

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 1900

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- (5) Despatch, dated 11th July, 1900, notifying the prolongation of the treaty between Great Britain and Montenegro.
- (6) Despatch, dated 19th July, 1900, respecting prohibition of sale of arms, ammunition, and liquor to natives of the Caroline Islands.
- (7) Despatch, dated 27th July, 1900, transmitting the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act.
- (8) Report, for the year 1899, of the Department of Public Lands.
- (9) Return to an order, relative to statistics under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Acts, 1894 to 1897, made by the House, on the motion of Mr. Armstrong, on the 25th July last.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE.

NORTHERN CHILLAGOE MINES COMPANY.

Mr. NEWELL (*Woothakata*) asked the Secretary for Mines, without notice—1. Has the hon. gentleman noticed the correspondence in the newspapers during the last few days in connection with the Northern Chillagoe Mines Company? 2. If so, does he intend taking any action with regard to the matter?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—At the instance of the Mines Department, notice was first drawn to the discrepancy between the official report and the prospectus of the company. The Government Geologist drew the attention of the local directors in Queensland to the omissions from Mr. Dunstan's report, and hence the action taken by those gentlemen.

QUESTIONS.

LEASE OF RAILWAY BOOKSTALLS.

Mr. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*), in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Has Gordon and Gotch's lease for certain railway bookstalls expired?
2. If so, will the department call for tenders for the renewal of the expired leases in the usual way?
3. Will the department safeguard the interests of the travelling public, by stipulating in the conditions of lease that the successful tenderer shall not establish a literary censorship over certain periodicals?
4. Is the Minister aware that at present Gordon and Gotch prevent the sale of certain newspapers, of which they do not approve, at the stations where they have leased bookstalls, and that vendors are warned off by the police?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*) replied—

1. Messrs. Gordon and Gotch's leases expired on the 31st December last, but it was decided to extend them until the new Central station was completed.
2. Yes.
3. No; but I understand the successful tenderers have hitherto wisely safeguarded the interests of the public by exercising a censorship over certain periodicals which have been found to contain matter of a scurrilous and libellous nature, for the publication of which the contractors render themselves liable.
1. No.

IMMIGRATION LECTURER, SOUTH AFRICA.

Mr. DAWSON, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Premier—

1. If he has instructed Mr. Burton, the South African immigration lecturer, to do his utmost to discourage Boers from coming here as the result of his lectures on the resources of Queensland?
2. If not, will he issue such instructions at once?

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—

1. No.
2. No.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER, 1900.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Arthur Morgan, *Warwick*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

CENTRAL AND NORTHERN DISTRICTS BOUNDARIES BILL.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received a message from His Excellency the Governor assenting to this Bill.

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

- (1) Mr. Cullen's report on waterpower privileges.
- (2) Return to an order, relative to payment of dividend duty by companies, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Dawson, on the 12th instant.
- (3) Return to an order, relative to dividend duty received from the Brisbane Tramway Company, made by the House, on motion of Mr. McDonald, on the 13th instant.
- (4) Report, for the year 1899, of the Official Trustee in Insolvency, Townsville.

PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL LINES.

Mr. MACKINTOSH (*Cambooya*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Has he received the report of the surveyor on the proposed agricultural lines from Nobby and Clifton, on the Southern line, towards Ellangowan, *via* Back Plains?

2. Have the Government considered the advisableness of constructing a light agricultural line, of the class referred to in the manifesto of the late Premier, from either of the points named, in the direction of Ellangowan and the Thane's Creek Crossing, on the Condamine?

3. If so, has he any objection to inform the House what decision has been arrived at?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. Yes.

2. Yes.

3. The intentions of the Government will be disclosed in due course.

MERINGANDAN-GOOMBUNGEE RAILWAY.

Mr. W. THORN (*Aubigny*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Will he lay plans and specifications on the table of the House this session for the Meringandan-Goombungee line, as guaranteed by the Rosalie Divisional Board?

2. If not, why not?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1 and 2. Consideration of this matter is being deferred, as the question of route has not yet been determined.

ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Friday in each week, in addition to the days already provided by Sessional Order; and that Government business take precedence of all other business after 7 p.m. on that day—

said: In moving this motion so early in the session I wish to impress on the House the necessity of getting on with business.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HIGGS: With public business.

The PREMIER: We have been sitting now exactly two months, and at the rate we are going it seems to me that it will take about twelve months to finish the business we have now on the paper.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: In order that hon. members may sit oftener, and probably later—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I have brought this motion forward at this early stage of the session. The Government are very desirous of getting through the whole of the business now on the paper before Christmas; and we can do it. We have some three months at least before Christmas, and in that time, if we are determined to get through, we can get a great deal of work done. I look to the leader of the Opposition to assist me as much as he possibly can.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Of course he will.

The PREMIER: I know very well that he will find it very hard to restrain some of his supporters—(Hear, hear, and laughter)—but still I have every hope that he will see it to be to the interest, not only of his party in the House, but to the interest of the country generally, that business should be gone on with.

Mr. McDONALD: We have no shares in "wild cats."

The PREMIER: I have no wish to have late sittings. It does not agree with my health. I have to work all the day, and if I have to work all night too it is not possible for me to give that consideration to business that ought to be given

to it. I am very hopeful that the leader of the Opposition will assist me in getting through the work.

Mr. DAWSON: Has he not been doing so in the past?

The PREMIER: I have no reason to apologise to the House for asking it to sit an extra day in the week, because I conceive that it is in the interests of every member of this House to get through the business of the country.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): I can assure the hon. gentleman that I have not the slightest notion, nor has anyone on this side of the House, of opposing this motion. In fact, ever since I have been a member of this House I have been clamouring for extra sitting days; and I am surprised that the hon. gentleman has not taken this course before. He says it is rather early in the session, but I do not remember an occasion since I have been a member of this House when the House has deferred sitting on four days in the week so long. With regard to public business, I have always tried to get on with that. With regard to the control of members on this side of the House, I will point out that I have not had a member on this side of the House, and especially a Minister, make the same mistake that one hon. colleague of the hon. gentleman made last week, when he tried to get in a second speech after he had once spoken on the question.

Mr. McDONALD: He was allowed, by the courtesy of the House, to speak when he had no right to do.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was stopped by the courtesy of the other side of the House.

Mr. BROWNE: He was stopped after going on for a quarter of an hour or so, which we considered was long enough, when he was not entitled to speak at all. I am just pointing this out to show that, at any rate, members on this side are as amenable to control, and I think a great deal more so, than the hon. members on the other side.

The PREMIER: I do not think so.

Mr. BROWNE: At any rate, I can depend upon the members who support me to be here to keep a House together; to be here for every division, and know what that division is about. With regard to the despatch of public business, as I say, we are all anxious to assist the hon. gentleman in that; but I must point out, as I have done earlier in the session, that the hon. gentleman seems to think there is only one important matter of public business now, and that is catering for a lot of gentlemen who want to exploit this country.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWNE: We have here—and I do not think a similar state of business will be found in any of the "Votes and Proceedings" of this House—nineteen matters on the business-paper. There are eighteen Bills and Supply, and the first five of those Bills are private railway Bills. We have a lot of important matter here—such as the Elections Bill, the Pastoral Leases Bill, the Sugar Works Guarantee Act Amendment Bill—and I know the hon. gentleman himself knows that weeks ago a number of gentlemen came down here from Townsville and the Johnstone River, on the assurance that the latter Bill was coming before the House. We have other Bills on the paper as well as that, and we have still the federal legislation to deal with, and, though it has been dealt with and almost completed in every one of the other colonies, it has not yet been laid on the table here. Then there is the Railway Commissioner's Bill, which the hon. gentleman gave notice of to-day, and which must be passed within the next week or two. An almost equally urgent matter is the Public Service Board Bill, and,

though the term of office of the Board will expire by effluxion of time at the end of next month, there is nothing yet on the table to deal with it. I object to all the talk about the time being wasted by this side when the hon. gentleman is trying to get on with private business, and is wasting time in doing that, because already two of these private railway Bills have passed their second reading, and they could have been put through committee and sent on to the other Chamber, but instead of doing that the hon. gentleman puts them back on the paper and another is shoved up for its second reading. Of course, we know that all the world over the Government in power accuses the Opposition of wasting time, and with the other side that seems to be a sort of frenzy. But, as a matter of fact, the public business has been got through a great deal quicker in this House during this session than in any other for the past twelve years, and *Hansard* or "Votes and Proceedings" will bear out that statement. I do not take much notice of this old cry about wasting time, but I have taken the trouble to collect a few facts on the matter that are worth any number of assertions, as the hon. member for Mackay would say. Up to last week we sat for twenty-five days this session, and, as the Premier knows, on two of those days there were adjournments on which nothing at all was done. That leaves twenty-three sittings, and as the hon. gentleman has admitted, short sittings at that. We must count not the weeks, but the days and hours we have sat to judge the work we have got through. The first thing we dealt with was the Address in Reply, and we took four and a-half sittings over that. Well, the average time taken over the Address in Reply for the last twelve years has been seven sittings. On the Financial Statement we occupied this session exactly two and a-half sittings—two full sittings and one evening sitting. The average for that during the last twelve years has been five and a-half sittings. During the time also four Bills have been passed—three besides an Appropriation Bill; nine have passed a second reading, and several others have passed the first reading and introductory stages. I may say also that during the time three motions for the adjournment of the House have been dealt with—two from this side and one from the Government side of the House. One of the Bills we have passed is the Health Bill, a Bill of 170 clauses—a very important Bill in which members on this side took more interest, and rendered more assistance upon to the hon. gentleman in charge of it than members on his own side of the House. That Bill of 170 clauses passed its second reading in one sitting. It is a very important measure, and one which I believe in. That Bill occupied two and a-half sittings in committee, and during those two and a-half sittings over eighty amendments were passed into the Bill, besides those which were dealt with and defeated or withdrawn. I admit that most of the amendments were introduced by the Home Secretary himself, or accepted by him at the suggestion of hon. members on this side. I ask where there has been any waste of time, when a Bill of so much importance and of those dimensions is passed through first and second readings, committee, and third reading in less than five sittings. Then we had one Bill, the Diseases in Sheep Bill, introduced, and after getting through its preliminary stages it had to be withdrawn and again introduced. Then we had the Brands Bill—and on that I will say I am sorry the Secretary for Lands is not here, and we are all sorry to hear of his being sick. That Bill was brought on and I do not think a single member on either side, except those specially interested in the subject,

debated it. It passed its second reading, and its committal was ordered when it was referred to a select committee on the motion of an hon. gentleman on the Government side of the House. I mention these facts to show that the time devoted to public business has not been wasted, at any rate by the hon. gentlemen supporting me on this side of the Chamber. Hon. gentlemen may remember that when hon. members on this side did me the honour of electing me leader of the party I promised the Premier that I would assist him in every possible way in getting on with public business. I promised him at the same time, without threatening in any way, but that in a fair and constitutional manner the party who had elected me as leader were going to oppose these private railways Bills in every constitutional way. I may say now, without using any threats on the matter, that we intend to continue to do so until by the Speaker or the House we are ruled out of order in doing so. But with regard to public business I say there is not one of us but is quite willing to assist the Government on every measure in this programme. Outside these private railways Bills I do not think there is one of the measures that can be called a party measure, because members on this side as well as members opposite and the people of the country are interested in them.

Mr. KIDSTON: Some would go through without discussion.

Mr. BROWNE: As the hon. member for Rockhampton says, some of them may go through without discussion. Then there is the Estimates to be considered, and on that point I may say that there has been a practice growing up of late years of the Government asking for votes of Supply in advance. In the good old days, Sir Thomas McIlwraith always got enough of the Estimates through to avoid asking for votes on account in that way. He could demand them, because the money had been passed; but the way we are doing business at the present time, there is no earthly chance of that being done. I am not anxious to say any more, but I distinctly refuse to allow the blame for the waste of public time and the delay in public business to be saddled upon members on this side of the House.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. HIGGS: I do not think the Premier need offer any apology to the House or the country for asking for an additional sitting day if he proposes to deal with public business, but if he is going to squander the whole four days per week upon the business of the private syndicates that apparently have considerable influence in the Government, then I think an apology is necessary. The Premier was told distinctly enough by the leader of this party and by some of his most orderly followers, that every assistance would be given to pass public measures, but that every constitutional objection would be raised to the passing of private syndicate railway Bills. The Premier has taken no notice of the hints that were thrown out, and he appears to be anxious and perfectly willing to force his private schemes through this House. Now, there are half-a-dozen very important Bills

which the Premier wishes to be passed, and I think these Bills will receive very little opposition from this side of the House. The Governor's Speech is full of important Bills promised two months ago. The Harbour Boards Bill is a measure which the mercantile communities are anxiously waiting for: the farmers are waiting for a cheap money Bill, promised by the Secretary for Agriculture some time ago; the local authorities are waiting for a Local Government Bill, which has been promised by the present Premier and

[4 p.m.]

by several Premiers before him for years past; the working classes are waiting for an early closing Bill; and we are all waiting for a Federal Elections Bill, which was promised in the Governor's Speech, as soon as Western Australia had decided the referendum. Here is the sentence—

There is every reason to believe that, as a result of the referendum about to be taken in Western Australia, that colony will be included in the Commonwealth from the date of its establishment, and as soon as definite information is obtainable on this point you will be asked to consider a measure providing for the election of representatives of Queensland in the Federal Parliament.

After the referendum was decided in Western Australia, the Premier, when approached with regard to the Federal Elections Bill, said, "As soon as the Chief Secretary is back in Parliament the Federal Bill would be presented; it is due to the hon. gentleman, seeing his work in connection with federation, that he should introduce this measure." Now, we find that the Federal Bill must, like all other legislation of an important nature, wait the pleasure of mining syndicates, thieves, vagabonds, knaves, and swindlers who are prepared to exploit this colony. I think it is time that the House made a protest against this country being handed over to these mining gentlemen—for illegitimate mining. I do not wish to reflect adversely on those gentlemen who legitimately desire to develop the mining industry of the country.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Are you to be the judge of these gentlemen?

Mr. DAWSON: He is one of them.

Mr. HIGGS: I have a perfect right to form my own opinion as to the character of these gentlemen who are endeavouring to exploit the country, as the hon. members for Mackay and Bulloo have to support these private syndicates. I would ask any hon. member in this House, or any intelligent person in the colony, what is their opinion of the character of certain of these gentlemen who are anxious to exploit the country after we have heard the correspondence quoted by Mr. Newell.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. HIGGS: What are we going to say to these gentlemen who wish to get syndicate Bills through this House, and who wish to exploit the mining industry? They do not wish to advance the prosperity of Queensland or of the mining industry; they only wish to deceive and rob the general public.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HIGGS: I have a right to form my own opinion of these gentlemen, and I shall not hesitate to express my objections to these syndicate railway proposals being rushed through this House. The hon. member for Mackay and the hon. member for Bulloo take upon themselves the duty of defending the Government by interjection and otherwise on every possible occasion. I am not like the hon. member for Bulloo, who is the only man in Queensland who advertises himself as M.L.A.; who signs himself as "J. Leahy, M.L.A."

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. HIGGS: The only man who endeavours to make money out of his "M.L.A.-ship."

Mr. LEAHY: That's not true.

Mr. HIGGS: And now he tries to put me down. I have observed, during my residence here for some years, that hon. members opposite take the most sarcastic weapons they can avail themselves of to try and overthrow members on this side, and I think it is time that these weapons were directed against themselves, and I shall not hesitate to do so. I think some hon. members are afraid of these sarcastic tongues, but I am not. The hon. gentleman at the head

of the Government should know, after two months' experience, and after the criticisms that have been passed on these syndicate railway Bills—I think he has every reason to believe that if he will bring forward public business, and abandon the schemes of private syndicators, that public business will be transacted rapidly. But he is apparently willing to postpone public business until the hot months, so that Estimates amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds can be passed through in as many seconds. He thinks that hon. members on this side of the House will then grow tired, and that their opposition to the hon. gentleman's schemes will cease. The hon. gentleman may have control over his own followers, but I refuse to believe that hon. gentlemen on the opposite side who are not interested in private railway schemes—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HIGGS: Or do not support private railway legislation are going to sit here night after night in the interests of mining gentlemen who are anxious to exploit this country.

Mr. LEAHY (*Bulloo*): I would not have risen to reply to the hon. member who has just sat down, because there is an old adage that you cannot touch pitch without being defiled, but the hon. member is always suffering from an itch—an ineradicable itch—for making slanderous statements.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LEAHY: And he was never yet known to prove one of those statements. He has stated just now that I made money out of writing "M.L.A." after my name. I should not have risen to refer even to that except that we know men who are justices sign "J.P." after their names in ordinary matters, and it might be inferred that I did the same thing in this case. Probably what the hon. member refers to is that in connection with some electoral matters "M.L.A." appears after my name.

Mr. HIGGS: No. You signed "John Leahy, M.L.A., Manager for the Union Mortgage Company." That is not done elsewhere in Australia.

Mr. LEAHY: It is just as well to explain. It is the usual thing for any member who is a director of any business company to have "M.L.A." after his name. There is no local bank director in Brisbane who is a member of this House who has not "M.L.A." printed after his name. Here is my friend, Mr. Callan, who has "M.L.A." after his name as a director of the Queensland National Bank.

Mr. HIGGS: But he does not sign "M.L.A." after his name.

Mr. LEAHY: I do not sign in that way either.

Mr. HIGGS: You sign the advertisement.

Mr. LEAHY: I do not. The hon. member is entirely wrong, but I can excuse him, because he is constructed on certain lines, and he cannot help it. I remember a short time ago, when I was in Sydney—a place where the hon. member is better known than he is here—I did not travel there with him.

Mr. HIGGS: No, you hadn't the chance; I went alone.

Mr. LEAHY: He was present at a gathering—a mob of electors whom he had worked with, and whom, I believe, he had mulcted out of £800—and they refused to listen to him.

Mr. HIGGS: That is a lie.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. HIGGS: That is a lie; I do not hesitate to say it.

The SPEAKER: Order! Personal recriminations are very much out of order, and I trust that hon. members will not descend to them.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LEAHY : I quite agree with you, Mr. Speaker, but they should have been stopped in the first instance.

The SPEAKER : Order, order !

Mr. McDONALD : That is a reflection on the Chair.

The SPEAKER : Order !

Mr. LEAHY : Hon. members opposite are very particular about reflections on the Chair. What I have risen for at the present time is this : We have had some very interesting statements from the other side this afternoon, and we have heard hon. members lay down what is supposed to be a constitutional basis—the constitutional means which they propose to adopt for the future for the purpose of obstructing business that they do not like.

Mr. DAWSON : That is not correct.

Mr. LEAHY : That is so. The leader of the Labour Opposition distinctly laid that down. Now, I tell the hon. gentleman that there are also constitutional means for dealing with things of that kind, and, if constitutional means are to be used on the one side, they should also be used on the other.

MEMBERS on the Government side : Hear, hear !

Mr. LEAHY : Let us know exactly where we are. So far as I am concerned, I have no particular interest in any business going through this House. I come here to do business, and not to be fooled. The Government and those sitting on these benches represent the majority in this House, and in the country, and, if they are not prepared to carry on the business of the country, they have no right to be here ; and, if they do not take reasonable steps to conduct the business of the country, I am not going to come here night after night to be fooled.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Maranoa*) : I regret very much the turn the discussion has taken.

Mr. BROWNE : Hear, hear !

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I might venture to suggest that it is really not in order to discuss the question of private railways on the motion before the House.

Mr. DAWSON : They have not been discussed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : Well, they have been extensively referred to. I desire to acknowledge the assistance that I have received from members on the other side in getting through this House measures that I have had charge of, of which they did not in the abstract disapprove ; but they can hardly expect the Government, who represent the people of the colony in this House, to accept the position that they will only bring forward measures of which hon. members on the other side tell them beforehand they approve, or of which they do not strongly disapprove.

Mr. DAWSON : Haven't we a right to object ?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : The hon. member who leads the Labour party—whose action in this House has always commanded respect and confidence—cited Sir Thomas Mellwraith. Now, I sat in this House for fifteen years with Sir Thomas Mellwraith, and for a considerable part of that time he was Premier of the colony, and I know there was no man who was less inclined to submit to any dictation as to the order in which he should bring forward the public business than Sir Thomas Mellwraith.

MEMBERS on the Government side : Hear, hear !

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : Having the responsibility of the Government on his shoulders, he said, "In my judgment this is the order in which the business submitted to this House should be brought forward," and, having put his foot down, he was not a man to retreat simply because there was opposition.

Mr. McDONALD : Whether he was right or wrong.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I do not say that he brought forward anything at any time that he thought was wrong. In his judgment he was right ; but he did not deny to the Opposition the right of opposing it. I have taken part in struggles in opposition to some of his proposals—

Mr. DAWSON : He never sneered at an Opposition.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : But, after a trial of strength—and I know we used to sit up all night, and sometimes two nights, on some measures—

Mr. DAWSON : Seven nights once.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : But, after a trial of strength, and, after having made an emphatic protest against the legislation submitted, the responsibility was then thrown upon the Government of carrying the measure through.

Mr. McDONALD : Didn't you compromise over the last big stonewall ?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : A Government should either get their measure through, or proclaim themselves unfit to hold office. Whether the Premier is right or wrong in putting these railway Bills in the position in which he has upon the notice paper is a matter for himself. If he is prepared to accept the responsibility of that—

Mr. DAWSON : Surely the House has some say in the matter.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : And, if his supporters are willing to assist him in carrying those measures through in that order, then the other side, if it is not numerically stronger, and cannot convince the members of the Government and those who sit behind them that these measures ought to be abandoned, or placed in some other order—then, judging from my parliamentary experience, the only thing for them to do, after delivering an emphatic protest, is to gracefully yield the situation. That is all that is necessary, and that is all that is left for a minority to do.

Mr. BROWNE : But there are five of these Bills.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : Surely the arguments that apply to one apply to all. I have not said a word about these private railways, and I am not going to say anything about them now.

Mr. DAWSON : Neither have I.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I know nothing about them, or who is carrying them through, and, personally, I have never owned a mining share in my life ; but I say, quite apart from the merits of that question, that the question now is whether it is desirable to have an additional sitting day. I think we are all agreed that it is desirable. I have no doubt that if the physical strength of the Premier was equal to it, it would be as acceptable to him to sit five days a week, but he has the great responsibility of carrying on business during the waking hours of the day as well as considerably into the night in leading this House. The Premier gave many reasons why there should be another sitting day, and they were accepted by the leader of the Opposition. No discourtesy was intended to the hon. gentleman because no one on this side got up after he had spoken, because it was recognised that when the two leaders had spoken, the one proposing, and the other acknowledging the propriety of the motion, there was nothing more to be said.

Mr. JACKSON : What are you disputing about ?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : There is really no need, therefore, for any further discussion of the matter, and we should come to a decision at once.

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*): The hon. gentleman has gone altogether upon the assumption that the leader of the Opposition was seeking to dictate to the Premier the order in which business should be introduced in this House. Now, I am sure that the Premier himself will admit that the relations between himself and the leader of the Opposition have not been of such a character as to justify him in saying that the leader of the Opposition was seeking to dictate to him the way in which public business should be conducted, and I think that the hon. gentleman will admit that, so far, in spite of differences of opinion, the leader of the Opposition has been exceptionally conciliatory and obliging. So that all the Attorney-General has said was simply so much beside the question, and the hon. gentleman must surely be aware of that himself. The leader of the Opposition did not seek to dictate to the Premier.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: The hon. member for Fortitude Valley did.

Mr. HIGGS: Oh! Get another Seaforth Estate.

Mr. KIDSTON: The Attorney-General allowed the speech of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley to go to one side. He did not think it was a good line to follow up, and so he referred to what had been said by the leader of the Opposition—or professed to refer to it, although, as a matter of fact, he did not refer to it at all. The leader of the Opposition, in reply to the statement of the Premier that he hoped we would be able to get on with public business, showed, in a way which must have struck every hon. member of the House who heard him, how very conspicuous had been the success of the Government in getting through public business so far. He showed that the only thing that there had been any difficulty over—the only matter there had been any delay over—were the discussions that had taken place on the private Bills introduced by the Government. He simply pointed out to the Premier that if he was anxious to get on with the public business the best way would be to introduce that public business. Judging by the experience of the past part of the session, he would get every assistance from this side of the House to facilitate it getting through, but intimating at the same time—a thing which the hon. gentleman knows quite well—that this side of the House are bitterly opposed to those Bills, and will resist them to the full extent of their ability. While the Attorney-General thinks it is very improper that the leader of the Opposition should advise the Premier as to what course he should follow, he evidently thinks it is quite competent for the Hon. the Attorney-General to advise the leader of the Opposition as to what course he should follow. I think the hon. gentleman will see for himself that if it is improper for the leader of the Opposition to advise the Premier—which I admit, but which I claim my leader did not attempt to do—then it is equally gratuitous on the part of the hon. gentleman to advise the leader of the Opposition.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: And you advise them both.

Mr. KIDSTON: If the Premier is really desirous of getting on with the public business, surely it would be far better to bring that business before the House straight away. He knows that there are some of the Bills on the notice paper in which he would get every assistance from this side of the House; and he knows that there are some others as to which, though we differ on matters of detail, there will be very little discussion, and quite a number may be got off the notice paper, and sent to the Upper House. That will be getting on with the public business. If the hon. gentleman does not take

that course—and of course he has a right to take that course or not as he thinks proper—all that the leader of the Opposition pointed out was that the delay in getting on with public business will not be the fault of this side of the House, but will be the fault of the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Unless you are allowed to govern.

Mr. KIDSTON: We are not seeking to govern. What the Government seem to be attempting to do is this: They are forcing these measures, which are so disputatious, on to the front of the business paper for the purpose of seeking to minimise the opposition of this side to them by the cry that we are obstructing all the valuable legislation that is behind them. I say it is not a fair way of fighting. Let them bring on their other legislation and let us pass it, and then fight out the things we dispute about. Then we will not have that parrot-cry about wasting the time of the House. I am glad the leader of the Opposition has dealt with that matter so effectively. With regard to the other sitting day, if the necessities of public business require it, the members on this side are willing to sit not only four, but five days a week. We are quite willing to sit all the days of the week for the purpose of facilitating public business, but we will not be bounced by any talk about stonewalling or hindering useful legislation in this very simple kind of way. The way is easy for the Premier to get his useful legislation through, if he chooses to take that way; and if he does not choose to take that way, then the hon. gentleman will have to take the responsibility.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I think it is time we had another sitting day, and I hope it will be the means of facilitating business; but, like other hon. members who have spoken, I would like to say that neither the Premier nor the Attorney-General has any right to threaten this side of the House.

The PREMIER: The threats are all from your side.

Mr. McDONALD: There have been no threats from this side at all. We were told from the other side that in addition to Friday they would probably take in Monday, too, and sit late also. The hon. member for Bulloo practically threatened the Government that if they did not sit day after day and night he was not going to come here to be fooled.

Mr. LEAHY: If we did not get on with business I said.

Mr. McDONALD: There was a clear attempt to threaten the Government. With regard to the waste of time, let me remind the Attorney-General that I object to hon. members on that side making second speeches on the same motion. We had the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, taking that course the other evening, and we have the Attorney-General doing the same thing this afternoon.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I forgot that I had seconded the motion. I apologise.

Mr. McDONALD: I want to show hon. members that is another instance of toleration on this side.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Ignorance.

Mr. McDONALD: It was not, because I saw the hon. gentleman getting up to second the motion.

Mr. COWLEY: He was quite right in speaking.

Mr. McDONALD: He was not quite right to resume his seat and to speak afterwards. We did not wish to stop him because we thought he had something to say.

Mr. COWLEY: I seconded the motion, too, and I intend to speak.

Mr. McDONALD: I will raise a point of order in your case. I just mention this to show that all the tolerance is not on the other side of the House. I object to these continued attempts to try and coerce members on this side of the House to do certain things. I don't think it is the place of the Premier or the Attorney-General to threaten this side that if we don't do certain things certain other things will follow. The Attorney-General said that if you don't allow it to go in the Premier will not only take in Friday but Monday, too, and we shall have to sit late also. That was a distinct threat.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I did not say that. I said that if the Premier was physically able to do so he would probably have no objection to sitting on Monday, and sitting late, in order to get through the business if necessary.

Mr. McDONALD: That is the third speech made by the hon. gentleman.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I had a right to make an explanation.

Mr. COWLEY: The hon. member for Flinders has spoken.

Mr. McDONALD: I have said all I wish to say on the question.

Mr. COWLEY (*Herbert*): I seconded this motion in a formal way, and I intend to exercise my right of speaking. The hon. member for Croydon, Mr. Browne—

Mr. McDONALD: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I ask your ruling as to whether the hon. member, having seconded the motion, is in order in speaking now.

The SPEAKER: The Attorney-General, Mr. Rutledge, seconded the motion.

Mr. COWLEY: When the Speaker asked for a seconder, I bowed to the Chair, and by that means seconded the motion. I was not to know whether the Speaker accepted my salutation as seconding the motion, or that of any other hon. member; but having seconded it, I now intend to exercise my right to say a few words to the motion. The hon. member for Croydon, Mr. Browne, has told us that business has been carried on expeditiously this session. I should like to know who is responsible for this.

[4.30 p.m.] MEMBERS of the Opposition: The Labour party.

Mr. COWLEY: Every hon. member on that side has spoken for an indefinite period on nearly every question brought before the House.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: No.

Mr. JENKINSON: That is not so; most unjust.

Mr. COWLEY: Well, not every one of them, but most of the hon. members on that side have—as my hon. friend, the member for Mackay, says—lived up to their reputation, and spoken for an indefinite period on almost every question brought before the House. Hon. members on this side have carefully refrained from speaking; many of them I know have been wishful and anxious to speak, but seeing that members on the opposite side have invariably spoken on every subject at great length, they have refrained from speaking on purpose to expedite the business of the House. Had hon. members on this side occupied as many hours in debate as hon. members on that side have done, no business would have been accomplished, or at any rate very little would have been done; so that the leader of the Labour party need not take the flattering unctious to his soul that his side have expedited business. I do not wish to say much on this motion. I am very sorry to have to break into this united and happy concert between the Government side of the House and of the Labour Opposition; but I certainly object to sitting on Friday night. If we are to expedite business, I think the proper means to do that is to sit longer hours on the days

already allotted as sitting days. I am perfectly willing and anxious to do business, and I believe that more business would be done by sitting from 11 to 1 o'clock on the present sitting days than will be done by sitting on Fridays. Hon. members of the Labour party have invariably spoken up to within a few minutes of the time for the departure of the last train, and then subsided, and the House has adjourned, and we have gone home, and no business has been the result.

Mr. McDONALD: That was to oblige members on the other side.

Mr. COWLEY: That members of the Labour party have talked up to that time?

Mr. McDONALD: Yes.

Mr. COWLEY: Then I wish they would find some other way of expressing their obligations to the Government and to members on this side of the House. What I should like to see, and what I think would be a better plan of procedure, would be to sit until 1 o'clock every morning, so that we might really get the business done.

Mr. BRIDGES: We would die then.

Mr. COWLEY: Very well, then we should be martyrs to our country. I am perfectly satisfied that if this extra sitting day is given, and business is conducted simply up to half-past 10, or twenty minutes to 11 o'clock, no business will result, and the time for the private sitting will, like the ordinary sittings on other days, be wasted by hon. members on the Labour side. Therefore, I, for one, will oppose the motion for sitting on Friday. There is no doubt whatever that so far very little business has been done, and hon. members on that side are to be thanked for it. This motion might have been passed as formal. Who cried "Not formal"? The hon. member for Croydon, Mr. Browne, and the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Higgs.

Mr. BROWNE: I did nothing of the sort.

Mr. COWLEY: Then I beg the hon. member's pardon. At any rate two members on that side cried "Not formal," and an hour will be wasted over the discussion.

Mr. KIDSTON: I think another gentleman called "Not formal."

Mr. COWLEY: No one on this side called "Not formal."

Mr. KIDSTON: I have heard a member on that side call "Not formal."

Mr. COWLEY: To this motion?

Mr. KIDSTON: No.

Mr. COWLEY: Well, I am dealing with the present motion. Although opposed to the motion I had no intention of calling "Not formal," and so waste the time of the House in discussing it. But when members on that side get up and claim that certain business has been done in good time, and that the whole credit is due to them, I protest and object, because they have done the talking, and this side of the House has done the business.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*): It is said that Satan sometimes reproves sin.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Are you Satan?

Mr. TURLEY: It seems to me that in this case we have the hon. member for Herbert telling us that no one should have called "Not formal" to this motion, and that we did so because we wanted to waste time. I called "Not formal" to the motion for two or three different reasons. And only last week we were told that it was the right of every member of this House, if he chose to exercise it, to call "Not formal" to any motion that might be proposed, and we were told that when a hon. member opposite called "Not formal" to a motion brought forward by a member on this side of the House. The hon. member also said that business has not been facilitated by members on

this side of the House. The Attorney-General, however, said he was thankful to the leader of the Opposition for the facilities and help he had afforded in getting through measures that were of public importance. As the leader of the Labour Opposition pointed out, the Health Bill is a measure of such magnitude and importance that under ordinary circumstances any legislative chamber in the world would probably take two or three sitting days to discuss the second reading. And I believe it would take fully a week to put it through committee in any deliberative chamber. If the hon. member throws his mind back for a short time he will find that there have been Bills of far less importance than the Health Bill, affecting as it does nearly every person in Queensland, which have taken far longer to discuss. The leader of the Labour Opposition stated on a former occasion that the Premier would receive every facility for the passage of all public business which he intended to submit, with the exception of the measures for the construction of private railways.

Mr. COWLEY: It has been ruled that they are public railways.

Mr. TURLEY: They have always been referred to as private railways.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Wrongly so.

Mr. TURLEY: It has also been stated that whatever constitutional advantages are offered to the Opposition, they will use them to the best of their ability to prevent those Bills becoming law. The hon. member for Bulloo told us that there are other constitutional methods which can be adopted by members on his side. We do not complain about that; but I would point out that the hon. member and the Premier are simply being goaded on by a journal which fancies itself the leading journal of the colony, and which says that something must be done, that the Government must put their foot down, and that members on this side of the House must be silenced in their opposition to syndicate railways. We have the Speaker in the chair to see that we are strictly confined to the Standing Orders, and we have a perfect right to exercise the privileges conferred upon us by the Standing Orders. If hon. members take it into their heads to alter the Standing Orders, then we shall have our say as to whether the proposed alterations are beneficial or not. At any rate, as long as we do not go beyond what the Standing Orders permit, hon. members opposite have no reason to complain of our action. On a former occasion we were told by the hon. gentleman who now sits as President of the other Chamber that we made a mistake in dealing with public business when we were practically newchums in the House, and that there were certain forms laid down in the Standing Orders, and if we did not know how to take advantage of those forms that was our own fault, and we need not expect any assistance from the Government. Now, we are pointing out that the Standing Orders give us facilities to do certain things, and then we are told that we should not do those things—that it is not right for us to do—that the constitutional advantages lie with members on the other side. Well, let members on the other side do exactly the same thing. As long as they keep within the Standing Orders that are there for governing the business of this House, no one has any right to complain. The principal reason why I called "Not formal" to this motion is this: Ever since I have been in this House, when this motion has been moved, it has been pointed out that there has not been a sufficient amount of time allowed for the discussion or private members' business. When the fourth day has been taken in, it has always been assumed that at least a good portion of that day will be allowed for the

discussion of propositions which private members may see fit to put on the business-paper. Now, there are certain matters on the business-paper at the present time of very great importance which have been placed there by private members, and I take it that some of them are of as much importance to the welfare of this colony—and more so—than the bulk of the measures that are put on the business-paper by the Government. Now, on these occasions we want to know whether the Government is not going to allow further time for the discussion of private members' business. I know perfectly well that when private members' business comes up there is no talk about waste of time by members on the other side of the House, but they get up and religiously talk out every resolution that is brought forward by members on this side of the House, if they do not happen to agree with it. Every form of the House is taken advantage of either by moving an amendment or by talking at inordinate length with the object of blocking for the time being any measure or resolution of public importance that is brought forward by a member on this side of the House. Now, we think that this is wrong, because our experience has been that it is only by the discussion of motions in this House that are actually expressive of the general opinions that are held by a large number of people outside, that after a lapse of time we find the Government coming down and embodying the proposition that has been brought forward in a concrete form in the shape of a Bill. And in those cases I say there is not a sufficient length of time allowed for private members to discuss matters of public importance. If we look at the business-paper at the present time we find that there are motions affecting cheap money for farmers, submitted by a Government supporter; we find that there is another resolution dealing with arbitration and conciliation for industrial disputes, and establishing a wages board in connection with the Factories Act. All these measures are of just as much importance, in my opinion, and in many cases of more importance, than some of the measures that are submitted here—well, they are important to a larger number of people than the measures which are submitted here by the Government; and that is the reason why I say, when it is proposed to take in an extra sitting day, that there should be more time given to private members for the discussion of their business. Now the Premier says he intends to sit later, and the hon. member for Herbert says we should sit until 1 o'clock. The Premier says that it affects his health to be sitting so many days in the week.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TURLEY: Well, I was just pointing out to the hon. gentleman that if it affects his health it affects mine also, and to that extent I am able to sympathise with the hon. gentleman; but when business is being considered by the House, it has been pointed out, time after time, that we get through more business in reasonable sitting hours than we do by sitting all night, and in many cases that has been exemplified, at any rate since I have been in the House.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: In many cases it has been disproved.

Mr. TURLEY: I do not think it has been disproved at all, only when the end of the session has been come to. That has been the only time, when perhaps a week or so before the end of the session, business has been allowed to go which otherwise would have entailed a considerable amount of discussion. But in this case, if the Government think it necessary to sit until 1 o'clock, or 2 or 3 or 4 o'clock, let them do so, as long as they think it is necessary to get through with their business. In that case I take it that

this House is not going to offer any particular objection to what hours they sit. We are here to do the business of the community, and if we have to give opposition to any particular business that is brought forward by the Government then we intend to offer that opposition. The Attorney-General has told us that years ago, when he was a member of this House, the Opposition thought that it had done its duty, if it had offered what it considered an effective protest. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman whether in the case that came before this House, when a million of money was asked for for "unspecified railways," and where the Opposition sat here till 12 o'clock on Saturday night, and met again on Monday—I would ask him whether he considered that was merely an effective protest? That was simply obstruction—deliberate obstruction offered to the proposals of the Government; and I make bold to say that at that time the Opposition represented 75 per cent. of the people outside this Chamber. And in this case I contend the same thing—that the opposition that members on this side of the House offer to some of the proposals of the Government command the respect, and I think the support, of at least 75 per cent. of the people outside this Chamber, whose opinions are against the Government taking advantage of the position that they occupy just for the time being, to carry out measures which, in my opinion, they have never received the sanction of the country to introduce.

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): I do not intend to occupy the time of the House for more than five or ten minutes, but I have a word or two which I would like to put forward for the consideration of members. Now, the Premier said he introduced this motion with the idea of getting on with the business of the country. I think every member, no matter on which side he is, will sympathise with the object of getting on with the business of the country. Speaking for myself, not only am I prepared to sit four days in the week, but five or six if it is necessary; but I am not prepared to sit five, or even four, if my time is to be devoted to the discussion of the business of private syndicates. Now, we have heard a good deal about the so-called waste of time by members on this side of the House. Well, I for one refuse to believe that any time devoted to the discussion of important measures that affect not only the present generation, but future generations in Queensland, is time wasted. I think it is time devoted to the very best of uses, and is likely to have beneficial results. It has become very fashionable for the hon. members opposite to twit the members of the Opposition with deliberately wasting the time of the House and of the country; but, so far as I can gather—and I have looked up *Hansard* for the purpose—the business of the country has been conducted more efficiently and expeditiously since the Labour party entered the House than it was before; and to prove my case let us take the debate on the Financial Statement. If hon. members look up *Hansard* for the six years prior to 1893—that is, before the Labour party entered this House in any numbers—they will find that in 1887 the debate on the Financial Statement took four days; in 1888, five days; in 1889, two days; in 1890, ten days; in 1891, three days; and in 1892, three days—in all cases exclusive of the day on which the Statement was delivered. For those six years the Financial Statement debate took an average of four and a-half days, whereas this year it occupied only two and a-half days. Yet hon. members on the other side have the unblushing effrontery to say that we are the party that is wasting time. I could quote innumerable instances from *Hansard* to prove that the same thing applies to the debate upon the Address in

Reply, and to almost all the important debates that take place in this House. That all goes to prove that since the Labour party entered this House, and especially this session, public business has been more expeditiously carried on than it ever was before they entered it.

Mr. KEOGH: There is not very much done up to the present time.

Mr. GIVENS: I am not concerned now to reply to the interjection of the admirable member who so effectively represents the Rosewood electors. I have more important business in hand just now. The suggestions of the leader of the Opposition with regard to the conduct of the business of this House should receive the consideration of the Premier. No doubt the Premier will say, as he has said before, that he will conduct the business of the House in whatever manner he chooses, and that is a right due to his position. But every member has a right to an opinion, and a right to express it, and mine is that it is the duty of the Government to legislate upon those matters upon which there is a consensus of opinion in this House and in the country that legislation should be brought in. That is the practice of the House of Commons, and the practice followed by that grand old statesman William E. Gladstone, who, however much he believed in a subject, never legislated upon it until there was a consensus of opinion that it should be legislated upon. Here, on the contrary, the Government are trying to force legislation upon the House though they know there is a very strong opposition to it, and though they must know in their own minds that the people of the country are strongly opposed to it. I have no objection to sit all night every day of the week if public business is dealt with. There are measures of local importance which the country is clamouring for. Every local authority in the colony wants to see a Local Government Bill passed, but there is no possible chance of such a Bill passing this session if the time of the House is to be wasted in considering concessions to private syndicates. Three of our principal ports are calling for Harbour Board Bills, to enable them to carry on their business in a proper manner. There are several other Bills I could name on which there is a general consensus of opinion that it is in the interests of the country they should be dealt with. I say it is the duty of the Government to legislate in accordance with the general consensus of public opinion, and of the opinion in this House, rather than to waste the time of the House in giving us legislation which is asked for only by private syndicates. I shall say no more, but I enter my protest against a further sitting day being granted if it is to be granted for the particular purpose of discussing private syndicate railways.

Mr. STEWART (*Rockhampton North*): I am very glad the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government has awakened at last to the necessity of adding another to the present number of sitting days. One has only to reflect for a moment to discover that Parliament is an exceedingly easy-going institution. Here we are, a certain number of hon. gentlemen chosen by the electors to do certain work for the country, for which we are paid £300 per annum, and we are expected to devote the whole of our time to the business of the country. I know some hon. members opposite will cavil at this, but it is a fact, or why should we be paid £300 per annum. Why should the Premier and other Ministers of the Crown be paid £1,000 per annum unless the country expected them to devote their entire time to its business? But do they? So far as ordinary members of the House are concerned how do we act? We come here in July, and we have January, February, March,

April, May, June, and until the middle of July to kick our heels anywhere we like and do anything we choose, and six months of the year are wasted doing nothing. We are always ready, upon any occasion, to come here when asked. The Premier and those associated with him are to blame for the fact that Parliament sits only between five and six months in the year. Not only do I complain upon this score, but when we do meet how do we act? We work about eighteen hours per week. We meet on Tuesday afternoon at half-past 3, and generally adjourn at half-past 10, and we have an hour for tea. That is six hours per sitting, and with three sittings per week we work eighteen hours per week. I ask hon. gentlemen whether that is giving the country value for its money? I do not think it is. We should do as other working people do. We should put in at least forty-eight hours per week, and work for about forty-eight weeks in the year. If we did that we would be giving the country value for its money, and the business would go on swimmingly and everything would be much better arranged than it is at the present moment. I invite the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, who grumbles at what he calls waste of time, to adopt this scheme for carrying on business. I am perfectly aware that my suggestion is not likely to be adopted by hon. gentlemen opposite. A considerable number of them have other business to attend to. They devote a considerable portion of the day to their own affairs, and in the evening they bring the fag end of their intellect and their time to the consideration of the business of the country. I do not believe in that. When a man enters the public service he should devote the best of his time and energy to that service. There is no service I know of which more requires the best that every man can give it. I ask the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government seriously to consider the suggestion I have put forward, and if he does so he will have very little cause to complain of any waste of time. The leader of the Opposition has completely demolished the assertion of the Premier that members on this side have deliberately wasted time during this session. That hon. gentleman showed that during this session there has been considerably less debate on many matters than there has been during any previous session. Some hon. gentlemen opposite have propounded the curious idea that if hon. members on this side do not care for the proposals of the Government what they ought to do is merely to lodge a protest as a sort of salve to their consciences, and having done so they should permit the Government to pass any legislation they desire. Well, I regret very much that I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman who made

[5 p.m.] that suggestion. I do not think that that is in accord with our ideas of parliamentary government at all. Why are we offering such vigorous opposition to these syndicate railway lines? I suppose it would be out of order now to call them "private railways"—therefore, I will call them syndicate railway lines. Why are we doing this? Simply because we believe that the country is not in favour of them; that if this matter was referred to the whole community, there would be a large adverse vote. And we do it also because we know that the country has never given to this or to any Government a mandate to reverse the accepted policy of the Government with regard to railway construction. That is the position that we take up with regard to these Bills. They are all Bills of a very contentious character. Besides, there is no reason why we should rush these Bills on to the disadvantage of other measures. Here we have federation shortly to be accom-

plished, and there will be federal elections—elections for members for the House of Representatives and for the Senate; but we don't know what the constituencies for the House of Representatives or for the Senate are to be. In this matter we are placed under a very severe handicap by the Government. Why, in this respect, are we not placed in the same position as people in the other colonies? They are there making all the necessary preparations. Here we do not know what the electorates will be; in fact we do not know anything at all about the matter. We are being kept in ignorance by the Government, if it knows; perhaps it does not know. If it does it ought to make up its mind on the earliest possible opportunity. This is a matter which concerns every man and woman in the colony, but these private lines only concern the people in the immediate vicinity of where these lines are to be constructed; so that we have the Government in this position: that they are putting localities, as far as legislation is concerned, in a position superior to the entire colony. There is another matter that has been demanded by many constituencies, and that is a reform of the electoral laws. The hon. gentleman has placed this Bill on the business paper, but it has been religiously kept in the background. In this connection, I believe we shall have the experience of last session repeated this session—that there will be no Electoral Reform Bill passed at the end of this session.

Mr. KEOGH: I believe that will be the fault of certain members on this side of the House.

Mr. STEWART: I don't think the opinion of the hon. member is of much value.

Mr. KEOGH: You test it.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. member came into this House returned to support a certain party and a certain policy, and when he renounced them I think he should have gone to his constituents.

Mr. STEPHENSON: That applies to hon. members of your party as well.

Mr. STEWART: No. It does not apply to the member who is speaking.

Mr. STEPHENSON: Yes, it does. He does not represent his constituents.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the attention of the hon. member to the question before the House.

Mr. STEWART: I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion made by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, but I only regret that he has not made the sitting days five instead of four. Some hon. members have referred to the Health Bill, in which there were 170 clauses, having passed its second reading in one sitting, but I say that during the time that that Health Bill was going through, it did not get one tithe of the discussion that it was entitled to. So that probably in the near future we will have an amending Bill brought in. That is another effect of this haphazard legislation. Amending Bills have to be brought forward year after year; there is no finality; nobody knows what the law is except lawyers, and I question very much whether they can tell what the law is at any particular time on any given subject. The hon. member for Herbert seemed to be very annoyed at the amount of discussion hon. members on this side gave to certain measures. The hon. member ought to know that discussion is the furnace in which we are compelled to place the crude legislative proposals of the Government so that they may be refined. You may as well try to pass copper ore off as pure copper, without refining it, as to try and pass the crude or ill-digested legislation brought forward by the Government. The hon. gentleman says, "Let us do business." But I say that we are sent here to discuss all measures

brought forward by the Government or by private members. We have to weigh all measures and place them in the furnace of discussion in order to refine them, and it is not possible to do that unless there is adequate discussion. Instead of opposing criticism, I think hon. gentlemen opposite—who, I suppose, are as anxious to serve the community as hon. members on this side—should welcome discussion. Instead of that they expect us to swallow everything they bring in. After a protest is made, then all objections should be allowed to lapse. I cannot subscribe to that doctrine, because it is a doctrine subversive of government by Parliament, and I trust no Opposition will ever permit itself to get into a drivelling, inane condition of that kind. In looking over the parliamentary records of Queensland, I find that there has been a good deal of talk on various matters, and hon. members on the other side have done a great deal of this talking. Why, the junior member for Mackay was simply irrepressible when he was sitting in opposition.

MR. BROWNE: Isn't he that now?

MR. STEWART: Well he is that now, but he was much more so when he was in opposition. He talked, and talked, and talked, until I believe his talking was accountable for the very high mortality in this House at one particular period. It is the business of an Opposition to discuss measures, and I think the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, instead of grumbling at the Opposition, should lengthen the hours of labour, and go in for eight hours a day, six days a week, and let us give the country some value for its money.

MR. LESINA (*Clermont*): I intend to support the proposal of the Premier, and I also desire to express my regret that the hon. gentleman saw fit, when moving the resolution, to charge the Opposition with wasting time.

THE PREMIER: I did not. You were not here, and never heard what I said.

MR. LESINA: I heard the speech of the leader of the Opposition in reply, and I have made inquiries since, and I understand that the hon. gentleman asked the leader of the Opposition to exercise his control over members on this side, and assist in carrying the legislation which now takes precedence on the business-paper. The charge of wasting time is frequently hurled across the floor of the Chamber at hon. members on this side, and that charge occupies a great deal of space in the papers supporting the Government—an inspired charge, I may call it. Now, members on this side are not going to sit here and permit those charges to be made against them. We are merely carrying out pledges which we gave to our constituents in opposing legislation to which they object, and regarding which they have never been consulted by members of the Government. If time has been wasted this afternoon—and I have no doubt it has been—the Premier himself is to blame for it. He has no right to say that we are wasting time. If we waste time, and are guilty of any infraction of the Standing Orders, I have no doubt you, Mr. Speaker, will pull us up; but when we hear this charge hurled across the Chamber, and repeated, parrotlike, by hon. members who believe it—or have schooled themselves to believe it—it is irritating. I find that an additional sitting day is necessary to discuss the business which is now on the paper. The first five measures that meet the eye are syndicate railway proposals—not proposals that are going to benefit the country, but proposals to benefit certain sections of the public. We want legislation of a public character. We want legislation dealing with federation, we want legislation dealing with electoral reform, we want a University Bill, and a score of other measures which the public are

crying out for. But, no—we are to get an additional sitting day to discuss the Mount Garnet Freehold Mining Company's Tramway Bill; the Port Norman, Normanton, and Cloncurry Railway Bill; the Glassford Creek Tramway Bill; the Albert River, Burketown, and Lilydale Tramway Bill; and the Callide Railway Bill. Then we are to discuss certain commercial legislation, such as an amendment of the insolvency law, an amendment of the Bills of Sales Act, a Harbour Boards Bill, and legislation of that character. Commerce, the pastoral industry, and the mining industry, as affected by the construction of these syndicate railways—all these things are to be legislated upon, but matters of public concern there is no time to legislate upon. Now I maintain that we are perfectly justified in taking up the attitude we have done so far, and, so far as I am personally concerned, this additional sitting day will be utilised by me in precisely the same manner as I have utilised every opportunity I have had in this House of discussing these measures. I have given a pledge to my constituents that I shall oppose syndicate legislation, and I shall offer opposition to such legislation at every stage of its progress through this House. In carrying out that pledge, I shall take advantage of every form of the House, and of the additional sitting day; and, if another sitting day is granted, I will take advantage of it to still further oppose the passage of this legislation. In saying that, I am not blind to the fact that the newspaper Press on the side of the Government is persistently denouncing, in inspired articles, members on this side for the prolonged discussion on these measures. Taking the Press right through Queensland, their articles have been tuned to the same key. I am not blind to the fact that the Press is against us; but that ought not to influence us, and I hope it will not influence us. What ought to influence us at all times is a desire to pass laws which will benefit the people as a whole. I shall use this additional sitting day, as I have used every opportunity in the past, in persistently preventing this Government arrogating to itself the right to exclude all public business of a pressing nature, and compelling the House to waste its time in discussing syndicate concessions such as are comprised in the five measures which stand at the head of the business paper to-day.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE (*Mackay*): Mr. Speaker—

MR. HIGGS: Stonewalling again.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: I call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to that remark of the hon. member for Clermont, which is quite consistent with his character. He is quite willing to talk by the hour himself, but he declines to permit any hon. member on this side of the House to speak for two minutes.

MR. DAWSON: The hon. member for Clermont never said a word.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Whether hon. members on this side have charged hon. members opposite with wasting time I am not prepared to say, but what is certain is that the metropolitan Press has charged those hon. members with wasting time on a great many occasions, and when we know what has taken place this afternoon, it is impossible to doubt that there has been a great deal of time taken up in this discussion, which is absolutely unnecessary unless there be a deliberate attempt to waste time, and to block public business. There is no other possible explanation. The Premier brought this motion in with the sanction of the leader of the Opposition, and, as they were both agreed, what earthly necessity was there for any discussion, except that hon. members opposite intend to use the forms of the House, as the hon. member for Clermont says,

to prevent certain railway proposals from being dealt with by this House. As long as this discussion goes on, hon. members are preventing what they call private Bills, but which it has been decided are a portion of the public business, from coming on, and they are also preventing all the public business coming on which is to follow this first public business.

MR. DUNSFORD: Does that apply to your speech?

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: I am only exposing this preposterous profession—because it is not sincere. Hon. members opposite are using the forms of the House at the present moment in order to prevent certain business being discussed.

MR. DAWSON: Well, what are you doing?

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: I regret to say I am compelled to pull the masks from the faces of hon. members opposite. I should like anyone to explain on what grounds this discussion has taken place, except it be to take up time, and prevent the discussion of other matters. Therefore, whatever complaint is made about the Government not proceeding with public business, it is those who are responsible for this discussion who are delaying public business. We have been told that all constitutional means are to be used to prevent certain measures passing, and these are some of the constitutional means which hon. members on the other side intend to use. They are simply using the constitutional means in any direction in which the public will not discover their intentions. The discussion is unnecessary, because the Premier and the leader of the Opposition are both agreed; and it is merely another way of putting off the discussion of what is called public business. What the hon. members opposite desire is this: According to the statement of the leader of the Opposition, he is quite willing not to use constitutional means of obstruction as long as all the measures brought forward here are approved of by him. What a preposterous statement to make!

MR. BROWNE: It is—for you to make.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: If the hon. member did not make it, the hon. member for Fortitude Valley did—the hon. member who occupies the position of being ex-editor of the *Worker*, which moved all those hon. members at one time.

MR. HIGGS: I never attempted to move them.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: I am not speaking to waste time at all; I am speaking to show—

MR. DAWSON: That you know nothing about it.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: To show the insincerity of hon. members opposite. Nothing can be more clear than that the discussion has been a perfect waste of time, caused by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who, after the Premier and the leader of the Opposition had spoken, and both were agreed, took occasion to throw some exceedingly violent epithets—which were probably very much in place in the *Worker*—broadcast on the floor of this House.

MR. DAWSON (*Charters Towers*): I must congratulate the hon. member for Mackay on the brevity of his speech, but I cannot compliment him on its wit. The hon. member stated that the discussion was simply raised because we had a desire on this side to waste time.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: To block the introduction of certain Bills.

MR. DAWSON: I may say that I give that a most emphatic denial.

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: When both sides are agreed, where is the necessity for discussing the matter?

MR. DAWSON: I deny most emphatically the statement made by the hon. member for Mackay when he said—and I believe the opinion is held by other hon. members on that side—that this discussion has been brought about simply through a desire to block public business—as a matter of pure cussedness. The pure English of the matter is entirely against the Standing Orders, consequently I will not make the statement. The hon. member stated that the leaders on both sides had agreed—

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: That the Friday sitting was necessary.

MR. DAWSON: Quite so. The statement made by the hon. member in that respect is perfectly true. But is it to be laid down in this House that because the leaders on both sides may agree on a particular course of action other members are not permitted to discuss it?

HON. D. H. DALRYMPLE: There is no principle involved in the matter.

MR. DAWSON: There is a certain principle involved in the matter. As a usual thing, when the Premier moves a motion and the leader of the Opposition agrees with that motion, it is moved without discussion, and the Premier in moving it makes no charges against members on the other side of the House. The Premier this afternoon is absolutely responsible for the discussion, because, in moving the motion he took the opportunity to make certain charges against members sitting on this side of the House of wasting time. This talk—I might call it this asinine talk—about wasting time, is repeated in parrot fashion in the metropolitan Press, which is no doubt inspired by some of our enthusiastic and interested politicians. When the Premier makes charges of that kind, I think it is the bounden duty of the leader of the Opposition to reply to every charge that is made, and it is the duty of every member on this side to back up his leader.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION: Hear, hear!

MR. DAWSON: If there has been any discussion it is the Premier's fault, and it will teach him a useful lesson—which the Chief Secretary already knows—that when he wants to get a motion passed he will have the ordinary common-sense and discretion not to make charges against members on this side that will not bear criticism. Of course, as the hon. member for Mackay pointed out, the metropolitan papers have accused members on this side of wasting time. If the hon. member had been in his place when the leader of the Opposition was speaking he would have heard a complete refutation of that ridiculous charge, and would not have been ridiculous enough himself to repeat it. I am inclined to think that the charges of wasting time made by the metropolitan Press are inspired by interested parties.

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION: Hear, hear!

MR. DAWSON: I think I can say that not only this session, but ever since I have been a member of this House, I have never been a party to set myself deliberately to the blocking of public business, or have in any way wasted time. Let the opponent be as bitter as he likes, he cannot with a conscience—of course very few opponents have got a conscience—honestly accuse me of doing anything of that description. While hon. members on this side have agreed to the attitude taken up by the leader of the Opposition that it is advisable to sit on Friday for the transaction of public business—while I agree with the general proposition that we should sit four days a week to get through public business, I am extremely doubtful now if it is a wise course for us to agree to the extra sitting day unless we have a definite statement from the Premier guaranteeing that we are going to go on with public business. I have no

objection to sitting from Monday till Saturday if the public business is to be discussed in this House fairly and liberally as laid down by His Excellency in the speech he delivered at the opening of the session; but if the extra sitting day is only a specious device to carry out certain schemes which we conscientiously believe to be against the best interests of the country, then I have very grave doubts about the wisdom of the leader on this side accepting the motion as proposed by the Premier. If the extra sitting day only means giving an extra day to carry out the intentions of the Government to enable a certain number of syndicates to construct our railways, then I certainly am against it. I think it is a very great pity that in discussing motions we have not, as we have in the case of

[5:30 p.m.] Bills, definitions of terms. I know that the junior member for Mackay is very fond of definitions, and it strikes me as rather peculiar that he has never asked for a definition of "public business." What is "public business"?

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: It is defined.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. gentleman may have defined it at some time or other, but I have not had the extreme happiness of listening to him defining it, or of reading his definition. I certainly think we should have a definition of what public business means. As far as I can understand matters, what we are engaged on at the present time, what we have been engaged on ever since we met, and what it is the intention of the Government we shall be engaged on on the extra sitting day that is asked for, is the business of enabling private persons to exercise public powers.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: You are a private person exercising public powers.

Mr. DAWSON: I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon; we are not private persons exercising public powers; we are public persons representing the public. However, as it appears to be the general opinion of members on this side of the House that the Premier's motion should be accepted, I shall not offer any further opposition to it, but I certainly felt it my duty at this stage of the proceedings to raise my voice in protest, and to point out that this extra sitting day only means giving the Premier another day to carry out certain schemes which have been entered into by private individuals.

Mr. DUNSFORD (*Charters Towers*): I am one of those members who, this session at any rate, have had very little to say; but I cannot sit here quietly and listen to charges and insinuations being repeatedly made against us by members on the other side, especially those members on the other side who are themselves continually talking. This afternoon we have had five or six speeches from members on the other side—one Minister spoke no less than three times—and we have had five or six speeches from members on this side on a subject in regard to which we are told there should be no dispute at all, because we are all agreed that there should be an additional sitting day. Members on the Government side occupied their time chiefly with making charges or insinuations against members on this side of wasting the time of the House. When a member on the other side—especially a member who is a Minister of the Crown, who is repeatedly making speeches in this House, delivering more speeches here probably than any member on this side—accuses us of wasting time, is not a member like myself justified in charging that hon. member with deliberately wasting the time of the House and of the country? When we find Government supporters who are supposed to be under the control of the Government getting up times out of number, and talk-

ing when they have no need to talk on the subject before the House, or rather not talking on the subject matter before the House, but, as a rule, making charges against members on this side, then I think we are justified in charging them with wilfully wasting the time of the House. And in future I shall not remain silent in my seat while such charges are made. Although it is not a good thing to retaliate—although it is not a good state of things for the country for members on either side to be throwing stones at each other—still I say if there is any justification for that sort of thing it has been given by hon. members opposite, who are constantly hurling those charges at members on this side. While I admit that it is a wise thing to have more sitting days, still I hope that that additional time will not be used wholly and solely for the purpose of passing unnecessary private Bills, and leaving in abeyance necessary and important public measures. We are on the eve of federation, and it is necessary that federation legislation should be passed this session. There are quite a number of important public Bills on the paper that may not be dealt with this session.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They are all public Bills.

Mr. DUNSFORD: They are not all public Bills. They may be in name; but we will not haggle over terms. In the programme of the Government there is necessary legislation and unnecessary legislation. The unimportant and unnecessary legislation is put in the forefront, and I suppose there will be a slaughter of the important and the necessary legislation at the end of the session. I should like to know, also, if we are to understand that the great public works policy of the Government has disappeared.

The PREMIER: You are keeping it back.

Mr. DUNSFORD: Certainly the public works policy of the Government, which was made so much of at the last general election, ought to find a place in their programme; but, instead of that, we have these private railway Bills put in the forefront. I have nothing more to say on this question. I do not desire to speak very frequently this session, but if hon. members opposite will persist in repeating these charges against members on this side, I say it is our duty to get up and reply to those charges.

Question—Appointing Friday an additional sitting day—put and passed.

TOTALISATOR BILL.

FIRST READING.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) presented this Bill, which was read a first time; and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for Friday, the 28th of September.

MOUNT GARNET FREEHOLD MINING COMPANY'S TRAMWAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*) said: This Bill is to authorise the Mount Garnet Freehold Copper and Silver Mining Company, Limited, to construct and maintain a line of tramway from Halpin's Creek to Mount Garnet, connected with the Mareeba to Chillagoe Railway, and for other purposes subsidiary thereto. I may say that the owners of this copper mine at Mount Garnet have experienced great difficulty in the past in carrying on the industry, the principal difficulty being that of access to the mine. They have approached the Government first, and now the Parliament—to get authority to lay down a line of tramway to connect

with the Chillagoe line. This they have found to be absolutely necessary in order to carry on the important industry in which they are engaged. They are asking for no concessions whatever, but for the right to lay down the tramline. They do not ask the public to contribute one shilling towards the expense of laying down this line of railway. They, on the other hand, are bound down by the Government to provide facilities for public traffic to enable the public to utilise this tramway under most reasonable terms, and under the superintendence of the Railway Commissioner. The Commissioner, of course, will have the same power over this syndicate or company as he has over the other companies whose Bills have been submitted to this House—namely, that the line is to be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Commissioner, and be passed by the Chief Engineer, so that the public are safeguarded in that respect; and they are bound to carry for the public under conditions which have already been submitted to the House and discussed by the House, so that I think all the circumstances will go to prove that they are reasonable and fair terms. Now, I understand that the difficulties they have experienced in the past in carrying on the industry has been so great that unless these facilities are afforded they will probably be compelled to shut down the mine.

Mr. REID: You said that about the others.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say that about this, and I say that about all the others. That is the position. We have many instances where it is practically impossible for a company to carry on the mining industry of particular districts unless they are afforded the facilities which we provide in this Bill—that is, simply to make a roadway to the nearest point of the railway line. That roadway is to be a tramway. Now, I think it must be apparent to every hon. member in this House, that it is most important that every facility should be given to those engaged in prosecuting the primary industries of the country. I see no great difference at all in the proposition for the construction of a tramline to give facilities to the miners congregated about Mount Garnet, than I see between that and the Government constructing lines to give facilities for the squatting syndicates, as they are often termed in this House. Here the country has already spent twenty millions of money in providing facilities to enable those engaged in the primary industries to carry them on with some degree of profit and success. I think it will go without saying that unless the country had provided railway facilities, probably the leading industry of this colony—that is, the pastoral industry—would not be in the same flourishing condition that it is to-day, and a large portion of the land now occupied would not be occupied.

Mr. REID: Is it flourishing now?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Unfortunately it is not at the present time, but we hope that before very long these troubles will pass away, and we shall have a time of prosperity again. Now I see no difference in the situation in any respect whatever. The only difference is this, that in the present instance before the House, the country is not called upon to spend one shilling in the construction of this line, nor will the taxpayers of the country be liable to be taxed at all in this respect. I am assured that hon. members who have the mining interests at heart will admit that if the Government have any duty more than another imposed upon them, it is to encourage the mining industry of this country. It is one of their duties, which to my mind stands out most prominently, that they should provide these people with facilities

to carry on this industry, an industry that is the second we have in the colony—next to the pastoral industry in importance; and how any hon. members representing mining constituencies can for one moment oppose a proposal of this sort is more than I can understand. It is a most difficult thing for me to understand, because I take up the position that it is the very first duty of the Government to provide all the necessary facilities to those engaged in the primary industries of the country to carry them on, because the public interests generally—the whole of the public interests, the mercantile interests, and every other interest in the country—depend entirely upon the successful prosecution of our primary industries; and this, to my mind, is one of the most important industries that we have in the colony. I believe that the mining industry will be the first industry in this colony before many years have passed over if the necessary facilities are afforded to those engaged in it to carry it on. Now the nature of this industry is this: Copper mining—and I may say all descriptions of mining in Queensland are of such a nature that they cannot be carried on successfully by individual enterprise or by individual effort. People must combine; they must have money; they must have capital to carry on such industries as the one now before the House—the Mount Garnet Copper Mining Company. There is no difference, to my mind, in a company that is asking for the facility to lay down a tramline to connect with the railway line, than there is between the Brilliant and St. George at Charters Towers asking for a tramway to carry their ore. It is the very same with the coalmines. The position is exactly the same, and I fail to understand why hon. members oppose a proposal of this kind by which so many miners would be employed at remunerative wages, and where the whole of the expenditure involved in the construction of the line will be spent entirely in wages. The distance is only twenty-eight miles, and this company ask for no concession whatever. They simply ask for the right to make the roadway.

Mr. GIVENS: Did this company ask for this Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They did ask for this Bill, and all they ask in it is the right to make a roadway at their own expense. The roadways made by the country, as has already been pointed out, have been made at enormous expense to the taxpayers, and they are still called upon from time to time to make good certain losses that accrue from the working of those roadways. There is nothing of that description about this proposal, because the taxpayers will not be called upon to pay 1s. towards the expense of the construction or of the maintenance of this line, and, moreover, the industry it is intended to assist cannot be carried on without such a connection as is here proposed. I now leave it with hon. members, and especially with those who represent mining constituencies—

Mr. RYLAND: Will you be satisfied with their decision?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I leave it especially with hon. members who represent mining constituencies to help and assist the Government in passing this business.

Mr. McDONALD: Terrible!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I honestly do so, because I am satisfied that the Government are more than justified, in the public interest, in bringing forward such a proposal as this. It has been said that it is to exploit the country and facilitate the operations of the mining speculator, and so on.

MEMBERS of the Labour party: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I point out that the mining industry of this colony will never be developed under any other system than such a system as is proposed in this Bill. I think hon. members will admit that.

MEMBERS of the Labour party: No, no!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think the members of this House must admit that the mining industries of the colony cannot be carried on by individual efforts. People must combine and put money into the industry to develop it, but as soon as they do they are designated syndicators and exploiters, as if they had no other object than to rob the country. These are the terms hurled at them, but I suppose that the public generally can judge for themselves.

Mr. BOWMAN: They ought to be able to judge after Saturday's *Telegraph*.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for South Brisbane, speaking this afternoon, said he was convinced that 75 per cent. of the electors of this colony were opposed to these proposals. I reverse that situation completely, for I am convinced that 80 per cent. of the people of this colony approve of these measures.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONNELL: Why don't you test it?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As a general rule, any measure submitted to this House which arouses any degree of public controversy is met in the country by public meetings held in opposition to what it proposes; but we have no evidence of public meetings held to oppose these measures.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Charters Towers.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was going to add, except at Charters Towers—

Mr. MAXWELL: And Croydon.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Except at Charters Towers, where three attempts were made to get up a public meeting in opposition to these Bills, and each attempt failed ignominiously. Every effort was made to get up an opposition meeting there, and it failed utterly.

Mr. REID: Who told you that?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member has had that information nearly every day in the paper sent down from Charters Towers.

Mr. REID: You saw it in the *Courier*, but nobody believes that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am fully convinced that these measures are approved by the public, and that the Government would be lacking in their duty if they did not assist them, seeing that the industry is languishing in the way it is, and that these enormous mineral resources will never be developed without some such means.

Mr. BROWNE: They will never be developed with them.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: People are willing to put their money into this scheme.

Mr. McDONALD: You have told us that five or six times.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A good wholesome truth is none the worse for being told several times. I know when the hon. gentleman thinks he has a good thing he repeats it a dozen times. Since this session began he has repeated his same old story of opposition, not once but twenty times. He repeats it incessantly. I do not think it necessary for me to say much more upon this Bill. The provisions are exactly similar to the provisions of the Bills which have preceded it, with the exception that this company ask for no concession what-

ever. The other companies asked for certain concessions in connection with the terms of their leases, but this company ask for no concession whatever.

Mr. REID: They must be very foolish not to ask for a concession.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They ask simply for the right to make this roadway to their mine, and I think hon. members opposite would be very foolish if they rejected such an offer. That is where the folly would come in—that is, if they have a *bona fide* interest in the working man at all. The working men cannot be employed in these industries without these combinations of capital.

Mr. GIVENS: There were men before there was capital.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It requires capital to pay for labour, and what we call a company or a syndicate is only the combination of a few men who have a certain amount of money which they are prepared, in this case, to invest for the development of the mineral resources of Mount Garnet. In order to carry out that work, they ask the House to give them the right to construct this roadway without involving the revenue of the country in ls. of expense in any shape or form. This cry of exploiting the country, I think, is pretty well worn out.

Mr. REID: No fear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I see no exploitation in this business at all.

Mr. GIVENS: This is the worst of the lot of them.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is an inevitable step on the part of the company to make this application, or to allow their enterprise to languish and die. I think hon. members of this House will agree with me that it is a wise thing for the Government to support the application of this company in order that their enterprise may be carried, I hope, to their own benefit, and, I am sure, to the benefit and good of the country. I am convinced that the construction of this railway, so far as the country is concerned, can have only one result—that it will be for the general good of the country, and of the working men in particular.

Mr. REID: For the advantage of those who carry it on.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Well, that is questionable. In my time I knew a company—the Peak Downs Copper

[7 p.m.] Mining Company—which was supposed to be—and at that time actually was—one of the most flourishing companies in Queensland, supporting a population of 4,000 to 5,000 men, and everything seemed to be highly satisfactory and prosperous. It was looked upon as a permanently established industry, but only a few years passed and matters turned out quite differently, and to-day this mine is completely deserted. So it must be evident to hon. members that a body of men who invest their capital in enterprises of this kind run great risk. One thing is evident as far as the working men are concerned—and their name is legion—and that is that their pay will be secured. The whole of the money invested in the construction of these lines and in the development of these mines will be spent in labour. Labour will gain everything, and will run no risk whatever. I trust hon. members will see the necessity of this capital being introduced in order to develop the resources of the country, and that they will offer every possible assistance in getting this legislation passed. I have no desire to speak at any great length on this Bill now, because this Bill is similar to other Bills which have been discussed. The public interests are sufficiently safeguarded, and I think it is

impossible to refrain from passing legislation of this description. The hon. member for Charters Towers said that if the Government would confine themselves to the legislation mentioned in the Governor's Speech, he would have no objection in assisting the Government in that respect. But I may point out that this legislation was a prominent feature in the Governor's Speech—that the Government thought it would be necessary to construct certain lines by private enterprise. That was set forth in the Governor's Speech, and in the discussion on the Address in Reply that matter passed with very little discussion. No objections were raised.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Oh, yes; there were many objections raised.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: At any rate there was very little discussion on the matter on the Address in Reply. I am waiting to see what opposition is going to be raised to this measure, because I cannot see what reasonable objection can be taken to it. I think, if hon. members opposite have the interests of the working men at heart, that they will support this measure.

MR. GIVENS: A lot of interest you have in the working men.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have done a great deal more for the working men of this colony than the hon. member. I don't suppose he has ever paid a working man a day's wage in his life.

MR. W. HAMILTON: You would never employ a white man when you can get a kanaka.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Who is the best friend of the working man? The person who finds him employment. I say the inevitable result of this legislation will be to give a vast number of men employment. There is no getting away from that. I trust hon. members will see the wisdom of supporting this measure. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of this Bill.

MR. BROWNE (*Croydon*): I must say that the hon. gentleman has not spoken at any great length on this matter, and I congratulate him on that, but he has given the House very little information on this matter. I agree with the hon. gentleman when he says that he honestly believes that the passage of this Bill will only have one result. I believe that, instead of the Bill being beneficial to the working men of the colony, it will do them irreparable injury, and therefore we on this side are here to try and stop this legislation going through. The hon. gentleman says that there is no concession in the Bill. Well, if that is so, what is the object of bringing this Bill before the House at all? I do not know what the hon. members for Woothakata and Cairns and other mining members think when they realise that the mining people in the districts concerned will have to pay, until 1947, 50 per cent. higher rates than were ruling in 1897; that all the traffic from the Western districts is faced with the barrier of this extra 50 per cent. higher than in 1897. The hon. gentleman told us in very plain terms that if this legislation was not passed that the mines in the district concerned would be shut down. If that is so, then the chairman of the company, in his speech at the half-yearly meeting, told a deliberate lie, because he stated distinctly that they did not care whether the Bill passed or not. Seeing so much has been said about hon. members on this side wasting time in discussing these Bills, I would just ask the Premier why all these Bills are brought in in succession? You, Mr. Speaker, have ruled that these are public Bills, and, if hon. members on the other side believe that the country is with them in trying to pass these Bills, how is it that we have five separate Bills brought in here taking up the time of the

House in discussing every one of them? If the Premier and his colleagues believe that the country is with them in regard to this departure from the policy of the country, how is it that they did not bring in one Bill, something like the Land Grant Railway Bill, or a Companies Bill, laying down the conditions on which the Government would allow any company to build a railway? That would have expedited public business. If that had been done the House and the country would have been satisfied with it, and the whole matter would have been settled. But, instead of that, they have proceeded just as if these had been regarded as private Bills, and we have had five distinct measures brought down. Then, again, as was said earlier in the day, no attempt has been made to push through committee those which have already passed their second readings, but we are simply asked to continue the debate on the second reading of another of these Bills. Why are the Government pottering about these smaller Bills? Why do they not come on with the big gun—the one they want to get through—that is the Normanton-Cloncurry line? Every member of this House, and the public outside, know that such Bills as this and the Callide Railway Bill are comparatively little Bills. The Government would not waste the time of the House, nor make the tremendous efforts they are making, all over the country, in the Press and everywhere else, only that they have that very big "grab"—and it is nothing else but a "grab"—the Cloncurry Railway Bill. Why is not the head of the Government plucky enough, seeing he has stated that he is prepared to stand or fall by these measures, to bring this big measure forward, that for the last three years they have been working all over the country, and in the old country as well, to engineer through? If the hon. gentleman had any desire to expedite public business he would have brought in one big Bill dealing with the question of private railways—or railways built by private companies for public purposes, if hon. members like that better—instead of having all these discussions. Another thing with regard to this Bill is this: that I am sorry the Premier has not kept his promise that he would lay on the table every scrap of information and all correspondence with respect to each of these railways. Now, not one tittle of information regarding this railway has been supplied to hon. members.

THE PREMIER: You have got all the correspondence.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Every scrap of it.

MR. BROWNE: I will appeal to the Clerk of the House or to the House as to who has got that information? I have asked for it several times, and it has been promised on all these Bills, but not a single hon. member can show me amongst his parliamentary papers any correspondence about this particular line. Another matter I wish to allude to is this: Ministers complain that they have a great deal to do in their departments. But they get an extra salary for that. It is none too much, and I am not saying a word about the salary they receive, but hon. members on this side have to go hunting about for information with respect to these Bills. This applies more especially with regard to myself. Since I have had the honour of occupying the position of leader of this party I have felt it my duty to find out all that I could about every one of these measures, and this has entailed a great amount of labour upon me in hunting round for information that was promised by the Premier. I have been able to get some information regarding this Bill, and I may say that that information distinctly contradicts the statement of the Secretary for Railways that if this Bill is not passed

the mines in the Mount Garnet district will be shut down. I have here the *Australian Mining Standard* for 6th September last—the leading mining journal; in fact, the only mining journal in Australia. It contains a synopsis of the report of the third half-yearly meeting of the Mount Garnet Company, and I shall just read a short extract—

At the recent third half-yearly meeting of the Mount Garnet Freehold Company (Q.), held at Melbourne, Mr. C. W. Chapman, chairman of directors, referred to the placing of 25,000 shares in London, 12,500 at 47s. 6d., with the option of 12,500 at 60s. He thought he had done as well as they could expect, considering the stringency of the London market.

He then goes on to give a lot of information about the company which is not worth while wearying the House with. But, regarding this Bill, he uses these words—

Regarding the question of carriage he had no doubt the Mount Garnet Railway Bill would go through the Queensland Parliament, but, should it not, there would be no difficulty. They could, under the Tramway Act, take up leases a chain wide, and make the tramway on about 100 acres. The surveyed route presented no difficulties, but until the provisions of the Bill as to the form under which the line had to be constructed were known no estimate of the cost could be made. For funds to make the road they had 37,500 reserved shares. I think that puts a different aspect on this matter altogether. All the miners in North Queensland are not going to perish through these mines being shut down. With reference to what Mr. Chapman said about the Tramways Act, of course, he was referring to the sections in the Mining Act of 1898, under which the leases have already been taken up. I would like to know why this particular mode of introducing this Bill has been adopted. I can see no other reason for it than that a concession was wanted, the same as in the other cases. This company want to be railway carriers, and to have all the people of that district under their thumb, and to be allowed to charge 50 per cent. higher rates than the State.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They do not want to carry for the public at all.

Mr. McDONALD: Will you accept an amendment to that effect?

Mr. BROWNE: When the hon. gentleman said that these mines would shut down, and all the miners would be idle, either he knew nothing about the matter, or the chairman of the company knows nothing about it. It is right that I should say a word or two with regard to Mr. Chapman's reference to constructing the line under the Tramways Act, meaning, as I have said, to refer to the sections in the Mining Act of 1898 dealing with tramways. The Secretary for Railways appealed to mining members on this side on behalf of the miners in the Mount Garnet district, saying that we should have every sympathy for them. Well, not only the mining members on this side, but every other member on this side, is only too pleased at any time to give every assistance to mining companies, syndicates, or private individuals—whoever they may be—to enable them to develop their mines, so long as they are not getting a monopoly as against the outside public. A few days ago the hon. member for Cairns asked the Secretary for Railways some questions with regard to some leases which had been taken up under the provisions of the Mining Act in the Herberton, Chillagoe, and Mount Garnet districts. The answer, which was given last Thursday, appears in "Votes and Proceedings." The hon. gentleman said—

No. Leases of Crown land have been applied for under section 30, subsection 2, of the Mining Act of 1898, for the purpose of constructing tramways to be used in connection with the mining operations carried on by the applicant on land held by him under mineral lease.

With all due deference to the Secretary for Mines or the Under Secretary, or whoever

framed the answer, there was a bit of quibbling about it. The hon. member for Cairns was perfectly correct. Section 30 of the Act of 1898 contains the same provision as was contained in the old Mining Act, that was, giving people the right to take up leases for mining purposes or for conserving water or for tramways; but there was no regulation or rule laid down by which they could do it. That want has been supplied by clause 94 of the regulations which gives the liberty of taking up mining leases of any length so long as it is not been less than one chain wide to build a tramway on. I think I have consulted with every mining member on this side of the House, and every member interested in the matter, and I say we are perfectly in accord in saying that if the hon. gentleman will safeguard the provision with what would be a very necessary condition—so that the clause would give power to build a tramway for mining purposes only, and not allow the company to be public carriers; we have no objection to that. This allows them, instead of taking an ordinary lease in rectangular shape, to take any length one chain wide; and that is a very good provision. I have seen the Secretary for Mines also the Under Secretary, Mr. MacDonald, and I think what they want to do before any of these leases are granted—I believe they are applied for and recommended—is that there should be a condition reserving the minerals on that one chain, and also giving other people the right to mine on that chain as long as they do not endanger or interfere with the safety of the tramway. Anyone who has been on a goldfield knows what it means to take a monopoly for ten miles or twenty-seven miles through country one chain wide, and prohibiting all men from working on that one chain the whole way. Supposing it went along the cap of the reef! I am certain that if I or any other man in the early days of Croydon or Charters Towers had that privilege of running a tramway like that those fields would not have been developed anything like half what they have been. If people take up a mining lease for a tramway it is simply for tramway purposes. The Minister the other day in conversation said to me it did not give the right to the minerals, but what we want to do is to safeguard the rights of other people.

The PREMIER: We will do that.

Mr. BROWNE: I am very glad to hear the hon. gentleman say that. I take it that they will have to post their applications; and if there is no local objection, or anything of the sort, and it is safeguarded in the way I say there is not a single mining member on this side of the House who is not willing to give any assistance to any mining company to get their properties developed in that way, because that is development without doing any injury to other people, or usurping the rights of other people. I referred just now to the Minister for Railways stating that this gave no concession. In this Bill we know that there is a repetition of the privilege given to the Chillagoe Company, that is, the right to charge 50 per cent. higher rates than those on the Government railways.

The PREMIER: What he meant was no mineral concessions.

Mr. BROWNE: It is very easy for the hon. gentleman to say he meant no mineral concessions. Considering that the place is a freehold I wonder what more mineral concessions he could have.

The PREMIER: They might have wanted more ground.

Mr. BROWNE: I am not referring to mineral concessions; I may refer to them later on. I say that giving them the right to charge 50 per cent. higher rates than those charged on Government lines is a large concession indeed. In 1897,

when the Chillagoe Bill was going through, and hon. members on this side objected to that concession hon. members on the other side said this was only may be, and they would not do it. But only one day last week we saw in the daily papers that the Executive Council had consented to the Chillagoe Company saddling this rate on the people of the district. And this Bill is to give this company the same privilege. I believe this district will be the black country of Queensland—it will be like the great mineral country at home—and unless some future Government comes down with a tremendous sum to induce these people to give up their monopoly, the people of the district will be at the mercy of the company for the next forty-seven years. When I went through the district I was informed by the residents in Herberton, who were in favour of the Chillagoe Company Bill, they had been led to believe—I won't say by the hon. member for Woothakata, but by Ministerialists in the district—that those rates would never be enforced, and that they would never be more than those charged on Government lines. Those people have been "sucked in," to use a vulgar expression. What is the experience of other places? Just as we are on the eve of federation, and the other colonies are using their best endeavours to get out of the hands of syndicates, in regard to railways, we are asked to go into them. About three days since I got forwarded to me the annual report of the Minister for Railways in South Australia, and it shows that after all the expenses they have been put to there the railways paid 3·91 per cent. last year. The Glenelg railway, the last private railway purchased by the South Australian Government, was purchased at the end of last year. The length was twelve miles fifty-five chains, and the Government had to pay £121,435 15s. 6d., or about £10,000 a mile. The department took over the property of the Glenelg Railway Company in December last, and in spite of the amount they had to pay they have been able to make a reduction of 20 per cent. in the passenger fares, thus placing the residents along the line in the same position as regards rates as the persons living along other suburban lines. In addition to that you will find in the Chief Commissioner's report a very cheer-

[7·30 p.m.] ful paragraph, stating that, acting on the instructions of the Government, he is at the present time valuing and getting reports with the view of purchasing the private tramway system round Adelaide. We are often told what state the line will be in when the country has to buy it from the company. On that point hon. members should read the report of the chief mechanical engineer of South Australia. That officer practically admits that he has been "had" by the company. In his report, which is dated the 22nd of August last, he enumerates the different items of rolling-stock, and the condition in which he found them. He says—

I find that the engines, speaking generally, are in a worse state of repair than I concluded was the case when making the examination prior to purchase. Engines which, from the history given to me, I considered would, with slight repairs, be likely to run for two or three years, must be taken in hand to have the boilers opened up, and a large sum of money will be required to be spent to put them in good condition. In respect to the carriages, four, known to the company as excursion carriages, as well as the nine open goods wagons—which are worn out—I had at once to condemn as unsafe for traffic, and they will be broken up.

That is the sort of property the Government had to buy back from a company which, I suppose, was one of those philanthropic companies which it was necessary to bring in to rescue South Australia, and to put bread into the mouths of the

working men of the colony. Further on, the chief mechanical engineer states that the brakes to the carriages are no good, that they are not all the same kind of brake, and that the carriage bodies are too wide, and he recommends that the Government should at once go in for a large expenditure for the renewal of rolling-stock. We have often been told that it is a great thing that at the end of fifty years the Government will be able to buy the railways which it is proposed to authorise these companies to construct. But what advantage will that be, if the lines and rolling-stock are in the condition described in the report from which I have just quoted? Then, again, it has been pointed out that the mineral concessions will be practically worked out by that time, or will be left in such a condition that a large expenditure will be required for the reopening of the mines. Those arguments have been pooh-poohed in this House, but here we have an instance in an adjoining colony where the very things which hon. members on this side have predicted will happen with regard to these railways have actually come to pass. I am not going to dwell much longer on this subject, but I would just emphasise this point—that what I am stating are facts. The junior member for Mackay has often referred to statements made by hon. members on this side as being simply assertions. What I am now giving are facts—extracts from the report of the Chief Commissioner for Railways in South Australia.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Last year's report?

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, last year's report, issued on the 9th of August this year. Three contentions have been advanced by hon. members on this side during the debates on previous measures of this character. I am not going to repeat myself on this occasion, or to repeat the arguments used in previous debates; I want, if I can, to be, like the Secretary for Railways, original. But I think there is one matter I may allude to just now. Three contentions have been continually put forward by hon. members on this side of the House, and they have been just as strenuously opposed by hon. members opposite. One of those contentions is that the concessions granted by this House to these companies, and reported upon by officers of the State, will be used to sell in London. The second contention is that the opinion of the Queensland Government, and the opinion of their experts, will be used to beguile the public. That has been contended repeatedly, and we have been challenged for proof. Further, it has been argued that the names and influence of members of Parliament will be used for that purpose. From very recent occurrences I think I can prove those contentions up to the hilt. A matter was referred to in the House this afternoon which is in the mouth of everybody about Brisbane—that is, the matter of the North Chillagoe Mines Company. I wish to make myself very clear on this point. It has often been said by members on the other side that the Opposition, and especially the leader of the Opposition, may do anything that will bring discredit on the Government in the eyes of the people. I have never subscribed to that doctrine, and I am not going to do so on this occasion. In any remarks I make on this subject I desire it to be distinctly understood that I am not implicating the Secretary for Mines, the Under Secretary for Mines, the Government Geologist, or any officer of the Government. On the contrary, I say straight out that last week, when I first found out this matter, I saw the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government, in his capacity as Secretary for Mines, and also other officers in the department. Since then I have used every endeavour to obtain information on the subject,

and I must say that the Minister and the officers of the department have done their best, from the time this thing became a scandal, to stamp it out.

The PREMIER: I told you first about it myself.

Mr. BROWNE: Oh, no.

The PREMIER: Did you know about it before that?

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, I saw the skeleton advertisement in the *Sydney Bulletin*, a paper which, as hon. members know, circulates throughout the whole of Australia, but I did not get the full prospectus until yesterday. Then I also heard that the skeleton advertisement had appeared in the *Australian Mining Journal*. I may say here that I do not know Mr. Dunstan, and that I have never met him, but from all I have heard of him he is a first-class officer. The statements made in this prospectus inclined me to take one of two views. One is, that Mr. Dunstan had been betraying his trust and giving a report which was not strictly in accordance with facts; and the other, which I thought was a great deal more likely, was that the promoters of this Chillagoe Mines Company had been 'trying to use him for their own purposes. When I mentioned the matter to the Secretary for Mines, I found that he had taken the same view of it, and that he was taking steps, not only to protect any officer of the department, which it was his duty to do, but also to protect the outside public from those people. It is only right that I should say that, because if blame is to be thrown on anybody else I shall not be sparing in apportioning that blame. But I do not wish to make use of the incident for political purposes. The full prospectus of the company sets forth that the company is the North Chillagoe No Liability Company, and that it has valuable mines in the marvellous Chillagoe district. The names of the provisional directors are given. The provisional directors are:—Sydney: Hon. A. J. Gould, M.L.C.; Harrie Wood, Esq., late Under Secretary for Mines and Agriculture, vice-president New South Wales Chamber of Mines; Patrick Duffy, Esq., merchant, New South Wales and Queensland; Robert Mackenzie Jolly, Esq., merchant, Sydney and Hobart. Brisbane: Hon. F. T. Brentnall, M.L.C.; Hon. John Archibald, M.L.C., Warwick, A. Melbourne: Alex. Campbell, Esq., chairman directors, Block 10, Broken Hill. Now, these are pretty influential names, and I may say, as I will show later on, that these very names have been used, and the report of the Assistant Government Geologist has been falsified and deductions drawn from it which should not have been drawn for the purpose of deluding the public. And I may say that the very first page of this prospectus shows that the contention of hon. members on this side, that what was wanted in connection with these concessions was to float them on the London market, is borne out. I will read from the statement on the front page of the prospectus. It says, "This is practically a large development company on easy terms, in which shareholders will participate in the profits made during development. Shareholders also become the original shareholders or proprietors, to participate in profits to be obtained by the anticipated flotation in the English market or otherwise." It is to bolster that up that those names and the name of the expert of the Queensland Mines Department have been used. Now, in the *Telegraph* on Saturday that report appears with the parts that had been garbled.

Mr. Dawson: With the interpolations.

Mr. BROWNE: With interpolations. I know from what I have heard that most hon. members have read that with a great deal of interest, and I know that a great many people outside have done so. In this morning's paper the report

appears signed by Mr. Rands, the Government Geologist. Now it will be noted that there is a slight discrepancy in these two. In the one that appears in the *Courier* you will notice that there is a tabulated statement of assays, which did appear in Mr. Dunstan's report, but which does not appear in this prospectus in any way. I think it was only a mistake, and that Mr. Rands, in looking for errors in the report, did not notice that this was omitted. Now the tabulated statement bears materially on a great amount of serious things that are in this prospectus. I think it is just as well for hon. gentlemen to know it. I may say that this table appeared in the *Australian Mining Standard*, and in fact it appeared in all the Sydney and Melbourne papers. There is a synopsis of this report which is even worse than what appears in the prospectus itself. Here we have a whole lot of what are supposed to be extracts from Mr. Dunstan's report. There is one in particular I will draw attention to—it was the first that attracted my notice. It says, "A rich goldmine within a rich copper-mine at Tartana Hill—see Dunstan's report." Now that appears in the main prospectus in even worse form than that, and whatever may be said about the provisional directors not having noticed these blunders or errors, when they allowed deliberate and intentional falsifications of that report—if they did not wade through all Mr. Dunstan's report, as I contend they should have done before they allowed their names to go upon the prospectus—then I say there is something here that should not have escaped their notice. At the end of this report they give more of the so-called Dunstan's report, and which has been proved was not his report at all. We have here at page 19 a *précis* of "Logical deductions from the foregoing reports. The facts declared by the Government officials of Queensland." Then it goes on—

Undoubtedly if the mineral bodies of ore, *vide* B. Dunstan, Esq., F.G.S., Assistant Government Geologist Queensland. Copper contents: Minimum bulk averages 7 per cent. A higher average product can be maintained by judiciously mixing high-grade ores (*see* table of analysis in schedule). Gold contents: High. A rich goldmine within a rich copper mine at Tartana Hill (*see* Dunstan's report).

Now, I say, and can prove, that there is not one single scintilla of evidence in Dunstan's report to justify any of these assertions being put on the prospectus, and they are put forth to try and delude the public of this colony and people in the old country. Now, as a matter of fact, here are the different assays—the tabulated statement of which appears at the end of Dunstan's report, which is published in the *Courier* to-day. It contains a list of twenty-six assays, and out of these twenty-six assays twenty-one are returned as containing "traces of gold." Now a trace of gold, I may say, is always defined by assayers as something below 7 gr. to the ton, something almost impossible to see by any known process at the present time; and, as I say, out of the twenty-six assays, twenty-one contain less than 7 gr. There is one that contains 4 dwt. 13 gr., and another 1 dwt. 7 gr. There are five altogether varying from 4 dwt. 13 gr., and taking an average of the whole twenty-six assays it gives an average of about 13 gr. to the ton; and this is "a rich goldmine within a rich copper-mine." And then I see they introduce into the *précis*, which they did not in the advertisement, the Tartana Hill matter. We will see how that pans out. There are twelve assays, eight of which contain traces of gold.

Mr. Dawson: Less than 7 gr.?

Mr. BROWNE: Less than 7 gr. One is 1 oz. 2 dwt. 17 gr. to the ton. They leave out altogether Mr. Dunstan's remarks about that 1 oz. Mr. Dunstan says in regard to that, "On

the data furnished above, and supposing all the gold in the sample that come from it—a shoot, say, 10 feet wide—would yield at the rate of 1 oz. 2 dwt. 17 gr. per ton.” Admitting, however, that 1 oz. 2 dwt. 17 gr., we have another which yields 4 dwt. 13 gr., another 3 dwt. 6 gr., and another 1 dwt. 7 gr. Taking the average of those twelve assays we get 2 dwt. 13 gr.; if you give them the whole benefit of these twelve assays, and they are made from the pick of material, it would give a return, even supposing the gold was all there, of 2 dwt. 13 grs.—a rich goldmine within a rich copper-mine. (Opposition laughter.) The most amusing is that the gentleman who prepared this left that out, and I think in doing that he over-reached himself. Then, on page 9, sandwiched in with Mr. Dunstan’s report, are a series of assays which anyone would be led to suppose had been supplied by Mr. Dunstan, but they are nothing of the sort. We find that these samples were assayed by a gentleman who signs himself “Alexander Orr, F.G.S., Analyst,” and dates his report “Analytical Laboratory and Assay Office, 109 Pitt street, Sydney, 11th April.” And yet these assays are deliberately put into this prospectus as coming from Mr. Dunstan. But these assays are even worse in their results than the others. There are thirty-two assays noted; one goes at the rate of 8 dwt. 4 gr. to the ton, one 15 gr. to the ton, two at the rate of 9 gr. to the ton, one a trace to the ton, and twenty-seven go nil—nothing at all. The average of these thirty-two assays gives a trifle over 10 gr. to the ton, and this is what these gentlemen have the audacity to try and make a Queensland Government Geologist tell the world is “a rich goldmine within a rich copper-mine.”

Mr. JACKSON: They want to attract capital to this colony.

Mr. BROWNE: They do want to attract capital. I want now to quote from a leading article in the *Mining Standard*, printed right opposite this prospectus, to prove the injury very nearly inflicted upon the mining industry and the Mines Department of this colony by the publication of these false statements. There is a leading article here in the issue of 6th September under the heading “The North Chillagoe Mine.” It starts by referring to Mr. Jack’s report, and, I may say in passing, that these people have not been content with trying to do Mr. Dunstan an injury, but they have also gone behind the back of a man like Mr. Jack in trying to manipulate his report. I have here Mr. Jack’s report on the Chillagoe Mines, Bulletin No. 9, issued in 1897. I may say that the extracts given from it in this prospectus are correct, but they have been manipulated the same as the rest. They have taken out pieces where, if they had inserted the whole paragraph, the context would have led to a very different conclusion from that which may be arrived at from the pieces used. This leading article gives a description of this group of mines, it gives Mr. Jack’s opinion, an account of Mr. Dunstan having been sent up by the Mines Department, and then refers to the prospectus of this company, to the work the Chillagoe Company have been doing, and what is likely to be the result. I am not going to inflict the whole of the article upon hon. members, but I draw their attention specially to this—

It is expected that matters will be booming at Chillagoe, and that all Chillagoe shares will greatly rise in value.

I do not think they will, after the little explanation we have had.

It will be remembered that Mr. Dunstan formerly held the position which is now held by the Rev. Father Curran, so that our New South Wales readers will have

no doubt of his capability. The terms, as will be seen from the prospectus, are very moderate, and there is an excellent prospect of floating the mine in London, when its value is proved, for a much larger sum than is now asked for.

I ask hon. members’ special attention to this—

The provisional directors are well known in the mining world, who would not be associated with any project without making an inquiry, and we are informed that they and their friends have already promised to subscribe for a large number of contributing shares.

Well, I will ask any unprejudiced man in this House if men are justified in signing their names to a prospectus like that without the facts being laid before them. We know the falsity of it and the way in which the reports of the Government geologists have been manipulated, and all the rest of it, and I say they ought to have made inquiry into it before they allowed their names to be used, as those of prominent members of the Parliament of Queensland, to boom a property like that. I am very sorry to see it, because they are men who have reputations of a different sort. One is a gentleman who I have been surprised lately to learn is mixed up in mining speculations. I had thought he was engaged rather in laying up treasures above than in looking for them below. (Laughter.) The other provisional director, Mr. Archibald, I have stated before in this House, and repeat now, knows as much about the mining laws and the mining industry of Queensland as any man in it. He has been an officer in the Mines Department, and as warden for Croydon I have borne testimony in this House to his capability and fitness for the position. I say that a man like that, who knows the mining industry of Queensland and the working of the Mines Department—

Mr. J. HAMILTON: He is one of the most honourable men in Queensland.

Mr. BROWNE: I am not saying one word as to whether he is honourable or not. No matter how honourable he may be, a gentleman with his knowledge of mining affairs, and the duties of the mining department, and knowing that a young man like Mr. Dunstan—a clever young man, I believe—has his reputation to make, and knowing that his reputation and the reputation of the Mines Department of Queensland are likely to be damaged by the publication of a false prospectus with which they were connected—I say that gentleman, with all his knowledge, should have satisfied himself that everything was correct before he allowed his name to be used to foist a thing like this upon the public.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I guarantee he will explain it satisfactorily.

Mr. BROWNE: I am not saying whether he can explain it satisfactorily or not. I heard that certain gentlemen withdrew from it when they found a mistake had been made. A whole lot of people get out of a thing when they find a mistake has been made.

Mr. ANNEAR: He has made his treasures on earth. (Laughter.)

Mr. BROWNE: No, they are looking for them under the earth.

Mr. DAWSON: Three feet above the earth.

Mr. BROWNE: In our Act of 1891 we have a provision which, to a certain extent, makes a director responsible for any misstatement in a prospectus signed by him, but it does not go as far as the English Companies Act does. I believe that under the English law at present anyone signing a false provisional prospectus, and allowing it to go forth to the public, is not only held pecuniarily responsible to anyone who is proved to have lost through it, but he is liable also to a criminal prosecution.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: Yes for misrepresentation.

Mr. BROWNE: How much misrepresentation would satisfy the omnivorous appetite of the hon. member for Mackay, if there is not enough of it in that prospectus? A phrase which followed the boom in mining in Western Australia, to describe certain people, was "a liar, an adjective liar, and a mining expert." Well, the gentleman who manipulated that prospectus deserves champion honours, and to be placed in the third class in that category. I do not see what more misrepresentation can be wanted. I am not going to deal at

p.m.] any further length on this matter, but I deemed it my duty to bring these matters before the House and the country. I say that these companies, in most instances, only want these concessions in order to float their business on the London market. That has been done time and again, and opinions of experts have been obtained for this purpose. Hon. members on this side have been taunted with making insinuations and statements which they cannot substantiate; but here we have our statements substantiated right off. Mining experts—officers of the Mines Department—have been dragged into the business, and names of prominent members of this Parliament have been flaunted before the public in a prospectus which, on the face of it, is distinctly untrue, to say the least of it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Not on the face of it.

Mr. BROWNE: Not on the face of it, but all through it—from the top of its head to the bottom of its feet.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Anybody who compares the two documents can see the discrepancy at once.

Mr. BROWNE: Of course, we will be told that it is pure business. They are all following the eleventh commandment. The old one was: "Do unto others as you would they would do unto you." But now it is: "Do others, for fear they will do you."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you say that certain members of Parliament knew what was falsely stated in that prospectus?

Mr. BROWNE: I do not say that; but I say they should have known what was done before they put their names on the prospectus. Speaking for myself, I have been asked time after time that I should allow shares to be allotted to me and have my name placed on prospectuses, but I always refused, because I did not care about being mixed up in these matters. I am not ashamed to say that if I have a pound to spare I would put it into mining.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Into a syndicate?

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, I am in one now. But I say that the people of Queensland have been deluded in these prospectuses, where M.L.A.'s names appear. Before I put my name to any prospectus I would have every line read over to me. I do not believe in making groundless assertions, but many hon. members have stated this afternoon that they know what has been going on—things that I had heard previously myself. I hope it is not the case.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I think it should be publicly stated.

Mr. BROWNE: I am going to use my best endeavours to try and sift the matter, and, if what I have heard is true, I will be manly enough to give the whole of the particulars and the names of those concerned in the matter.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWNE: I cannot say any more than that. I have already dealt with the statement of the hon. gentleman that there are no concessions in this Bill; that this company only want a few miles of tramway to carry their stuff from the mine. If they have got £37,500 in shares for

the purpose of building this line, why do they want nine months before they start the line and three years before they complete it? Then they have another concession in that they can build branch lines. The hon. members for Cairns and Woothakata and others know the character of the country through which this line will pass. Now, the Chillagoe Company have also the right to build branch lines for a length of ten miles each. If this company has this length of time in which to build this tramway, and has the right also to build branch lines, it is simply ridiculous to say that they only want this line to carry their ore to and fro. Then with regard to the traffic and interest. How are we treating the taxpayers over this? A large amount of money has been spent on the Cairns Railway, and I distinctly say that they are being defrauded of their just rights. Heavy interest is being paid on railway construction for a certain distance, and the construction of a line further into the interior would help to recoup the Government for the interest to be paid. But the first section has been handed over to a private company, and they are allowed to charge 50 per cent. higher than on the ordinary lines, so that the people have been defrauded of the interest they should have got from the payable portion of the line in that part of the country. I have very little more to say on this Bill, but, without using any threats, I think the hon. gentleman might as well knock off these Bills from the business-paper. There are many Bills which we are anxious to get through—Bills which are very necessary for the welfare of the people, such as the Electoral Reform Bill, the Shops and Factories Bill, and the Early Closing Bill. There are many measures which we are anxious to see pass—measures which we have been fighting for for years, and trying to get through. Hon. members opposite are trying to discredit us in the eyes of the people who have sent us here by telling them that we are blocking these measures. Now, I want to make myself perfectly clear, by saying that that sort of argument has no influence upon me. I say here to-night to all the workers who have supported me for years past, anxious as I am to see that legislation passed; anxious as I am to see an Electoral Reform Bill passed; anxious as I am to see that measure which the hon. member for Kennedy so strongly advocates passed—that is the old age pensions scheme; anxious as I am to see an amended Factories Bill, and an Early Closing Bill passed; still, at the same time, great as would be the benefit to the people of the colony from the passing of these measures, I believe the incalculable mischief that would be done by the passing of these private railway Bills would so much outweigh that benefit that I am perfectly prepared to take the responsibility, and I believe that I shall be only doing my duty to the workers who sent me here, if I do all I possibly can to prevent these Bills passing. With regard to the charge of wasting time, I would just conclude by quoting the words of a man, whom every member in this House must recognise as the equal of even the hon. member for Mackay. The man I speak of is that great English statesman, Edmund Burke.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: He was killed by the Labour party in Paris.

Mr. BROWNE: It does not matter whom he was killed by. I suppose he had heard that the hon. gentleman was going to deliver his celebrated discourse on the French Revolution, and went to Paris to hear it, and the hon. gentleman killed him. These are his words on the functions of an Opposition—

Criticism is the special and legitimate function of an Opposition, and it is clearly they, and not the Government, who must determine how much time will be

required to discharge it properly. Though not one vote is gained, a good speech has its effect. Even if an obnoxious measure is not defeated it may be materially altered. Though we cannot outvote them we can outargue them. They shall not do wrong without its being shown to them and to the world.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: There is one thing the hon. member might have added to Mr. Burke's peroration, and that is: "Our side can outtalk the other side."

Mr. KIDSTON: On Thursday afternoons.

The PREMIER: This Bill, as I understand it, is a Bill "to authorise the Mount Garnet Freehold Copper and Silver Mining Company, Limited, to construct and maintain a line of tramway from Halpin's Creek to Mount Garnet, connecting with the Mareeba to Chillagoe Railway, and for other purposes subsidiary thereto." This is one thing that the hon. gentleman spoke about. He also spoke about tramways and the prospectus of the North Chillagoe Company. I do not find fault with him for speaking on either of those subjects, but he has certainly given a wide range for his followers to follow.

Mr. BROWNE: I think they were all perfectly pertinent to the Bill.

The PREMIER: The hon. member's remarks with reference to the prospectus of the North Chillagoe Company would apply to many mines in the colony.

Mr. McDONALD: He wanted to make a comparison, and he did it very well.

The PREMIER: No one objects to mining leases, and what hon. members opposite have objected to mostly is the area of those leases. So far as the North Chillagoe prospectus is concerned, the Mines Department deserve the credit of exposing that.

Mr. BROWNE: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It is not the first mining prospectus which has been published in Queensland which has been misleading and quite untrue, but it was Mr. Dunstan's superior officer who called attention to the way in which his report had been misquoted, and had the thing exposed. I hope no one will lose any money over it. I understand that the directors in Queensland had received some application money, but they have informed me that they have returned it all, and that they wrote to the Press next day stating that they had believed that Mr. Dunstan's report was published verbatim. For a long time past the Mines Department has been asked to allow its officers to report on mines. I have set my face against it as much as possible, but we have been told that it would help the colony, and that they only wanted to get true reports.

Mr. TURLEY: Like the railways.

The PREMIER: They have always said that the Government geologists are known to be good and reliable men, and it would assist them very much to get reports from them, but I can assure the House that in future any report that is furnished by any officer of the Mines Department will be published by the Department at the same time.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Concerning the tramways lease, I am very glad to know that the hon. gentleman agrees with the Government in one thing. Those leases have been applied for under a certain section of the Mining Act, and they will only get a lease to build the tramway. The leases will not contain any provision to mine beneath the surface of the leases—much the same as in a mining homestead lease.

Mr. BROWNE: I would like that to be stated.

The PREMIER: It will be stated in the lease. No lease has yet been issued; in fact, this is the first application we have received, and it will be clearly stated in the lease that the

company have only the surface rights. All mining rights will be reserved for anyone who wishes to mine under them, provided they pay compensation for any damage done, the same as in a mining homestead. It will be a good thing for Queensland, as these twenty-seven miles of tramway will assist these mines to be developed. We are asked why we do not give the Mount Garnet Company a lease in the same way, and we are also asked why we do not bring in one Bill instead of five measures. Well, if we had brought in one Bill we should at once have been accused of having done something underhand and of having something to conceal, and that we were not acting straightforwardly in not bringing in Bills dealing with each separate proposal. I think we have adopted the straightforward course in acting as we have done. As to giving a tramway lease, the company would only have the right to run their own minerals over the line, and we insist upon their carrying goods and passengers.

Mr. BROWNE: At 50 per cent. higher rates than the State.

The PREMIER: I shall come to that. At present there is no other important discovery at Mount Garnet, except the Mount Garnet Freehold, but I know it is a very valuable property. I have seen the mine and the workings, and certainly this line will enable those people to work their mine much longer, and to greater advantage, than if they had no railway. The company is given no monopoly. The Government can at any time build another line to Mount Garnet, if they think it will pay them to do so.

Mr. TURLEY: What about Thomas's line, which cost you about 50 per cent. more to buy it than it was worth?

The PREMIER: At the present time I only know of the one mine at Mount Garnet which you can call a mine. A great number of leases have been taken up, but I do not know of any important discoveries beyond Mount Garnet. These people own the mine themselves, and I think it would be unwise for the Government to build a railway to Mount Garnet for the sake of one mine; I don't think it would pay the Government to do it. I don't believe the majority of hon. members would vote for its construction by the Government.

Mr. FITZGERALD: Give them a tramway under the Tramways Act.

The PREMIER: We want the public to benefit by the line as well as the company. There is a lot of people living there, and I dare say more will go there, and it is only right that they should have the benefit of using the railway instead of continuing to pay £10 or £12 a ton from Mareeba. We can only grant permission under the Mining Act for the company to build a tramway to carry the product of the mines. In this case we seek to give permission to the people who own the mines to construct the railway—nothing more. The members on this side will not always be over here. Some day the leader of the Opposition will be here, and then if he thinks it will be a good thing for the country to build these railways he will build them.

Mr. BROWNE: Build another one alongside this!

The PREMIER: Why not? The railways now are only opening up the country and settling a population, and there will be a better chance of any line he may construct by and by paying than there is now. The member for the district admits that he would not vote for the Government to build a line from Normanton to Cloncurry, and why should the Government build that line? The Cloncurry district has been open to my knowledge over thirty years, and I believe more people were there thirty years ago

than now. Hon. members talk about the injustice of this 50 per cent. extra charge. I may remind the hon. member for Croydon that the Government charged 50 per cent. higher when he came to the House.

Mr. BROWNE: And one of the first things I did was to get it reduced.

The PREMIER: Fifty per cent. more was charged on the lines in that part of the colony, because they cost so much to build, and to work and maintain, that the Commissioner thought he was justified in charging that amount more than on the railways in the Southern part of the colony.

Mr. BROWNE: That did not apply to the Croydon line. It was cheaply constructed and worked.

The PREMIER: Look at the cost of coal there. In Brisbane it is 7s. 6d. a ton—it used to be 6s. 6d.; at Normanton the price is 59s.; and at Burketown, 60s. a ton.

Mr. BROWNE: The Minister for Railways will tell you that they don't burn coal there.

The PREMIER: Whatever fuel they use it is very much more costly. At Mount Garnet they will have to pay freight to the Government on their coal to Mareeba, and they will have to pay freight on their coal to the Chillagoe Company—they will have to pay two freights besides the steamer freight.

Mr. BROWNE: Would not the Government have to do the same?

The PREMIER: Certainly. And you can see why railways do not pay, because, in the case of Government railways, influence is brought to bear to reduce the rates so as to make them the same all round. If a private company had built the Cairns railway they would have had to charge ten times the present rates.

Mr. TURLEY: No company would have done it.

The PREMIER: I don't think they would. Instead of that we were paying £50,000 a year out of the money found by the taxpayers of the colony to meet the interest on the cost of the Cairns Railway until the Chillagoe Company relieved us to a certain extent. I believe it will relieve us more by and by, and in time it may pay working expenses. The district was dead before the present company came there to build the line.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is not the statement of the present Chief Secretary.

The PREMIER: I know of my own knowledge that those copper mines were taken up ten years before the company got the right to build the railway, and the district was practically abandoned. One little mine was being worked; I saw the whole of those mines, including Muldiva, which was going to turn out a great thing, and I know that the copper mines were then abandoned.

Mr. GIVENS: They were abandoned because the price of copper fell.

The PREMIER: When permission was given to the Chillagoe Company to build the line, copper was £50 a ton; now it is £74 a ton.

Mr. McDONALD: There is a big ring controlling the market.

The PREMIER: There is a great demand for copper now. I say that the Government would not be justified in building the line. We have built lines to two copper mines already—one to Mount Perry and another to Peak Downs—and our experience in those cases would not justify us in building another railway of this kind. I say it is a speculation which no Government should be prepared to go into—building railways into mineral districts, either copper or tin, where there is such a big rise and fall. I think the Chillagoe Company, in building that line, did a very good thing for Queensland. At all events they have made that district a live district. They

have opened up their mines, and a great number of other mines have been taken up and worked—many of which had previously been abandoned. This Mount Garnet Mine, great mine though it is, I do not think would have been worked to-day but for the Chillagoe Company, and it was the building of the Chillagoe line that commenced to reopen the whole of the mines of that district. Then there is this tin company, which has the right to build a tramway by using the Chillagoe line—Mr. Dickson has got the leases. I am sure that if the concession had not been made to build that tramway he would not have gone on with the mines at all. With regard to Herberton, there have been a great number of mines taken up and abandoned during the last twenty years, and all the shows taken up by that Adelaide gentleman were old abandoned shows. The charge cannot be laid at the door of the Mount Garnet Company that they wished to issue a prospectus. We know that the mine has been floated and has been worked, and they are only waiting for water to commence smelting. At present they must use charcoal to smelt, because they cannot get coke.

Mr. GIVENS: They let a contract for charcoal not long ago.

The PREMIER: If the mine is the big property they think it is they will want to use a great deal of charcoal, and I think they would soon exhaust all the timber in that district. To

make their mines profitable they [8.30 p.m.] will want to get railway communication of some sort, and they desire to get permission to construct the line on the terms of this Bill. If they do not get that permission the country will be the sufferer.

Mr. BROWNE: They can build a tramway under the Mining Act.

The PREMIER: If they did that they could only use the tramway to carry their own produce, and the people living at Mount Garnet would not be able to travel by the tramway, or to get their stores carried on it.

Mr. BROWNE: The people in that district are decidedly against the Bill.

The PREMIER: I do not think so; I have not heard of any meeting being held at Mount Garnet to protest against the Bill.

Mr. DAWSON: What about the election at which the Ministerial candidate was defeated?

The PREMIER: What election?

Mr. DAWSON: The election at Cairns.

The PREMIER: This line is not to be built for the benefit of the people of the Cairns. It is to be built for the benefit of the people of Mount Garnet, and I have never heard of the people there getting up meetings to protest against the construction of the railway. I know that two attempts were made at Charters Towers to get up meetings against syndicate railways, but they were not successful. There was also a meeting held at Croydon, and among those present I recognised a well-known person in political matters—namely, Mr. Aldridge—and a Mr. Rafferty.

Mr. DAWSON: There was a meeting of 7,000 people in Lissner Park, Charters Towers, last Sunday.

The PREMIER: It has not been reported in the daily papers, and I believe that if a meeting of 7,000 persons had been held at Charters Towers to denounce these railways we should have heard something about it. However, I am inclined to agree with the Secretary for Railways that instead of 75 per cent. of the people of the colony being opposed to the construction of these lines 75 per cent. of them are in favour of their construction by private enterprise. We on this side of the House represent constituencies as well as hon. members on the other side, and we shall have to go before

our constituents some day. It may be this year, next year, or the following year, and when we do go before them we are quite prepared to take the responsibility of our action, just the same as the leader of the Opposition is. I have working men in my electorate, just the same as the hon. member for Flinders has in his electorate, and if they are not satisfied with me they will turn me out. I am quite prepared to go before them at any time, and I think every member on this side is quite prepared to go before his constituents.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: But so long as we are in the majority, I do not see why we should go to the country. We are satisfied that we have the people of the colony behind us, and it would be senseless for us to go to the country with the majority we have in the House. But, as I have said, I am prepared to go at any time, and when we do go, if the majority of the people of the colony think our actions are wrong or are not in the interest of the country, they will turn us out. At the present time I am satisfied that we have a large majority of the people of the colony in favour of our proposals. What is the feeling in Normanton and Cloncurry about the Cloncurry line? What is the feeling in Burketown about the Burketown line? And what is the feeling in Gladstone, at Callide Creek, at Glassford Creek, and at Mount Garnet about their railways? The people in all those places want their lines passed by the House, and they are much more concerned in the matter than the rest of the people of the colony. The Government believe that they are doing a good thing for the colony in inducing these people to build the lines proposed. The lines will open districts for which no Government could bring forward railway proposals with any hope of passing successfully. Those districts have been neglected shamefully in the past, and if any outside capitalists are prepared to come here and help us to push the colony along we ought certainly to give them every facility to do so. I maintain that no monopoly is given to any company by passing these Bills, because the day after to-morrow, the Government could, if they thought it wise, build another railway in the district. But at the present time there is no justification for the Government building these railways. There are mineral deposits there, and we wish to see them worked, and we believe that the building of these lines would encourage the working of those deposits. I have as much right to speak for the miners of the colony as the leader of the Opposition. I have done as much for them as the hon. member, and I say that the best thing you can do for the miners is to give them plenty of work at good wages. In no place has a miner a better chance of getting good wages than in Queensland. He can also take up land, and possibly sell it to the companies. If smelting works are established, and railway communication is provided, then he can send his ores to be smelted. At present nearly all the ore from Broken Hill is sent to Port Pirie to be smelted.

Mr. McDONALD: The State are erecting their own smelting works there.

The PREMIER: I believe the Government works there are erected. I know of one place there that has been closed up, because they cannot get sufficient ore to smelt. The present rate of carriage for ore is 1d. per ton per mile, so that for a distance of twenty-eight miles it would be 2s. 4d., and under this Bill the company can at the outside charge only 3s. 6d. for the same distance.

Mr. BROWNE: That is three times what they charge on the State railways in the other colonies.

The PREMIER: No; they charge the same rate, except, I think, from Broken Hill.

Mr. BROWNE: South Australia and New South Wales have both the same rates.

The PREMIER: I think not. Our rates are the same as those of New South Wales, but I know that in South Australia they are carrying ore at a very low rate, otherwise the ore would not be sent by rail. I maintain that if any more mines are discovered in the Mount Garnet district, as I believe there will be, the people who have those mines will have a better show of making them pay if this railway is built than they would if there was no railway, or if there was only a tramway constructed under the existing law, because in that case the company owning the tramway could not carry their ores. Under the present Bill the company will be compelled to take ore from other people. Then, again, the more railways we can add to the Mareeba line, the better chance there will be of that line paying. I know that my hon. friend the member for Cairns is prepared to make a big speech on this subject, and I do not wish to keep the House sitting all night. I dare say he will contend that the proper way to build this line of railway is from Mareeba to Atherton, *via* Herberton to Mount Garnet.

Mr. McDONALD: Is your conscience pricking you?

The PREMIER: No, it is not. I hope to be able to assist the Secretary for Railways to put a Bill through this session providing for a railway from Mareeba to Atherton. I assisted to pass such a railway five years ago, but, unfortunately, the Upper House did not pass it. When we get to Atherton there is a big range to cross, and if the Mount Garnet people have to wait until they get railway communication *via* Atherton, I am very much afraid their patience will be exhausted. I admit there are great possibilities in that line. There is an enormous quantity of good land—perhaps the finest piece of land in the whole of Australia, and in a temperate climate; and I am anxious to see it thrown open when the railway is finished to Atherton. But I think that, if the Mount Garnet Company have to wait until that line is finished by the Government from Mareeba to Mount Garnet, the Mount Garnet Company will have to wait a very long time.

Mr. BROWNE: They have not to build it for three years.

The PREMIER: That is their business. If they like to wait so long before building the line we cannot be blamed for it, but I say the Government could not possibly build the line for the next six or seven years.

Mr. DAWSON: Why?

The PREMIER: Because there are so many other lines that require to be built. The hon. member for Charters Towers thinks the Bowen line ought to be first.

Mr. DAWSON: I do not know where you got that information.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Croydon thinks that the Georgetown line should be built first, and I am inclined to agree with him. The hon. member for Cairns thinks there is no line in the colony ought to be built before the Mareeba line.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about the Richmond line?

The PREMIER: That, I think, ought to be built, too. Then the hon. member for Mackay thinks that his railway should be constructed. These are only claims for the North, but when you come to the Centre and the South you come to see how it is that £20,000,000 of money is required by the Minister for Railways to build the railways asked for by members of this House. Every hon. member knows that it will take us twenty

years to build the lines that every member wants, and I say that the more of these railways we can get built by private enterprise the better chance we shall have of getting the public lines built.

Mr. REID: How do you make that out?

The PREMIER: Because it relieves the pressure on the Government at once. If the Mount Garnet and other private companies will build these private lines, it will leave us free to deal with other lines.

Mr. DAWSON: Why not farm out the Bowen line?

The PREMIER: For the life of me I cannot see what objection any member in this House can have to the building of this railway by this company. They only seek to get leave to build this railway, and to do it under the supervision of the Commissioner. They seek to charge 50 per cent. more than the Government lines, because it will cost a great deal more than 50 per cent. to work than the lines down here. They do not ask for any mineral concessions. That has been the great bugbear of the other side. We have been told that we are handing over the whole of the colony to syndicates, whereas, instead of doing that, we are only giving a strip of sixty chains by, in some cases, twenty-eight miles.

Mr. REID: But there are so many strips.

The PREMIER: And then we retain the mineral rights of those twenty-eight miles; it is only the surface we are giving away.

Mr. McDONALD: Do you do that with all the others?

The PREMIER: In every one of them.

Mr. BROWNE: By the provisions of the Bill you will find people already mining on that ground.

The PREMIER: I do not understand that.

Mr. BROWNE: Oh, well; see the Bill.

The PREMIER: To go through a mining lease you must compensate the owner. The mine there is a freehold mine, and it is exempt from labour conditions. I think that on the sixty acres of freehold they have three or four men to the acre, instead of one man to ten acres, working, so that I think that this Mount Garnet Company, at all events, are showing their *bona fides*. In the previous cases we were asked who these people were, and we were told they were going to London to sell their concession. Now, we know that this company is floated, and that they have so many shares in hand that they are prepared to sell some, so I fail to see how anyone can be taken in by any false prospectus. So far as I know, it may be they want to borrow money on debentures. I do not know their position. I certainly think that if any line should meet with no objection, the line before the House is that line, and, in my opinion, it ought to be passed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GIVENS (*Cairns*): I feel particularly interested in this Bill, because it greatly affects the constituency that I have the honour to represent; and I may state that although I am as much interested in the welfare of the Cairns district and the adjoining districts as any man in this House, I nevertheless oppose this Bill, and I intend to do all I can to prevent it becoming law, and that for reasons which I will state as briefly as I can. Now, this Bill differs from the private railway Bills that have been introduced into this House this session in several important respects. In the first place, the Government have always justified their private railway proposals by stating that no Government would be justified in building the lines for which it is proposed to grant concessions to private companies to build. Now, I would state for the information of hon. members—I need not state it for the information of the Premier, because he knows it as well as I know it—that it has always

been the recognised policy of hon. members to send out their railways from the eastern coast to the western country; and, further, that it was always the recognised policy of the Government—of every Government that I can remember since I have been in Queensland—that the Cairns Railway should be pushed on right to the junction of the Normanton-Croydon line, and so connected with the eastern coast.

The PREMIER: I never heard of it.

Mr. GIVENS: Then you must have taken exceedingly little interest in public matters. And not only do the public of Cairns recognise that a line would be justifiable to the Mount Garnet district, but the Government recognise that it is justifiable, else why are they going to the expense of making a survey of a railway line from the present Cairns Railway to Mount Garnet at the present time?

Mr. COWLEY: We are going to run one from the Johnstone well into Mount Garnet.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member may be going to do so, but I think he will have a little difficulty before he accomplishes it. As a matter of fact, at the present moment the Government have a surveyor engaged surveying a route from Atherton to Mount Garnet, and I say that of the people of the Cairns constituency and Woothakata, represented by Mr. Newell, nine out of every ten are in favour of the railway going from Atherton to Mount Garnet. The people of Atherton are very alive to what the granting of this private railway Bill will mean to them and the surrounding districts. As the leader of the Opposition has pointed out, for the next fifty years, if this Bill becomes law, they will have to pay 50 per cent. over and above what is paid on the Government railways. Now, what does that mean? And, as a matter of fact, the railway does not go in the direction of Mount Garnet at all. It is what is described as a go-away-come-back line. It starts at a point fifty-five miles on the Chillagoe line, and it comes back towards the coast. I read by the report of Mr. Longland, who was the surveyor sent up to survey both routes, that it goes in a direction north-west to south-east, and, after going inland fifty-six miles west of Mareeba, it goes back to the coast again, so that anybody sending goods will have to pay these very high and increased carriage rates inland and then back again to the coast. There is a difference in the routes of over twenty miles, and I have worked out a few items to show what the difference in freights would be. Take the cost of carrying on flour. Suppose a merchant in Cairns wants to send a ton of flour to Mount Garnet, let us see what the freight would be on the two routes. From Mareeba to Mount Garnet would be ninety-three miles by the private railway on which hon. members will remember the goods would have to pay 50 per cent. more than the rates on the Government lines; the freight on a ton of flour by that route, according to the present rate on the Government line, would be £1 19s. 7½d.; whereas if it were carried by the State railway, which every disinterested person in the district advocates, the freight would be only £1 1s. 8d. So that the private railway will scoop from the consumers of flour for the next fifty years a clear profit of 17s. 11½d. on the carriage of every ton of flour from Mareeba to Mount Garnet, over and above what it would cost carried on the proposed State railway.

Mr. KIDSTON: That is to benefit the working man.

Mr. GIVENS: That is to benefit the working man who consumes flour. Now, take second-class passenger rates, which are 1½d. per mile on the State railway, and you will find that a second-class passenger from Mareeba to Mount Garnet by the private line would have to pay a fare of

17s. 6d., while by the proposed State railway the fare would only be 9s. 3d. So that a working miner is to be mulct in one day's pay at least in order that he may have the privilege of travelling by the railway of this private syndicate. That is not the worst of it. Everyone knows that the Atherton district is the finest agricultural district in Australia.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: No. Warwick.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member has seen Warwick, but he has not seen Atherton, and, therefore, he is not competent to judge. The most competent judges who have been in that district, and who have travelled all over Australia, say that, without exception, it is the finest agricultural district in Australia.

Mr. COWLEY: It is not a patch on Mourilyan, or the Johnstone.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. gentleman may not be intimately acquainted with it.

Mr. COWLEY: I have been all over it.

Mr. GIVENS: I would like to know what is the extent of the acquaintance which these gentlemen have of that country.

The PREMIER: You do not know very much about it. You only talk about it.

Mr. GIVENS: I know a good deal about it. I have been through that country from one end of it to the other.

Mr. COWLEY: Have you ever been over the Mourilyan country?

Mr. GIVENS: Yes.

The PREMIER: When where you there?

Mr. GIVENS: Not very long ago. The hon. gentleman will probably get a little more information from me about the land up there, before I have done, than he bargains for. With regard to the carriage of produce from Atherton to Mount Garnet—and I may say that the farmers of Atherton look upon Mount Garnet and the Western districts as the market for their produce—it is fifty-two miles from Atherton to Mount Garnet, but if this railway is passed these farmers in Atherton, if they want to get their produce to Mount Garnet, will have to take it for twenty-two miles by a State railway from Atherton to Mareeba, and by the private line for ninety-three miles from Mareeba to Mount Garnet. It would only cost the farmer 7s. 9d. a ton to land his maize in Mount Garnet by the State line from Atherton, fifty-two miles; but by this proposal it would cost him 4s. a ton to rail it twenty-two miles by the State line to Mareeba, and by the private railway from Mareeba to Mount Garnet, ninety-three miles, it would cost him 19s. 4½d. a ton more, or a total of £1 3s. 4½d. per ton, or over three times as much as they would be called upon to pay under the alternative proposal of a State line from Atherton to Mount Garnet. That is how it works out. There is a difference of 15s. 7½d. per ton on maize in favour of the State line, and that would mean all the difference between profit and loss to the farmer. Why should not the interests of the people of Atherton be considered in this matter as well as the interests of the people of Mount Garnet. The people of Mount Garnet have a right to be considered, but then they would infinitely prefer a direct State line from Mount Garnet to Atherton to being asked to go all round the country, and to get their goods all round the country for an unnecessary distance on a private railway. From my place on the floor of this House, as the representative of Cairns, I can say that nine out of every ten of the electors of my district are opposed to this private railway being built at all, and I can say that nine out of every ten in the district of Woothakata are opposed to it also. I go further, and say that the hon. member for Woothakata himself is opposed to this line, and is only compelled by political exigencies to support it. I believe if he would

state his real feelings he would admit that I am perfectly right, and that he is as much opposed to it as I am myself.

Mr. NEWELL: Nonsense! You do not know what you are talking about. I will tell you all about it by and by.

Mr. GIVENS: I quite understand the hon. gentleman's position, and I sympathise with him very much. In the case of all these other lines the excuse has been that the member for the district and the people of the district have been in favour of them. Well, in this case I say emphatically that the people of my district, which is vitally affected by this line, are almost unanimously against it, and fully feeling the responsibility of what I say, I challenge the hon. member for Woothakata to deny that nine out of every ten in his district are also opposed to this line, and would infinitely prefer the continuation of a State line from Atherton to Mount Garnet.

Mr. NEWELL: Oh, no!

Mr. GIVENS: I do not want the House to take my unsupported statement with reference to these two lines, and I will therefore quote from the report of Mr. Longland, the Government surveyor sent up last year to report upon the two lines. This will be found in "Votes and Proceedings," vol. 3, second session 1899, page 140. In speaking of the [9 p.m.] quality of the land and the resources of the place, Mr. Longland says—

With reference to immediate traffic, I am of opinion that the transport of the marketable timber at present standing in the immense scrub between the Upper Barron Crossing and Millstream Creek—a distance of twenty-two miles—will be a big factor in making this line pay for some years to come. The principal timbers of value are red cedar, bean-tree, beech, silky and red oak, walnut, kauri pine, and white pine. When this timber has been cut, and the scrub opened up, the amount of rich agricultural land available for close settlement should make this district the greatest agricultural producing area in the colony, as the conditions for farming are most favourable—viz., one of the best climates in the colony, owing to the altitude of the locality, a fair annual rainfall of about 52 inches extending over the whole year, a plentiful supply of water in the various springs and wells, and the really magnificent soil. This scrub land, I am informed, extends right through to Cardwell on the coast, and I estimate that there are 100,000 acres of scrub land unalienated within ten miles of the route on the eastern side. The Evelyn table and forest may be described as first-class pastoral country, and there is about 100,000 acres unalienated and available for grazing homesteads, and suitable for combining farming and dairying. The tin centres of Herberton and Watsonville will benefit the traffic on the line, as a good even road can be got from the top of the range into Herberton. As stated in my wire of to-day, I am of opinion that this portion of the line has a payable future before it, even if Mount Garnet and its copper lodes were not the objective point of route.

I would ask hon. members to make a special note of that. Speaking of Mount Garnet, he says—

This mine has at present 20,000 tons of copper ore formation in sight, estimated to yield 10 per cent. of copper, and further prospecting may quickly increase this estimate, as the formation at 70 feet from the surface is over 100 feet wide, and appears to be making larger, both in width and length of ore, as depth is attained. The site of the smelter when I passed through was not determined, but it is proposed to erect three smelters capable of turning out about 300 tons of copper per week.

That would mean that there would be 900 tons of copper available to the State railway, if the State built that line. The Chillagoe Company are given the right under their Act to build branch lines, ten miles in length; and it was the obvious intention of the House to give them that right in order to enable them to open up all the mines in the locality within a radius of ten miles. But now, they are really asking for a Bill to extend their line right to Mount Garnet. If this is granted, the Chillagoe Company will

completely encircle the whole of these districts, and every man, woman, and child will be under their thumbs; nobody will be permitted to live in the district without their permission. I was in this district six months ago, and I heard it stated that, as soon as they got this line to Mount Garnet, they would ask for another line right into the rich cedar country. Not satisfied with having control of all the mines, they want the control of the timber as well; and in a short time no one will be able to live there unless they fall in with the wishes and obey the conditions of this syndicate. These are facts which it is hard to get away from. When I was in this district six months ago I took the opportunity of going over every inch of the route from Atherton to Mount Garnet. It has been said that there is a difficult range to get over, but I saw no such range. My guide, a gentleman well known to the Premier and the hon. member for Woothakata—Mr. Mazzlin, told me that we had got over the range, but I did not know that we had got over any range at all; and that is borne out by the fact that the stiffest grade on the proposed line will be 1 in 55. Mr. Longland states that the prospective traffic justifies the construction of this line, even if there were no Mount Garnet in existence. Now we are told that no concessions are really asked for in this Bill; but they are exactly the same as in the other Bills. The country that the private line will go through is barren and unproductive; Mr. Longland's report bears me out in that. Then it will not serve mining centres such as Herberton, Mount Albion, Irvinebank, and other places in that neighbourhood one iota. It will only serve the Chillagoe Company and the Mount Garnet Company.

Mr. JACKSON: Are the Chillagoe Company interested in the Mount Garnet line?

Mr. GIVENS: Well, they are two separate companies, but I believe the shareholders and promoters of the Chillagoe Company are intimately connected with the Mount Garnet Company. I believe the promoters of the Chillagoe Company—or most of them—are the biggest promoters in the development of Mount Garnet. If this line is passed, in what position will the divisional boards be in? They will have to build roads to the different stations fixed by the company on this line, which will improve the value of the company's property and enable more traffic to be brought to their line. And the railway will be absolutely exempt from rates, simply because it is to be exempted from the operations of the Valuation and Rating Act of 1890. Now, that is manifestly unfair. The Secretary for Railways stated that the country will not be called upon to expend £s., but the miners in the district will be called upon to expend a great many shillings, because I have pointed out the enormous difference between the rates charged on other railways and the rates that will be charged on this line during the whole fifty years of the currency of this Bill if it should be passed. The hon. gentleman says that he cannot understand the representatives of mining districts opposing this Bill, but the miners want the same fairplay that is shown to every other class in the community. It is the duty of those hon. members who represent the working miners of the colony to see that they get fair play, and mining members are more than justified in opposing this Bill on account of the much higher rates which the miners will have to pay on this line. The hon. member for Cambooya got up here the other day, and made the absolutely shameless confession that he was in favour of these Bills, because, if we get private companies to construct our railways in Northern Queensland, there would be all the more money left to build

agricultural lines in the Southern portion of the colony. The miners of Northern Queensland are to be taxed up to their eyes in order to provide cheap railrage for the farmers in the Southern portion of the colony, in addition to which those miners are to pay 50 per cent. more in freight for the railrage of their own goods over private railways. Is there anything just or honest in such a system? Of course the Secretary for Railways poses as a mining authority, too, and he says that individual miners can do nothing except in alluvial ground. I would like the hon. gentleman to turn round and ask the hon. member for Woothakata how far a tunnel was driven on the Hodgkinson by one single miner.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Has it paid him?

Mr. GIVENS: He has managed to make a fairly decent living out of it. He has driven a tunnel into a hill further than any of the big companies ever succeeded in doing.

Mr. NEWELL: He never employed any labour.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member has the same old cry, "He never employed any labour." The hon. member is a very large storekeeper in the Woothakata electorate, but does he mean to tell me that he employs all the men who are working in his stores and driving his carts, and everything else? He does not employ a solitary one of them. It is the working miners who buy his goods who employ them all, and I employ just as many men as either the hon. member or the Secretary for Railways. I dare say I wear as much clothing as either of those hon. members, and I employ as many men to weave them. I dare say I perspire as freely as the Secretary for Railways, and employ as many washerwomen to wash my shirts as the Secretary for Railways, and I dare say that I wear out as many boots as the hon. gentleman, and employ as many boot-makers.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What wages do you give?

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. gentleman does not pay £d. in wages—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GIVENS: Supposing the hon. gentleman has a sheep farm and has a couple of kanakas working on that farm, he does not pay those kanakas their wages. It is the people who wear the clothes that are made from the wool that is grown on the sheeps' backs on the hon. gentleman's farm that pay those kanakas.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GIVENS: As a justification for the construction of private railways the Secretary for Railways said that the mining industry cannot be developed without the assistance of these railways. Now, is that in accordance with facts? We know that until the latter portion of 1897 we had no private railways in Queensland, and will the hon. gentleman say that the mining industry of Queensland was not magnificently developed before that date? Take the Herberton district, which is represented by the hon. member for Woothakata. That hon. member knows how, working under enormous difficulties—having to pay as high as £25 a ton for the carriage of their tin to the coast—that district was magnificently developed. And tin was not at an extraordinarily high price then either—only from £95 to £100 a ton, if I recollect aright. That was before there was any railway at all in that district. The mines there have been developed chiefly by the energy and the skill and the enterprise of the working miners. They stuck to the field when it was deserted by the men who came there to do big things by means of imported capital. And now the attempt is being made to oust those working miners by big syndicates. We hear a great deal of what has been done by the Chillagoe syndicate, but it is not the operations of that

syndicate that have caused the present progress and prosperity of the district at all. That is due to the large rise in the price of copper and other minerals. That prosperity would have taken place if the Chillagoe syndicate had never sighted the district—if it had never even sighted Cairns. Certainly they were astute enough to take advantage of the rise in the price of minerals, and, knowing that there were large mineral deposits in the Chillagoe district, they came and forestalled the market, and now we are told that they developed the district. It is not at all certain to me whether Queensland will not yet bitterly repent some of the many undue concessions which have been given to the Chillagoe syndicate. We have found in connection with that syndicate—and I suppose we shall see the same thing in connection with the Mount Garnet syndicate—that the whole of the mines in the district have been locked up under illegal exemptions, simply because there is work being done by some other proprietary on the railway. Mr. Moffatt got exemptions for a large number of leases for about two years, which were held in his name, on the plea, as stated by the Government in reply to a question I put to them, that there was work being done on the Chillagoe Railway which represented the work that should be done on Mr. Moffatt's leases. But that was an entirely different proprietary, and the exemptions were quite illegal, and would not be allowed by anyone except by a party that desired to confer a special benefit upon the company. Notwithstanding all the enormous development that is talked about, we find that all the mines are held under exemption. The result is that swindles are very likely to be worked. The amount of information placed at our disposal to help us to arrive at a decision on this Bill is practically *nil*, and the Premier has broken the distinct promise he made to the leader of the Opposition some time ago.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GIVENS: I have a distinct recollection that the Premier, in reply to the leader of the Opposition, stated that every available information would be furnished to hon. members, including all the correspondence and papers connected with the railway in each case when the Bill came on for the second reading, and there was actually a motion to that effect carried in the House; yet we find that not a single tittle of information has been laid on the table in reference to this Bill, but accompanying the Bill is a map which is of the most meagre description and does not give any idea of the relation of the line to the surrounding country. When we find that this promised information is not given, I think we are entitled to be suspicious about this sort of treatment; and only for the fact that I am not of a very suspicious nature myself I would be inclined to suspect that the Government had something to conceal. The leader of the Opposition alluded to the method by which these syndicates would perhaps not only take down the public but even corrupt members of Parliament; and I agree with the hon. gentleman's remarks in that connection. There is always a danger of these big syndicates going in for lobbying, and they might be able to exercise such undue influence that members would be unable to withstand the temptation.

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: You speak for yourself.

Mr. GIVENS: I am just as well able to speak for the hon. member as for myself in that connection. I don't know any man that should be submitted to undue temptation; and I would like to remind the hon. member that in most

Christian communities the morning prayer is generally that divinely taught one—"Lead us not into temptation."

Hon. D. H. DALRYMPLE: The devil can quote Scripture.

Mr. GIVENS: The hon. member for Mackay seems to think himself secure; at any rate, he seems willing to walk open-eyed into temptation. We know that in other countries this thing has become a scandal, and without going to other countries we have a case here under our own eyes. During the last day or two we have had a fraudulent prospectus issued under the signatures of some of the most prominent men in New South Wales and Queensland—under the signatures of men occupying prominent positions in the Parliament of this colony in the other House; and that is proof positive that this influence is continually at work. I believe that if I did anything of the kind the Government would rightly subject me to prosecution, and land me in St. Helena for the next five years; and I want to know why these highly placed gentlemen are not subjected to prosecution the same as any other individual—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is violating the rules of debate. The rule on this point is that imputations of falsehood against members of the other Chamber are out of order. I trust that the hon. member will observe that rule.

Mr. McDONALD: Speak of them as directors.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GIVENS: I don't know very much about those hon. gentlemen in their capacity as legislators, and I should not like to criticise their conduct in that capacity. I only know those gentlemen in their capacity as provisional directors of a proposed public company, and I contend that in that capacity I have a right to show the connection that exists between individuals of that kind and companies such as these. And I contend, if I am in order, that it should be the pride of the Government, no matter how high any individual may be placed, to enforce respect for the law by seeing that the law is impartially administered. To the honour of the British Parliament, and to the honour of the British Government be it said, no matter how high a position a man might occupy, directly he violated the law, the law pounced on him and made him suffer.

The SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. GIVENS: It appears that I am not in order in discussing this subject now. But before I sit down I want to enter a protest against the particular portion of the country I have the honour to represent being made the happy hunting ground for private syndicates; and if the hon. member for Woothakata was to get up in his place and say that the people of Woothakata as a whole were in favour of this particular railway as against the proposed State railway from Atherton to Mount Garnet, I think he has a very different idea of what constitutes public opinion in his electorate from what I have. I was present at a meeting in Herberton at which the hon. member was also present, and that meeting was unanimous in favour of the State building the railway from Atherton. If the hon. member was as free as I am to express his opinions, and was not restrained by political exigencies, he would say that nine out of ten of the people of Woothakata, as well as the people of Cairns, were opposed to this particular railway; and though there may be some justification for a syndicate railway where it is wanted by the people of the district and the members representing the district, there is no justification for such a railway where the people and their members are opposed to it. I ask the Minister for Railways did the people of Woothakata ask for this

Bill? Did the people of Mount Garnet ask for it? Did the member for Woothakata ask for the Bill? I defy the Secretary for Railways to answer any of those questions in the affirmative.

[9.30 p.m.] There is only one set of people who are asking for this Bill. As a matter of fact, the Mount Garnet Company do not ask for it; all they wanted was the right to build a tramway under the Mining Act. It is the Chillagoe Company who desire this measure, and that shows the danger of granting such concessions to private syndicates. Instead of being satisfied with the concession granted to them, they reach out their hands for more. As has been stated by the leader of the Opposition this afternoon, the chairman of the Mount Garnet Company has said the company do not care a straw whether they get this Bill through at all, as they could build a tramway to suit themselves under the Mining Act. It is the Chillagoe Syndicate, and nobody else, who are anxious for this Bill, and we find that everywhere you turn in this House you run up against the Chillagoe influence. It is not open, but it is there all the same, and no matter how strong your arguments may be, no matter how good a case you may make out, directly you run up against that influence you can do nothing. I say that is a dangerous thing to have in this House, and that all hon. members, no matter on which side of the House they may sit, should hesitate greatly before they do anything which would tend to assist, or solidify, or consolidate that influence. I do not intend to occupy any more of the time of the House on this subject. This Bill is framed on similar lines to those of the other private railway Bills before the House, and has all the defects they have got, and I shall insist, if it goes into committee, on moving many amendments in a direction which I think will materially alter the measure, and make it more effective and more conducive to the welfare of the public who will be served by it if it is passed. I hope it will not pass, and I will do all I can in a legitimate way to prevent it becoming law. If the people of the district do not want a Bill of this kind it is not the duty of the Government to try to force it upon them. Were it not for the fact that people want to make money quickly by fleecing the public, we should not hear so much about these private railways. These private syndicates use plausible arguments with the members of the Government. What those arguments may be, it is not for me to say. I did not hear them. But they no doubt used very plausible arguments, with the result that they convinced the Secretary for Railways and the other members of the Government that it was absolutely essential for the welfare of the public that a syndicate should be given the right to build a railway to fleece the public. There is not one of these syndicates cares a straw about the welfare of the people, and it is a piece of pure hypocrisy to say that they do.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It might be said that it is a piece of pure hypocrisy on your part.

Mr. GIVENS: I am here in a representative capacity, and I am paid to represent the people, but the Chillagoe syndicate, or any other syndicate, is not paid to represent the people in any way, and the only way they can make a profit is by fleecing the people.

Mr. NEWELL: Who are the Chillagoe syndicate?

Mr. GIVENS: The Chillagoe syndicate are an association of men banded together for the purpose of making very large profits out of a concession they were granted by Parliament. But who compose that syndicate is more than I know, and more than the hon. member for Woothakata knows.

Mr. NEWELL: Do you know any of the persons?

Mr. GIVENS: Yes, I do. I believe that at one time the hon. member for Woothakata was a shareholder in the syndicate, and he may be one now for all I know, and I can assure the House that I have a sincere admiration for that gentleman in many respects. There are other men in this House who, I know—or at least who have told me—are shareholders in the syndicate. I have no means of knowing who are the members of the syndicate beyond the unsupported word of the members who told me that they were shareholders, and there is nobody else knows who the members of the syndicate are, because the share list is not worth the paper it is written on. Anybody who believes that such and such a person owns so many shares, simply because he is set down on the share list for that number, must be a very simple individual. Everybody knows that when a syndicate is bearing the market shares are changing hands every day and payment of the stamp duty is avoided by not registering them. There is no law to compel them to register their transfers, with the result that in six months, let alone in two and a-half years, there is no record at all of the persons who compose a syndicate carrying on business in the colony. But it does not matter who the members of the Chillagoe syndicate are; their operations are before us, we know what they are doing. It has been said that they are not trying to fleece the public. But is it not a matter of fact that they have put the freights on their railway 50 per cent. over the rates on the Government railway? And even if the Government railway rates are reduced 50 per cent. within the next five years, the Chillagoe syndicate will have the right to charge their present rates, and the people in that district may be paying for forty-seven years an inordinately high tariff in order that the people in the South may have money to build railways in their part of the colony, notwithstanding that the Northern railways are paying better than the Southern lines. If, in face of these facts, any Northern member can support a Bill to hand over North Queensland to be exploited by syndicates, he has not the interest of his constituents or the interest of Queensland truly at heart.

Mr. NEWELL (*Woothakata*): My name has been so often mentioned during this debate that I am compelled to say a few words. There has been a great deal of talk about this iniquitous syndicate—the Chillagoe syndicate—and the evils they have brought on the electorate of Woothakata and the electorate of Cairns. Well, as far as I can judge, those iniquities have come in the shape of a blessing. Before the Chillagoe Company came to that part of the Woothakata electorate in which they are located, it was in a very poor way indeed, and there was very little work going on, and very little prospect of anything being done. Mines which had been worked were closed on account of the want of facilities for carrying the produce to market, the works were lying idle, and the township was deserted. The Chillagoe Railway Bill was on the same principle as this Bill. And what do we find to-day? There are townships springing up in all directions, and hundreds of men are employed, not only in the Chillagoe district, but also all along the line from Mareeba. Hundreds of miners have been enabled to make a living and settle in the districts. Teamsters have been able to get employment, and so far from carriers having been driven out of that district, there are more there now than there were before the Chillagoe Railway came into existence. Now the same thing is said about this Mount Garnet line; it is said it is going to ruin the district. I maintain that it is going to do nothing of the sort. It is going to be the

making of the district. I agree with a great deal that the hon. member for Cairns says about this line from Mareeba and Atherton to Mount Garnet being the best. I do not say it would not be the best; I say I would like to see that line built. I say it would go through the finest agricultural land, I suppose, to be found in Australia. I speak from my own knowledge of that, because I have been on the country. I have lived on it for over twenty years, and I know it very well. One side of the proposed line will touch the centre of that district, and they say it is only going to benefit Mount Garnet. Nothing of the kind. It goes right from the 55-Mile on the Chillagoe line, and it will benefit Avon Creek, California Creek, Halpin's, Glenlinedale, Coolgarra and several other places. At Coolgarra, where there were only two public-houses and a few empty houses, works are going up. There is to be a 20-head stamper battery erected, and all that has been done since the Chillagoe Railway came into existence.

Mr. REID: How many "pubs" and empty houses?

Mr. NEWELL: There are now four or five hotels there and other improvements.

Mr. GIVENS: What has the Chillagoe Railway to do with Coolgarra?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NEWELL: I am speaking of the Mount Garnet line, which, I say, is going to benefit Coolgarra. It will be only a few miles from that township—at any rate, within ten or eleven miles of it. Of course every mine cannot have a railway to it, but this line will benefit several. It will benefit Smith's Creek, and, generally, a very large area of good mineral country. I admit that it will not go through agricultural land at all. It is all mineral country which it will pass through—country worthless so far as grazing or agriculture are concerned. It is simply mineral land that it will affect, and it is simply required for the mineral districts for the purpose of getting the ore from the mines to the market. Now, in a very short time the smelting will be commenced at Mount Garnet—as soon as they can get water. They have three large furnaces there all ready to start, and it is supposed that these will turn out about 200 tons a week. How many teams will it take to take that to the coast? I will just ask any hon. member here, or the hon. member for Cairns, who knows a little about how many tons of ore can be put on a wagon, to calculate how many it will require to take 200 tons a week to the coast.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You have to get that 200 tons first.

Mr. NEWELL: It will take fifty teams a week. Then in addition to that a district like this will require a quantity of provisions; and all this carriage could not be done at a remunerative rate unless they got railway communication. For my own part I do not care whether we get this line or the line from Atherton, so long as a line gets there, and gets there as quickly as possible. I have no particular desire to see this railway built before the other, or the other built before this one, so long as one of them is built. I have always said that, although the hon. member for Cairns has invariably spoken of me as if I were tied hand and foot to the Chillagoe Railway and some other company. Nothing of the kind. I have never received from the Mount Garnet Company a scratch of the pen to indicate that they wanted this line taken there. I suppose they thought I might or might not be in favour of it, and probably they did not care to risk writing to me on the subject.

Mr. GIVENS: Were you asked to support a private railway from Atherton to Mount Garnet?

Mr. NEWELL: I have never received a scratch of the pen from the Mount Garnet Company or any other company—I have never been asked to support any private line. I have stated publicly before that I was always in favour of Government railways being built in preference to private railways, but if the Government are not prepared to build lines to open up the mines, or to any other portion of the country which requires to be opened up, I am in favour of private individuals being allowed to do so, so that the development of the country may go on as quickly as possible, and the affairs of the colony not be kept back through the want of a little railway communication. What is the use of having a lot of mines in outside districts that you cannot utilise properly? There is only one thing you can do with them, and that is shut them down. That is what the hon. members on the other side of the House want still to see. They do not want any further population, and they do not want to see any actual advance. They want to see the country remain as it is. What is it that has sent other countries along? What is it that has made the United States of America? What is it but its railways? It is the same with New South Wales, with Victoria, and other Australian colonies. Wherever you have railways that part of the country advances.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Where you have State railways.

Mr. NEWELL: It does not matter whether there are State railways or private railways. If this Bill passes, the company will be able to charge 50 per cent. more than the Government charge on their railways; and I will ask every hon. member if he had that privilege given to him whether he would not exercise it? For what else would it be put in the Bill? What use would there be in putting it in the Bill if they would not exercise it?

Mr. BROWNE: That was denied on the other side.

Mr. NEWELL: If the Chillagoe Railway Company had started to charge just the Government rates, and based their schedule on that published by the Government, and afterwards found it necessary to charge something more, what a cry there would be. Why there would be petitions; and such a howl would go up throughout the whole district, and throughout the country; and there would be no end to the discussion about it. I think they did quite right to show that they had the privilege, and they can reduce the rates later if they like.

Mr. LESINA: Are you in favour of constructing a State line there?

Mr. NEWELL: If the hon. member had been here a few minutes ago he would have heard what I said.

Mr. LESINA: I have been here since you got up.

Mr. NEWELL: I will not repeat it for the hon. gentleman. If he chooses to be outside, that is his own lookout.

Mr. LESINA: Would you vote against a State line there?

Mr. NEWELL: So much for this talk about the 50 per cent. It must be remembered, too, that everything in that district is much higher than in the Southern portion of the colony, and I am one of those who believe that even where State lines are built in out-of-the-way districts, where they cost more to build, the people benefited should be asked to pay accordingly also.

Mr. REID: Would not the company get their things at the same cost as the Government, and why then should they charge more?

Mr. NEWELL: I believe they would get them cheaper than the Government.

Mr. REID: Then why charge 50 per cent. more?

Mr. NEWELL: I have said that I think the people benefited should be asked to pay for the extra cost of building either a State line or a private line in outside places. Take the instance of private carriers like Cobb and Co. You do not find them charging the same fares for conveyance in outlandish places that they do in the Southern portions of the colony. They do not fix one tariff for the whole of Australia. If they charge different rates in different places I do not see why the Government, or a private railway company, should not do the same thing. On the Cairns line—which cost a great deal of money—I remember that on the start of the line to Mareeba a little more was charged on that line than in the Southern portion of the colony, and I was one of a deputation to get the increased charge reduced. Of course, if I could get it reduced I was prepared to do so, but at the same time if the Government had thought fit to say, “No, this line cost so much, and is costing the revenue so much every year, and the people in that district must do something to help to make up the loss upon it,” I should not have grumbled about it—not a bit. Talking about syndicates and the concessions they want to get to float them, the syndicates that get concessions are not the only syndicates that want to make money; and I was very glad to hear the reply the Secretary for Mines gave to-day to the questions asked about the North Chillagoe Company. There is nothing I abhor more than to hear of these “wild-cat” schemes being put before the country to fleece people. I think I know very well where the North Chillagoe mines are, though I may not know them by the names they go by now. I believe they are the same mines as I saw some years ago, and I believe some of them are very good properties. At the same time, I believe that the report that was sent out was anything but a creditable report, and I am very pleased to hear the action that has been taken.

Mr. BROWNE: The report was good enough for anything, without manipulating.

Mr. NEWELL: It was good enough, and if they had stuck to the report as it came out it would have been quite sufficient for anything they required. But some people are not satisfied with telling the truth, they must go a little further.

Mr. JENKINSON: It was not mutilated in Queensland.

Mr. NEWELL: Possibly the hon. gentleman could tell me where it was manipulated. (Laughter.) I can assure the hon. gentleman that I do not know where it was manipulated.

Mr. JENKINSON: I am as jealous of the honour of Queensland as any other member, and I say it was not done here.

Mr. NEWELL: The hon. member for Cairns has repeatedly said that nine-tenths of the people in Woothakata were against this Mount Garnet line. I would like to know how the hon. gentleman found that out?

The PREMIER: He knows everything.

Mr. KIDSTON: Is it true?

Mr. NEWELL: I would like to know on what grounds he bases his assertion. I do not think a referendum has been taken in the district. I have been watching the thing for some time and I never heard of it. I know that a great number of people at Atherton are against the line, as they want a line *viâ* Atherton. If I was settled in Atherton I would like to get a line there too.

Mr. GIVENS: A good many people in Herberton want it too.

Mr. NEWELL: There are some people in Herberton who would prefer it. But let the hon. gentleman go out from those places to Irvinebank, Mount Garnet, and Coolgarra. Let

him take the voice of the people there and does he think nine-tenths of them would be against this line.

Mr. GIVENS: I can show you letters from some of your own constituents against it.

Mr. NEWELL: I do not take much notice of that. I can tell the hon. gentleman that there is a gentleman connected with the North Chillagoe named J. Munro. I know Mr. Munro very well, and I know him to be one of the staunchest Labour men in the whole of the Chillagoe district. I do not take much notice of these things. I dare say you will find him against it, but if he found that the North Chillagoe Company were interested he would vote for it. The hon. member for Cairns only heard those who are against the line, and he did not hear those who are for it.

Mr. GIVENS: Oh, yes, he did.

Mr. REID: Perhaps there were none about.

Mr. NEWELL: Reading through the Bill I think there are several things contained in it which will stand alteration when we come into committee, but I am in favour of the principle of the Bill—the principle of opening up the country. If I thought there was a possibility of the Government building a line to Mount Garnet I would give my vote against this line, but I do not see that there is any chance of the Government building a line there. We have had promise after promise of a line since 1884, when a vote passed this House for a line from Herberton to the coast. Have we got that yet? No, and that line was asked for sixteen years ago. We

[10 p.m.] have not heard of that railway at all. They have taken the line somewhere else. A line has been promised from Mareeba to Atherton time after time, but that has not been carried out. That line was passed by this House, but it was thrown out by the Upper House, and I do not see any hope of this Mount Garnet line being built, except by private enterprise. It is all very fine to say that the chairman of the company said that the company did not care whether the line was built or not. I question very much whether he said that in the way it has been put before the House.

Mr. BROWNE: I used his own words.

Mr. NEWELL: Yes, but it all depends on the way in which the words are read and understood. I think Mr. Chapman is anxiously looking for a line to Mount Garnet, in order to have railway communication with the coast.

Mr. BROWNE: But in a different form. A tramway would suit him.

Mr. NEWELL: The provision in this Bill is for a tramway.

Mr. BROWNE: Under different conditions.

Mr. NEWELL: I am prepared to state that the Mount Garnet Company are very anxious to have a railway on the conditions mentioned in other Bills; but I think they would be quite satisfied with a tramway. This Mount Garnet Company will benefit the whole of the districts concerned, and they do not care about carrying for the public, but the Government insist that they shall do so. The stipulations are very stiff. The company has to keep everything in working order for the safety of the public, and they have to provide the accommodation that is required by the public.

Mr. BROWNE: The same conditions were proposed in South Australia, and see what the Commissioner says about them there.

Mr. NEWELL: This line is in Queensland. Are we to be governed by South Australia? We are sent here by the people of this colony to do the best we can for the people here.

Mr. BROWNE: Hear, hear!

Mr. NEWELL: If South Australia does so and so, it is not necessary that we should follow suit. If South Australia has had a sad experience, we can benefit by that, and guard against anything of the sort here. We should act in a manner that we know from experience will benefit the people of this colony. I think the conditions in this Bill are such that there need be little fear for the interests of the public. Everything for the public benefit is provided for, and the trains must be run according to the Commissioner's regulations. In fact, this is not a private line at all. It is a public line.

Mr. REID: Owned by private people.

Mr. NEWELL: All these lines are really public lines.

Mr. REID: Who gets the profits?

Mr. NEWELL: They are all public lines, under the control of the Commissioner.

Mr. REID: Owned by generous private companies.

Mr. NEWELL: The hon. member for Cairns referred to some shareholders in the Chillagoe syndicate holding a similar position in the Mount Garnet Company. He is quite right. I can name one man who is interested in both companies—Mr. John Moffatt. Mr. Moffatt helped to develop the whole of that country very materially. He has worked very hard there; he has lost money, and his health and strength has been impaired. I reckon that Mr. Moffatt is the backbone and sinew of the whole of that district. I would like anyone to come forward and point a finger at Mr. Moffatt and say that anyone has worked harder than he has in mining in Queensland.

The PREMIER: He was referred to as a thief and a swindler and a vagabond by one member opposite.

Mr. HIGGS: No; you know that is untrue. I said there were thieves and vagabonds connected with these private railway companies, but I did not condemn those who work in the mining industry legitimately.

The PREMIER: You called syndicate people thieves and robbers.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. NEWELL: I shall always stand up to defend Mr. Moffatt, if he is designated—by those who do not know him—as a thief or a robber or a swindler. I have known that gentleman for twenty-seven years, and no doubt some hon. members have known him longer than I have. During the whole of those years I have never known any man to speak harshly of the same Mr. Moffatt. He has been a real friend to many a working man, and he has done more for these Northern mining districts than any man I know of. There is no man in Queensland who knows more about the mining industry, or who has given more time and thought and expended more energy in connection with its development and in trying to bring about the present state of prosperity than Mr. Moffatt. What he has done round Irvinebank, and in fact in the district generally, would do credit to any part of Australia. He has helped to bring the district into prominence. It is true that you can find some men out of employment there, but you can do that in any district in the colony, but there are more men employed there since the advent of the Chillagoe Railway Company than there were before.

Mr. REID: Is that in mining alone?

Mr. NEWELL: The leader of the Opposition knows that when he was in that district the class of mining that was carried on was of the greenhide-windlass order, but those days are passed. The rich shoots of ore have all been taken out, and they have now to manipulate the low-grade ores. In the old days we had to pay from £8 up to £14 per ton for the carriage of

minerals to the coast, and we had to pay as much as £25 per ton to carry goods from Port Douglas to Herberton. I have paid as much as £1 5s. a bushel for maize in Herberton.

Mr. W. THORN: I have paid £1 a bushel on the Darling Downs.

Mr. NEWELL: If it had not been for those shoots of very rich ores, the miners could never have carried on. At that time the leases were in the hands of working miners, and when those rich shoots were worked out they had to abandon the ground. Now, after lying idle for a long time, those leases are all being taken up again, and you will find works going up in all parts of the district, and in a short time I hope to see a population of 40,000 or 50,000 in the district; but you cannot expect to get all these things in a day. We must have all the appliances necessary, and one of those appliances is a railway or a tramway—whatever you like to call it. As the Premier said, there is nothing to prevent a line being built from Atherton to Mount Garnet. In fact, I think the day is not far distant when we will see a line starting from Cairns, and going right through to the Gulf of Carpentaria, without touching a private railway, and there is no necessity that it should. It can go right through to the Croydon line without touching a private line at all. You can go from Mareeba to Atherton, thence to Mount Garnet, then on to Campbell Creek, and then to the Einasleigh. There are copper mines there and a good route all the way.

Mr. REID: But would it pay to do it, after these private railways are built?

Mr. NEWELL: Certainly it would pay. The only thing I am afraid of is that whatever Government may be in power will be like the present Government, and will be a bit cautious about building railways. If the hon. members on the other side should happen to be in power, I expect they will hesitate, too, before they go headlong in for railway construction. I believe they will weigh well any line before they start to build it, just as the present Government have been doing. The only thing is that there are one or two lines which the Government ought to have submitted to the House, so that we would have known what their intentions were. Amongst them is the line from Mareeba to Atherton. That is a long-promised line, and one which has been badly wanted for a number of years.

Mr. REID: The Council blocked that.

Mr. NEWELL: I know that, but I trust that before long, where railway communication is wanted, the Government will see their way either to build the lines themselves, or to allow private syndicates to build them.

Mr. MAXWELL (Burke): The hon. member for Woothakata waxed rather warm over some statements which were supposed to have been made on this side attacking Mr. John Moffatt. I may say that I have lived in North Queensland for a considerable number of years, and I have never heard a miner outside this House, or anyone connected with mining in this House, say a wrong word against Mr. Moffatt.

Mr. BROWNE: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: He has always been held in very high esteem by the people throughout North Queensland, and wherever you go you will hear them saying that probably no man has done as much for the district of Woothakata as Mr. Moffatt has done.

Mr. REID: I have heard the same thing said about Mr. Newell.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. member for Woothakata said that even if Mr. Moffatt's name was connected with anything that looked a little fishy he would still have the same faith in him. I would be very sorry to say that. We find that he is connected with the Chillagoe

Railway Syndicate, and that looks very fishy just now, considering that they are quarrelling among themselves about the division of the spoil.

Mr. NEWELL: According to your idea.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is not my idea at all. You can find it in the southern papers.

Mr. BROWNE: Sir Malcolm McEacharn brought an action against them.

The PREMIER: Not against Mr. Moffatt?

Mr. BROWNE: Against the company of which he is a member.

The PREMIER: Not against the company at all.

Mr. MAXWELL: No, against the original promoters. The introduction of this Bill seems to have been due to some spontaneous action on the part of the Government, because no correspondence regarding it has been placed before us that would lead us to come to the conclusion that it has been asked for. I have been in the district within the last few months. I was at Mount Garnet probably about the time that the hon. member for Woothakata was last there, and from there I went to Herberton, and the general opinion in the district—and I may say even beyond the district—was that this is a line that should be built by the Government. The people believe that the line should go from Mareeba to Atherton, and then on to Mount Garnet. I am certainly of the same opinion as the hon. member for Woothakata, that that is the line that ought to be built. I do not for one moment favour the construction of this line by private enterprise. This is a line that the Government ought to construct, and, as far as this tramway is concerned, going from Lappa Lappa to Mount Garnet, there are just the same difficulties in the way of building it as there are in going over the range behind Herberton to Mount Garnet. There is certainly this to say in favour of that line—that at the foot of the range, on the Lappa Lappa side of Mount Garnet, there is the Mount Pardo copper-mines; and I think from there to Mount Garnet that is all the copper-mines that this tramway will serve. Of course, if a man rides a bicycle over the country, and takes a walk now and then, he has a better idea of the country than a man that rode miles away in a coach. The Premier has never been over it.

The PREMIER: I was over the country years and years ago. I know more about it than you do.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman was not over it twelve months ago.

The PREMIER: A portion of it. There is no range to cross worth speaking of. It is not a third of the height of the Atherton range.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman never went from Mount Garnet to Cardwell or he would have found a range.

The PREMIER: I rode from Mount Garnet.

Mr. MAXWELL: Did not the hon. gentleman see a range?

The PREMIER: There is no need to cross it.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. gentleman must have had something stronger than water to drink if he could not see a range when going from Mount Garnet.

The PREMIER: I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member be requested to withdraw that remark.

The SPEAKER: Unparliamentary language and words used in an offensive sense ought to be withdrawn.

Mr. MAXWELL: I did not use them in an offensive sense.

The SPEAKER: Order! The words were offensive, and that should be a sufficient reason for the hon. member withdrawing them.

Mr. MAXWELL: I beg to withdraw them, and I am sorry the hon. gentleman was offended. I should like to know what any syndicate has done in the Woothakata district? A great deal has been said about the many blessings conferred on the district by these syndicates; but I ask hon. members to look at the *Wild River Times* and see the amount of land locked up there week after week—see the areas locked up there quite recently on which miners in that district—old men unable to compete with younger men for wages—would have been able to make a living year after year. These are some supposed blessings which these syndicates have conferred on the working men. The Bill also provides for certain telegraphic communication to be made for the benefit of the Mount Garnet Company. Quite recently the holders of a copper mine in the district I have the honour to represent approached the department to endeavour to get a telephone line laid on to their mine. For some distance this had to go along the Government telegraph poles; and the company were prepared to place the line in working order, but the Government asked them to pay so much a mile for erecting at their own expense a wire on the Government telegraph poles. Under this Bill this company can get all these concessions gratis.

The PREMIER: You have not read the Bill.

Mr. MAXWELL: Probably the hon. gentleman has not seen it himself, and is quite satisfied to introduce anything that is passed into his hands. The Minister who introduced the measure tells us that the mining industry cannot be carried on by individual effort. For years and years the whole of the mining industry in Queensland was carried out by individual effort. Probably the development work of the greatest field in Australia to-day—that is, the work which led up to the proof of its permanency—was done by individual effort. In the Woothakata district, most of the development work has been done by individual effort; and I contend that if the Government are prepared to give these people the necessary assistance that is due to them, the mineral and goldfields of Queensland would be still further developed by individual effort. Some time ago, when the Premier was speaking about the falsifying of these Government reports, it brought to my mind a point I raised the other night—namely, that every claim to be placed before the speculating public should have with it a report by the Government Geologist; and I have no hesitation in saying that would be the best inducement—one of the best inducements—that could be held out to people to speculate in these mines. I shall have a few amendments to propose in this Bill, and I am glad to say that some of them will have the support of the hon. member for Woothakata, as he has promised to do his best to remodel the Bill on better lines.

Mr. HIGGS (*Fortitude Valley*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put and passed; and resumption of the debate made an order for to-morrow.

OPENING OF THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT.

PROPOSED VISIT OF DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK.

The PREMIER: Before we adjourn I take the liberty of reading the following cablegram which I have just received—

Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to assent to the recommendation of the Marquis of Salisbury to the visit of H.R.H. The Duke and Duchess

of York to the colonies of Australasia in the spring of next year H.R.H. the Duke of York will be commissioned by Her Majesty the Queen to open the first session of the Parliament of the Australian Commonwealth in her name. Although the Queen naturally shrinks from parting with her grandson for so long a period Her Majesty the Queen fully recognises the greatness of the occasion which will bring her colonies of Australia into Federal Union and desires to give this special proof of her interest in all that concerns the welfare of her Australian subjects. Her Majesty the Queen at the same time wishes to signify her sense of the loyalty and devotion which have prompted the spontaneous aid so liberally offered by all the colonies in the South African war and of the splendid gallantry of her colonial troops. Her Majesty's assent to this visit is of course given on the assumption that at the time fixed for the departure of the Duke of York the circumstances are as generally favourable as at present and that no national interests call for His Royal Highness's presence in this country.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

The House adjourned at half-past 10 o'clock.