intend to say more on the subject. The Hon. Dr. Taylor has expressed his regret that tuberculosis is not included amongst the diseases of human beings. It is well known that tuberculosis is one of the most dangerous and destructive of human diseases, and that persons suffering from consumption, which is a form of tuberculosis, are a grave source of danger to those amongst whom they move. In the last number but one of the *Agricultural Gazette* there was a very valuable paper on this subject by Mr. Tardent, who used to be in charge of the experimental farm at Westbrook. He treated the matter from the point of view of a doctor with an unpronounceable name, but who had evidently studied the subject very carefully. He shows how great the danger is when persons are associated with others who are suffering from tuberculosis in an advanced form. A number of people are under the impression that lung disease is produced in human beings from consuming the meat of cattle suffering from tuberculosis. I doubt very much whether that is the case, because meat or milk which is consumed passes down the alimentary canal, and is not brought into contact in any way with the lungs. It is by breathing air infected with the germs of tuberculosis that this disease is carried direct to the lungs. Mr. Tardent shows how the bacilli are distributed through the sputum of persons suffering from consumption, and how in a large number of cases those bacilli before they are inhaled by persons in good health are dead, and therefore harmless. But he forgot to mention that far more difficult to deal with than bacilli are their spores, which are for a long time practically indestructible. Where the bacilli themselves die the spores are preserved, and because they are preserved the air which is tainted with the dust arising from sputum is conveyed to the lungs, and if the lungs are weak the seeds of the disease are very apt to be sown. As far as meat is concerned, there are very few persons likely to have their lungs affected by cattle suffering from tuberculosis. The danger is in the milk given to children, because milk containing the bacilli of tuberculosis is very apt to attack the body through the alimentary canal. That is said to be the cause of a very large number of deaths amongst children. We are proposing to protect human health and life by passing this Bill. I would ask the Postmaster-General whether we should stop here? Should not similar legislation be applied to dairies, to grocers' shops, to all shops where food for human beings is served out? Are we to run the risk in all those cases of food being handled and served out by the healthy and the unhealthy alike? People are very much afraid lest the meat of diseased cattle should convey disease to human beings. Do they ever think that the sputum of tuberculous human beings can convey the disease to cattle? I have no hesitation in saying that that is how the disease is acquired by cattle in many instances; and it has been ascertained by scientists in England and France that the disease has been communicated to foods in the same manner. In his report on the cattle at St. Helena Mr. Pound points out, after testing a number with tuberculin, that some of them were suffering from disease, and he advises in so many words that persons suffering from consumption should not be allowed to be employed in a dairy. That is a suggestion that ought to be attended to, as well



as in the other cases I have mentioned, and I would ask the Postmaster-General to give it his most serious consideration. I am not sorry to see this Bill introduced, although it requires a great deal more consideration than it is likely to get at the very tail-end of the session. At the outside, we can only give it a few hours' attention. Whatever may be the desire of the Government with respect to the matter, however anxious they may be to do what is right, they would deserve a great deal more credit if they brought a Bill like this forward early in the session, so that it might be dealt with in this place as fully and as carefully as its importance warrants.

Question put and passed; and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### MARSUPIAL PROOF FENCING BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The HON. A. H. BARLOW: This Bill, as to its machinery, requires very little explanation; if the House approves of its principle that is all I need deal with. It belongs to a class of Bills which, rightly or wrongly, are finding their way into the legislation of all the colonies. Its aim is similar to that of the Sugar Works Guarantee Act, and in a lesser degree to the Rabbit Act and the Meat and Dairy Produce Encouragement Act—the principle being that of assistance by Government loans. The Bill proposes to assist farmers whose land is infested by marsupials. By the 3rd clause the Government may constitute any part of Queensland an infested district. It does not apply to the whole colony, but only to such places as are proclaimed. Then follow provisions, very much on the lines of the Rabbit Act, that wire-netting may be supplied, that it shall be a charge on the land, that the mortgage shall be registered, and that with the consent of a previous mortgagee the mortgage given in favour of the Government may take priority. That is provided for in the 10th clause. In default of payment the Minister has power to forfeit and take possession. The 12th clause provides that the wire-netting fence shall be maintained in proper order. The 13th deals with compensation, under which the rights of the Government are to be preserved; the 14th deals with the Fencing Act, the 15th with the service of notice, and the 16th inflicts a similar penalty to that contained in the Rabbit Act for the misuse of wire-netting provided or obtained at the cost of the Government. The whole principle of the Bill is that of State assistance to individual industry. The Bill is of very limited application, and the principle having been endorsed by the House in other cases, I presume it will meet with their approval in this. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

The HON. A. NORTON: Only one question occurs to me in connection with this Bill. If we admit the principle in one case why should we not go further and assist the grazing farmer to erect his fence? The land belongs to the State, and it may not be purchased. Those men have to put up their fences at their own cost. If they were supplied with the materials for fencing we should have large numbers of grazing farmers settled on the land who cannot now take up a selection because they have not the means of putting up a fence; fencing is the principal cost. I have never made any opposition to those Bills for supplying rabbit-proof fences. At the same time it always struck me that if we are to adopt the principle in connection with rabbit-proof fencing we might just as well go a little further and provide the material for fencing

for those persons who take up land, and who may sooner or later be obliged to put up rabbit-proof fencing. At any rate the idea is worth considering.

The HON. C. H. BUZACOTT: I do not intend to offer any opposition to the measure, but I should like to say that I think the Government should deal much more comprehensively with the system of making advances to settlers. These small Bills which are introduced from time to time—the Sugar Works Guarantee Act, the Rabbit Act, and this measure—are all framed on different lines. None of them contain the security which all of these measures ought to contain, and I think it is quite time that the Government brought in a comprehensive measure, which should include every safeguard, and at the same time give assistance and encouragement to those men who are willing to subdue the country and increase the value of the public estate. I do not think there is much to complain of in the Bill, and I hope it will pass.

Question put and passed; and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### BRANDS BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The main object of this Bill is to enable stockowners to put an earmark and cheek-brand on stock instead of the three-piece brands which are now used, and which we are informed by men who understand the subject are very destructive to hides. I am informed that the depreciation in the value of hides through the present form of branding is estimated by Mr. R. M. Collins, M.L.A., at between £70,000 and £80,000 a year. That shows that it is very important that we should endeavour if possible to legislate in the direction of allowing a different system of branding which will not cause such a depreciation in the value of hides. I should like to impress upon hon. members that this Bill is entirely permissive. Stockowners can do as they like under it. They can use the provisions of this Bill if they like, or they need not do so. Those who prefer the present system can adhere to it, but those who may be induced to advance in the direction that Mr. Collins advises will be able to do so. Hon. members will recollect that a select committee was appointed by the Legislative Assembly to consider this question, and they reported favourably on the principle embodied in the Bill. Clause 9 provides—

Every registered earmark shall consist of two letter-marks and one numeral mark.

The letter-marks shall represent letters, and shall correspond as far as possible in shape and arrangement to the letters, if any, of the three-piece brand. If the three-piece brand does not contain letters, the letter-marks shall be such marks representing letters as the registrar may subject to regulations allot, but no combination of letter-marks and a numeral mark shall be allotted to any person which corresponds to the letters and numeral of any three-piece brand registered in the name of another person.

So that there cannot be any confusion. The earmark and cheek-brand together will be *prima facie* evidence of ownership just as the three-piece brand is now, and there will be no difficulty in the law courts in proving the existence of a brand of a certain kind. Of course the adoption of this new system will involve the making of regulations to carry out the intentions of the Bill. Part IV. provides for the surrender, cancellation, and reallocation of brands and marks. Under the present law there is no provision for cancelling a brand that has once been issued, although the registered owner may long since have ceased to use the brand. The rest of the

clauses of the Bill simply carry out the principles to which I have alluded, and which seem to me to indicate an improvement in the method of branding stock which will lead to a state of things considerably to the advantage of the pastoralist and those who deal in hides. We have heard of this subject for a very considerable time. It has been constantly referred to in the Press by correspondence and otherwise by people who wished to show that the present system of branding is simply suicidal. It depreciates the value of the hide when it comes to be tanned for leather, and is the survival of an old system of branding which ought to be discontinued. This Bill is brought in for the purpose of indicating a new system which appeals to common sense, and which, if adopted by the parties interested, will no doubt lead to a very much better state of things. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

The HON. A. NORTON : I think there is a great deal to be said about this Bill by those who are disposed to oppose it, and so far as I am concerned I should feel much more strongly opposed to it if it were not originated and strongly advocated by a personal friend of my own who has owned and worked among cattle all his life, and is regarded as a thoroughly practical man. How he came to adopt a system like this, with its elaborate plan of earmarking, is a little more than I can understand. He may be perfectly right, and if he is I shall have to admit that I have been mistaken as to the value of the Bill. Personally, I am hardly affected, because I am almost done with cattle, and do not intend to have any more to do with them, and my opinion is therefore expressed without prejudice. I do not think the Bill will work as a practical measure, although, as pointed out by the Postmaster-General, its adoption by stockowners is optional. The most serious objection I have heard urged against it is by gentlemen interested in properties in the far West, where there are large scrubs and large areas of country only occupied occasionally, and without any right, by persons who move their stock from place to place, and who put brands on calves the mothers of which they do not own. I know of many persons who object to the measure ; but, seeing that it is optional, a great deal of the objection will be removed. There is, however, some good in it. I believe the reduction in the size of the brands is a good thing, but when hon. gentlemen talk about the loss on the sale of hides through bad branding amounting to £70,000 a year, then all I can say is that I do not believe the loss is a fourth of that amount, nor do I believe that the owners of cattle themselves suffer to the extent of 10 per cent. of the value of the hides. It is not the breeder who loses, and I do not know whether he would get more for his hides if the cattle were not branded at all. I have been told frequently that the price of hides is not materially affected by the position in which the brand is placed. I think it only fair to mention the fact that several gentlemen have told me that they are bitterly opposed to the Bill for the reason that it will, in their opinion, make it infinitely more easy to steal cattle. The old Act was passed with the idea of preventing cattle-stealing, and I think there is a good deal in what they say, that if this system is generally adopted cattle-stealing will become much more easy.

Question put and passed ; and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at one minute past 6 o'clock.