

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 1909

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The SPEAKER (Hon. J. T. Bell, *Dalby*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.

BAKERS' WAGES BOARD.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. On what dates did the Bakers' Wages Board sit?
2. What was the duration of each sitting?
3. At how many sittings were the chairman and respective members present?
4. What was the remuneration received by the chairman and each member?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*), with the view of economising time, read only the answers to

questions 3 and 4, but at the same time laid on the table answers to the whole of the questions, as follows :—

(1 and 2)—	Date of Meeting.	Duration.
	1909.	
12 February	4 p.m. to 4.45 p.m.
25 February	7.15 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
4 March	4 p.m. to 9 p.m.
18 March	7 p.m. to 9.35 p.m.
25 March	4.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
1 April	4.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
15 April	4.30 p.m. to 9.20 p.m.
23 April	4.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
27 April	7 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.
29 April	4.30 p.m. to 9.45 p.m.
6 May	4.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.
13 May	4.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
20 May	4.30 p.m. to 9.25 p.m.
27 May	4.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
3 June	{ 9 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. { 7 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
10 June	4.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
17 June	7.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
25 June	4.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.
1 July	4.30 p.m. to 9.15 p.m.
8 July	4.45 p.m. to 9 p.m.
8 September	3.30 p.m. to 8.15 p.m.
15 September	3.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.
22 September	9 a.m. to 11.15 a.m.
29 September	9 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.
(3 and 4)—		

Number of sittings attended by chairman and members; also remuneration received by chairman and member—

Name.	Number of Meetings or Part of Meeting Attended.	Total Remuneration.
C. P. Buchanan (chairman)	24	18 10 0
D. Webster	24	9 5 0
H. Sheard	22	8 10 0
A. Simpson	24	9 5 0
J. S. Perrin	24	9 5 0
G. Goodhew	24	9 5 0
J. Leggett	21	7 15 0
Total	£71 15 0

ELECTORS VOTING AT LATE ELECTION.

On the motion of Mr. LESINA, the following motion was agreed to :—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—

- (1.) The total number of electors who voted at the late elections.
- (2.) The number of women voters.
- (3.) The number of electors who voted for—
 - (a) Government candidates;
 - (b) Labour Opposition candidates;
 - (c) Independent candidates.
- (4.) The number of electors who voted as absent voters for—
 - (a) Town electorates;
 - (b) Country electorates.

Question put and passed.

KINGAROY TO NANANGO RAILWAY.

APPROVAL OF PLANS. COMMITTEE.

(Mr. W. D. Armstrong in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, Mackay), in moving—

1. That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed extension from Kingaroy to Nanango, in length 16 miles 17 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, the 3rd November, 1909.

2. That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council for their approval, by message in the usual form—

said: The extension of the railway from Kil-

kivan was built some years ago, and the further extension of the line to Kingaroy was finished some three or four years ago. About 1901 or 1902 it was proposed that the line should not stop at Kingaroy, but should be extended to Nanango, but for certain financial reasons which existed at that time the line was stopped at Kingaroy. Since then there has been a considerable amount of discussion as to whether this line should be carried on to Nanango, or whether the Southern Burnett district, in the vicinity of Nanango, should have communication with the Brisbane *via* the Esk line, and, consequently, on to Brisbane. I think the differences of opinion between the people immediately interested was probably the reason that the extension of this line has been delayed. I had an opportunity of visiting the Southern Burnett during the ordinary recess following the session of 1908, and owing to the courtesy of the settlers and some of the residents of Nanango, I had a full opportunity of inspecting, during the time I had at my disposal, the resources of that portion of the Burnett district.

Mr. MAUGHAN: One of the finest districts in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The senior member for Ipswich says it is one of the finest districts in Queensland, and I quite agree with him.

Mr. COYNE: Was not the Millmerran district the finest yesterday. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say it is one of the finest districts. In reply to the hon. member, I may say that we have many fine districts in Queensland right from the Southern border to Cooktown. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. COYNE: And in the West.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not discriminate at all between the seaboard or the middle west or the far west. Probably the country north of Cooktown is not quite as suitable for settlement as the Southern part of the State.

Mr. LENNON: What about the district immediately north of Townsville?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I said from the Southern border to Cooktown, and in that area is included the famous Herbert electorate and the Atherton district. I came to this conclusion after my visit to the Southern Burnett district—and I not only drove over a part of it, but I rode over a great many miles of it—that it was not possible for that portion of the Southern Burnett district to be opened up by one line of railway. Although there are large areas of country in the vicinity of the link I am now proposing should be built already settled upon, further west there are large areas of Crown lands—which are not available for settlement now, but will be available for settlement in the course of eight or nine years. I will tell the Committee what my idea is for opening up that district, and I say advisedly that this 16 miles now proposed is simply one link in the system for giving the Burnett settlers—those who are in it now, and the many thousands who will come there in the future—connection with their ports to the north, to the south, and to the east.

Mr. HAMILTON: They will have a double connection?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; to enable Nanango to have direct connection with her northern ports—that is, with Maryborough, Bundaberg, and Rockhampton, and also a somewhat circuitous connection with her

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southern port of Brisbane, it would be advisable in the future that a connection should be made between Nanango and Blackbutt.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Hear, hear! I am glad to hear you say that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The country to the west of Nanango might very well be opened up, and I hope at no very distant date. There are a very large number of settlers who recently settled down on Tablinga resumption—150 families I believe there were there when I visited it last year—and it is necessary that a line should be built from the vicinity of Kingaroy to the Western line. This afternoon I am going to propose a further link in this scheme for opening up that country: that is a line from Oakey to Cooyar. (Hear, hear!) When that scheme is finished it will prove to be a good railway scheme for many years to come. It will be necessary to connect the length from Nanango to Blackbutt up the Yarraman Creek Valley with the line which will connect the Western Railway with Kingaroy. I am not, of course, prepared to absolutely denote the exact portion where this should be done, as that is a matter for survey. But when I was in that district I travelled over portion of the trial survey made from Kingaroy to Tarong, and after seeing the great amount of settlement that had taken place to the westward of that proposed route, when I returned to Brisbane I suggested to Mr. Lethem, the chief officer in charge of railway surveys, that he might make a further inspection of that district with the view, if it were physically possible, of throwing this proposed line somewhat further to the west than what had been projected, so that it would give a better chance to the men settled on the Tablinga resumption and those who I think will be settled on Burrandowan—and who are already settled there—a better chance of getting to the railway line. That inspection was made, and it was found that it would not be possible, owing to the configuration of the country, to throw this line very much further to the west. However, I have a surveyor in the district at the present time who is now starting to survey the route which is to connect up eventually Oakey with Kingaroy, one link of which I propose to bring before the Committee this afternoon if we get that far.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That will make a whole network of railways there?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. I thought it was advisable to place the particulars of the present proposed line before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask hon. members to refrain from carrying on a conversation even in whispers, so that the Minister's statement may be heard by the Chamber.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was saying that I thought, perhaps, it was advisable that before speaking specially about the route of the proposed railway that is now before the Committee that I should give an idea to the Committee of the scheme to open up this district—a scheme for the future development of what is a very rich portion of the State.

Mr. LESINA: Is it necessary?

Mr. MAUGHAN: My word, it is. People are waiting for it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Clermont asks me is it necessary?

Mr. LESINA: Is it necessary to make such a long speech in favour of the Bill? I heard John Murray introduce six railways in this time.

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The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have not had the opportunity, since I have been Minister for Railways, of introducing many railways—I have introduced two.

Mr. LESINA: We want to get on with business.

Mr. RYLAND: Go on, we want to hear it.

Mr. LESINA: We do not want speeches, we want work.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Each time I have had the pleasure of introducing a line I have tried to give hon. members all the information in my possession. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MULCAHY: We want it too—we do not get enough information.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is an hon. member who does not get enough information, and the hon. member for Leichhardt invariably gets up and says there is not sufficient information.

Mr. HARDACRE: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Now the hon. member for Clermont, who is also a leading member of the Labour party—(Opposition laughter)—twits me with giving too much information. The only thing I can do is, as I usually do, go along on my own course, and do that which I think is best in the interests of those who have to pass this line—that is, to give the information in my possession as shortly as I possibly can, and as lucidly as I can.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: This is the first link in the scheme for opening up this district, but I do not think it is a matter that affects or should affect the question of giving connection either with Maryborough or Brisbane—I do not think that either Maryborough or Brisbane, as Maryborough or Brisbane, should come into it at the present moment.

Mr. MAUGHAN: There is room for both.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is room for both, and I hope when we consider this line, and also the other link from Oakey to Cooyar, this afternoon, that such considerations will be left out of the question altogether; that the proposals will be discussed entirely on their merits and in the interests of those who are most immediately interested—that is, those people who have to bear the responsibility, if there is any responsibility at all. Whilst I was in the district, I found considerable opposition to the line coming into Nanango, and when I was in Nanango I found considerable opposition to the line running further west, so, being perfectly disinterested, I came to my own conclusion. I was told that nine years ago, whilst there was a Royal Commission sitting, very unfavourable evidence had been given against carrying the railway into Nanango. That was nine years ago, but since that time there has been a very large amount of land taken up immediately in the vicinity of Nanango, and all round Barker's Creek and Broadwater, which is quite a number of miles away, there is a very large extent of very rich country, which I was sorry to see was not under the intense cultivation that it is entitled to be under.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is fine wheat country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It will grow anything at all. In order to see the fertility of the soil, on my trip to Nanango, about 3 miles north of Nanango, I visited the farm of Mr. Langdon, and I was very pleased to see that three or four farmers who had settled in that district, on adjoining selections,

had entered into a little co-operative community. I had very great pleasure in talking to them indeed, and I can only express my surprise at the very large areas of scrub that they had been able to clear in such a short time, and get under cultivation and artificial grasses. They had gone up from one of the Southern districts to Nanango, and they told me they had been able to do as well as they had because they had always worked together—that if there was a large piece of work one had to do, those on the adjoining farm helped, and then went on to the other. On Mr. Langdon's farm I saw a patch of 50 acres of prairie grass, upon which he fed forty-five head of stock all through the comparatively dry winter of 1908, without any visible diminution of the quantity of grass. That alone spoke to me as to the fertility of the soil in this district, where I was told it was not possible to carry on any cultivation. I also saw areas of land under maize and other crops.

Mr. HAMILTON: That was the old cry in the old days to keep people away.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That happened quite a number of years ago, but, fortunately, some of us were not kept away by that kind of thing. I might say there are very large quantities of very useful timber in this district. The timbers that are most plentiful are pine, crows-ash, yellow-wood, and, in the open forest country, ironbark. I saw two very large sawmills, indeed, at work in the vicinity of the township of Nanango, and I made some inquiries, and found they had no fewer than eight traction engines at work taking the sawn timber from those mills to Kingaroy. This had been going on for some years, and the railway has been losing the whole of the revenue that was derivable from the carriage of that timber and produce from Nanango to Kingaroy. I would also remind hon. members that there were also a very large number of horse and bullock teams engaged in drawing sawn timber to Kingaroy, and in bringing logs to the mills. In Nanango itself there is also a very up-to-date and well-equipped butter factory, and I am given to understand that the Nanango butter obtained a gold medal at the Franco-British Exhibition. That is another industry there that can be very much extended as soon as they can get easier and quicker railway communication, as I would point out to hon. members that it does not do either cream or butter any good to be carted too many miles over rough roads. If hon. members will turn to the report of the Commissioner, they will find that he gives a full description of the route. The Commissioner says—

The character of the country is of volcanic formation, from red to chocolate in colour, and very fertile, especially in the far-famed Coolabunia Scrub.

I did not say anything about the Coolabunia Scrub. That is very thickly settled, and this railway will practically run through the middle of the scrub. There are also good alluvial black-soil flats under cultivation, but not very much at present, and at the terminus—that is, the Nanango township—the soil is somewhat sandy. In the past that has been used as an argument against the building of this line to Nanango, because they said that part of the country was poor and sandy. I say that we have had to build railways very frequently through country that is poor and sandy for considerable distances

[4 p.m.] in order to get at fertile country, but in this instance the line is running all through rich country until it comes just in the vicinity of Nanango.

Provided we can get the route down to Yarraman Creek school in the direction I have indicated—that is 7 miles to the right of the route that was originally surveyed through the poor forest

country—it will run again, after leaving Nanango, right away down to Yarraman Creek school, a distance of some 15 or 16 miles, through exceptionally rich scrub country. The Commissioner further says with respect to works—

The earthworks generally will be light, with no engineering difficulties. The black-soil flats at Barker's Creek are subject to flood, and a high-level bridge above flood mark would necessarily be very long and expensive. I propose, therefore, to build a low-level bridge, and to cross the flats on the surface.

With respect to this remark of the Commissioner's that the black-soil flats are subject to flood, I made particular inquiry whilst I was there as to whether these flood waters were strong current waters or whether they were practically back waters, and the people who were living there told me that they had no fear at all from the current waters on the flats; that the waters came over the flats, and when the floods went down simply ran away. There was practically no danger at all from flood waters; the flats became simply covered with water. As a proof of that they told me that none of their fences had ever been washed away. It is proposed that the railway should run along the main road quite a considerable distance, and the total area of private land to be resumed will be about 100 acres. The estimated cost of the 16 or 17 miles is £55,000, equal to £3,393 per mile, and it probably can be reduced. The Commissioner estimates that the revenue to start with will amount to £3,500 per annum, and working expenses £2,000 per annum, leaving a net revenue of £1,500 per annum to meet interest on the capital cost. I think when the line gets really into working order there will be no loss at all. The line from Kilkivan Junction to Kingaroy last year earned £400 per mile, leaving a net revenue of £3 10s. 1d. per cent. on the capital, so that it is not at all unreasonable to expect that the further extension of this Kilkivan line will, at any rate, make it pay better.

Mr. MAUGHAN: According to the Commissioner's last annual report, it is £5 8s. 10d.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am very pleased the hon. member has looked up the Commissioner's report. This report of Mr. Thallon's which I am quoting from is dated 26th June last, because plans were first tabled on 29th June this year, so the Commissioner was quoting the returns of 1907-08, not 1908-09, but it makes the case all the better. There is a description of the railway district in the Commissioner's report. Of course, it lies with the people of the district, after the Commissioner and the Legislative Council approve of the plans, to say whether they desire the railway to be built or not. With these remarks, which I hope the hon. member for Clermont will not think are too protracted—I have endeavoured to give the fullest information I possibly can to hon. members—I beg to move the resolution standing in my name.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): I do not desire to occupy the attention of the Committee at any length. I have no objection to the extension of this railway from Kingaroy to Nanango. I think it is one which is in every sense justified, not only from the remarks which fell from the Minister, but from the local knowledge of every member of this House. It is generally conceded to be one of the lines we ought to pass through without very much discussion. Nevertheless, some members on this side of the House may have something to say regarding it, particularly those members who had not an opportunity yesterday of expressing themselves. I merely justify myself by saying that personally I regard the line as a very important one, and one that should have been constructed many years ago.

Mr. Lennon.]

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): I simply rise to give my whole-hearted support to this project. Perhaps I may say, for the information of hon. members opposite, that for the period I had the honour to represent the Burnett I urged the construction of this line, and I knew of no district in Queensland, then or now, which is more entitled to railway communication. It has proved itself so far to be a source of vast revenue to the railway division. With regard to the figures given by the Minister just now, may I supplement his remarks by pointing out to the Committee how the line from Kilkivan to Kingaroy has served a useful purpose to our revenue. On page 67 of the Commissioner's report we find these remarkable figures: In 1904-5, the line from Kilkivan Junction to Kingaroy paid £1 19s. 3d. per cent.; in 1905-6 it jumped to £2 5s. 3d. per cent.; in 1906-7 to £1 2s. 8d. per cent.; in 1907-8, for some reason, it dropped to £3 10s. 1d., but last year, 1908-9 we find that it paid no less than £5 3s. 10d. per cent. When I was the member for Burnett we used to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to catch the early coach from Kilkivan to Nanango, and we went through two or three big stations, but now the whole scene is changed—there has been a great transformation. I think by extending this line to Nanango the excellent results obtained in the first section will be maintained right to Nanango. I am very glad to hear the Minister say that the Government proposed to establish a regular network of railways in that particular part of Queensland, which I think everyone must admit has been too long neglected. Before I sit down I would just like to pay a tribute to the splendid work in the House and outside done by the late member for Burnett, Mr. Alfred Jones. (Hear, hear!) He never lost an opportunity of representing the claims of the Burnett district to railway communication, and I take this opportunity of placing on record the fact. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. HODGE (*Burnett*): I am very pleased indeed to see that the Government recognise the claims of the Nanango district. For some twenty years past a railway league has been established in that centre, with the object of getting railway communication. There is not the slightest doubt that the people of the district have been suffering—I will not say from an injustice—but they certainly have been suffering from the lack of railway communication. You, Mr. Armstrong, are acquainted with the district, and you know its possibilities, and you are familiar with the developments that have taken place in consequence of other railways that have been built in the district. We have a bright example of that development in the case of the country referred to by the senior member for Ipswich, which shows conclusively that, instead of deteriorating, our railway system there has been paying handsomely, and that the revenue returns are increasing year by year. According to the report of the Commissioner, there are 81½ miles of railway from Kilkivan Junction to Kingaroy, and he estimates the earnings at £400 per mile. I do not quite agree with the Commissioner's estimate that the earnings for this extension will be only £94 per mile. From Murgon to Kingaroy is a distance of something less than 30 miles, and I can say, without fear of contradiction, that two-thirds of the revenue is collected from that section of the line; and taking into consideration the quality of the country that this line will traverse, I cannot understand how the Commissioner arrives at such a low estimate of the probable earnings.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is better to under-estimate than to over-estimate the earnings.

[*Mr. Maughan.*]

Mr. HODGE: I quite recognise that, but at the same time I think that, had he placed the earnings at £400 per mile for this extension, he would still have been under the mark. It is one of the most magnificent pieces of country it is possible to see. There is not the slightest doubt the Minister was perfectly right when he said it is one of the finest—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: One of the many fine districts.

Mr. HODGE: The hon. gentleman spoke of it as one of the finest districts, and I quite agree with him that it is one of the finest districts in Queensland, and one that will certainly give a very good return for any money that may be expended in giving it railway communication. No better extension could possibly be submitted to Parliament than this and the one that was referred to by the senior member for Ipswich, and, as the hon. member stated, the return from that line for last year was over 5 per cent. Before that line was constructed some of the farms that are now fetching fabulous prices could have been picked up for 10s. per acre. If you tried to buy one of them at the present time, I question whether you would not have to pay ten lovely golden sovereigns per acre. The same remark applies to the land which this line will tap. A short time ago the Government threw open to selection some thirty odd selections in the Nanango district. It is over 16 miles from Kingaroy to Nanango, and to get to those selections at the nearest point is a distance of nearly 3 miles. The selections were thrown open at from £4 to £6 per acre, and they were all taken up under special priority conditions with the exception of eight, which were taken up under the ordinary agricultural farm conditions. In many cases there were as many as ten applicants for a farm. There is another matter to which I wish to refer. The Secretary for Railways referred to the likelihood of other branches being extended into this part of the district, and I would like him to take into consideration the fact that the Government have a vast deal of unalienated land there, and it would be very wise on their part if they were to extend their railways, and let settlement follow.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is what I want.

Mr. HODGE: At the present time it would be possible for the Government to put anything from £1 to £1 10s. an acre upon the land before any railways are constructed, and it would go off like hot pies. The same thing would happen with regard to those lands that has happened in connection with the lands to which I referred at Nanango. The Assembly seems favourably disposed towards this line, and I believe that hon. members recognise it will be a good thing for the country if the line is built.

Mr. CORSER (*Maryborough*): I have very much pleasure in supporting this railway. I have known the country intimately for many years, and can say that it is all that it has been described as being by the Minister. The only thing to be regretted is that the line was not extended many years ago. The land is undoubtedly good for the first 8½ miles, and after you reach Nanango there is a very large area of splendid scrub country which would have been closely settled if it had not been such a great distance from railway communication. If this line is constructed, I have no doubt at all that there will be a very large amount of settlement, and those who are now on the rich lands in that district will be able to prosecute their work very much better and more profitably than they can at the present time. Many of the settlers have been stopped from cultivating as much as they

desired simply on account of the distance they had to cart their crops. I am also very pleased to hear that it is the intention of the Government to connect the railway from the Downs with Kingaroy. No doubt that is one of those lines that should be linked up, as it would be an immense advantage to the people on the Downs. Many of them would like to reach the Northern portion of Queensland by that route. The line would pass through very good land, and it would bring about a large amount of settlement. I also noticed that the Minister spoke of another line connecting Nanango with Blackbutt. I think that is a question requiring a great deal of consideration before anything is decided upon; and I hope that before the Minister asks this Chamber to vote for such a line, he will consider this point—that it will be taking two lines into the same district from competitive ports. The Nanango district is not only connected with the port of Brisbane, *vid* Kilkivan, but it is also connected with the port of Maryborough. I mention this, not in any way against a network of railways when the time arrives when we can afford to build them, but because the enormous Burnett district extends very much to the north-west of this place, and there is no railway communication with that portion of the district at all, although there are millions of acres of land that could be closely and profitably settled.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The scheme that I outline would open up that country.

Mr. CORSER: I only ask the hon. gentleman, before he asks this Chamber to agree to such a scheme, to consider the advisability of urging railway construction in a more northerly direction. I do not intend to detain the Committee further, because I do not think there can be two opinions as to this being a most desirable line to construct.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I think this is a railway that will commend itself to members on both sides; and, after the lengthy speech of the Secretary for Railways, and the descriptive manner in which he pointed out the advantages to be found in the country through which the line will pass, I do not think there will be much opposition as far as the building of the line is concerned. There is one point in the Commissioner's report which is worthy of notice, and that is the area of the land to be resumed for the purpose of building the railway.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: 100 acres.

Mr. McLACHLAN: And is the remainder of the land private land?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Except where the line goes along the main road.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I think the fact that we have to resume land at all should be an object lesson to Queensland, and should be a warning in connection with the further alienation of land. We never know where we may have to build railways; and if we alienate land in this way it means that we have to resume it in the future at a very much higher price than the Crown received for the land. I rose principally to speak about the necessity for including in this motion some provision with respect to the payment of a minimum wage in the construction of the line. A lengthy discussion took place yesterday on the inclusion of a provision for the payment of a minimum wage in connection with the construction of another line; and the matter was so fully debated and the case so forcibly placed before the Committee that I do not intend to reiterate the arguments used. I did not speak on the question yesterday; but prior to the last general election, when speaking on the Address in Reply,

I advocated the principle that we should have a national minimum wage. I was then of opinion, as I am now, that no adult man should be asked to work for less than 1s. an hour.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I recognise the fact that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley did not speak yesterday on the subject, but our Standing Orders provide that a debate cannot take place on a question already decided in the same session. I must therefore ask the hon. member to confine himself to the specific question now before the Committee.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I propose to move the insertion, after paragraph 1, of the following words:—"That the House approves that a minimum wage of 8s. a day be paid to adult workers thereon." I propose to do this for the purpose of securing that the men working on this line shall be paid a minimum wage of 8s. a day.

The PREMIER: I rise to a point of order. Manifestly no business can be done if, after a question is discussed at extraordinary length and decided, it is allowed to be discussed over again.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

The PREMIER: My point of order is that the Committee should consider only such matters as have been referred to it by the House.

Mr. MULLAN: The whole question is before the House.

Mr. COYNE: You are a bit premature.

The PREMIER: My point is that it is not in order to discuss the question of a minimum wage, which was decided yesterday, in connection with this motion.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already given my ruling that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley is not in order in debating a matter that has already been decided this session; and if my ruling is wrong, it is for the Committee to say so. The point of order raised by the Premier is in confirmation of the ruling I have already given.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I accepted your ruling, Mr. Armstrong, and proceeded to put myself in order by moving the insertion, after paragraph (1), of these words—

That the House approves that a minimum wage of eight shillings a day be paid to the adult workers thereon.

I do not propose to discuss the matter at any length, as a long discussion on the question took place yesterday.

The PREMIER: What is the use of moving it at all?

Mr. McLACHLAN: To my mind it is the correct thing to have a minimum wage clause included in all railway proposals, and for that reason I move the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: In view of the ruling I have given, I cannot put the amendment. The amendment is out of order, and I refuse to put it from the chair.

Mr. LENNON: I consider that the effect of your ruling, Mr. Armstrong, will be that it will be impossible to get any amendment in any measure. I feel satisfied that you have no desire to so hamper members that it will be impossible for them to introduce amendments. I would like to state that this party has no desire to prolong discussion, and that the motion can go through in half an hour so far as we are concerned. I therefore hope you will reconsider your ruling and view the matter in a broader light, and not establish a precedent that I think will, perhaps, cause you regret in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I must make some explanation to the Committee. At an earlier stage I called the hon. member for Fortitude Valley to order for discussing a matter that has already been decided this session; and it must be obvious to the Committee that I should be out of order if I were to accept and put to the Committee an amendment regarding the

[4.30 p.m.] same matter. With regard to the question raised by the leader of the Opposition, the hon. member must know, as every other hon. member must know, that no individual occupying the position of Chairman of Committees for the time being will burke discussion, but the member occupying the chair must conduct the business of the Committee in accordance with the Standing Orders. For the information of hon. members I will read Standing Order 71. It says—

A question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same in substance as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

I refer hon. members to the business-paper for to-day, where they will find the hon. member for Gympie yesterday moved the following amendment to be inserted after paragraph (1) of the motion then before the Committee:—

That the House approves that a minimum wage of eight shillings a day be paid to the adult workers thereon.

The amendment which the hon. member for Fortitude Valley desires to move on the present occasion is the same in substance and form as that amendment. Therefore, I must, in accordance with the Standing Orders, rule that the amendment cannot be put.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): I just rise to point out that in 1908 there were two railways discussed in this Chamber, the Mount Elliott Railway and the Lawn Hill Railway, and the Chamber allowed the same discussion to take place on both those railways, owing to the fact that the two railways were in different parts of the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that I am Chairman at the present time, and that it is my ruling which is under discussion. It is for the Committee to decide whether I am right or wrong, and any reference to what another Chairman has done does not affect that question.

Mr. LENNON: I am sorry you have not seen your way to reconsider your ruling in this matter. It is the desire of hon. members on this side to facilitate the transaction of business, and not in any way to retard the business of the Committee. I gave the Committee an assurance that this amendment would be decided within half an hour, and I can do no more than that. Therefore, I am under the necessity of moving that your ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): According to Standing Order 157 we must consider, in Committee of the whole House, only such business as is referred to the Committee by the House. That is the procedure, unless we are going to make Standing Orders as we go along. I am perfectly content to be guided by a majority decision of the Chamber, but it is clear that until the contrary is determined we can only consider such matters as are referred to the Committee by the House. Standing Order 157 says—

The Committee shall consider only such matters as have been referred to it by the House.

The motion referred to the Committee relates to the approval of the plans, etc., of a certain railway. That motion we passed only fifteen minutes ago. Everybody approved of passing it, and everybody who has spoken since has

approved of the plans. Now a proposition is made that the motion be amended in a certain way, and the Chairman has ruled the amendment out of order, quoting in support of his ruling Standing Order 71. We were all taught to read and write at school, and as reasonable men and men of the world we should be able to understand a sentence written in plain English. Standing Order 71 reads as follows:—

A question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same in substance as a question or amendment which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

It is contended that the proposition that 8s. a day should be the minimum wage paid to adults employed on the construction of this line is not the same as the amendment moved last night.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is a different line altogether.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; this is a different line, but one point I want to insist upon is that there is no question as to whether we shall build this line or not. No one is objecting to the line, but what is proposed is that when the railway is being constructed the men employed on it shall be paid a minimum wage of 8s. a day. That principle I approve of, and I voted for it last night, and I would vote for it again if this amendment was allowed and went to a division. But the question before us is a question of procedure, which is of more importance than any other question that can come before us. It is a question which is above party, and I hope we shall never settle the constitutional procedure of this Committee on party lines. A motion to disagree with the Chairman's ruling has been moved by the leader of the Opposition. One would expect that in such a case the mover would give reasons for his action.

Mr. LENNON: I did not want to waste time.

Mr. LESINA: There would be no waste of time in producing such reasons as will enable us to come to a decision which will guide the Committee in the future. If there is any precedent for the objection to the Chairman's ruling, then that precedent should be quoted for the information of hon. members. If the Chairman is determined to depart from precedent, he can only do so with the approval of the Committee. This House makes its own rules. It is a self-governing democracy. One member is as good as another, each member has one vote, and one vote only, and we fix the procedure of the House by the decision of the majority. If the Chairman is backed up in a certain line of action by the majority, then a precedent is established by the majority. I approach this matter with an entirely open mind, which is the only way in which we can arrive at a reasonable conclusion. I am inclined to agree with the Chairman's reading of Standing Order 71, and with his view that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McLachlan, is the same in substance as the amendment which was negatived by the Committee last night. It is true that this is a different railway, but the amendment is precisely the same as the one which was negatived last night, which was that the men working on the construction of the railway should be paid a minimum wage of 8s. a day. The amendment which it is desired to submit this afternoon is couched in the same phraseology as the one dealt with last night, and negatived by a majority of one after a long debate. That being so, the Chairman refuses to put the proposed amendment of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. As the Premier has said, if that amendment can be discussed on this motion, it can be brought up again on the next resolution, and we can go on speaking on this one question for

[*Mr. Armstrong.*]

the rest of the session. Some members did not speak on the matter last night, although they have spoken on similar propositions on previous occasions. It appears to me that, before this can be done, members should look at Standing Orders 71 and 157, and they should also see if there are any precedents established in previous sessions to guide this Committee. If they do, and they show that the Chairman's ruling is wrong, then I shall vote against it. But if, on the other hand, it cannot be shown that we are departing from the Standing Orders, which protect me as well as anyone else in this House, and which give no more privileges to me than to anyone else, then I will support the Chairman's ruling.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): I contend, Mr. Armstrong, that your ruling is wrong. Standing Order No. 71 was drawn up to prevent a repetition of amendments of the same character in the same measure. The Standing Order says that the question must be the same in substance as the question previously put. Well, that does not apply in this case, as this motion is not the same in substance as the one which was proposed yesterday. The House in its wisdom yesterday decided by a majority that 8s. a day was too much as a minimum wage on that particular line which we decided yesterday.

The PREMIER AND OTHER GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. WHITE: The House decided nothing of the sort.

Mr. COYNE: This House decided that 8s. a day was too much to pay for a minimum wage.

The PREMIER AND OTHER GOVERNMENT MEMBERS (loudly): No, no! No such thing!

Mr. COYNE: We are dealing now with another railway line altogether, hundreds of miles away from the one we decided yesterday, and we are asking that 8s. per day be established as the minimum wage on this particular line. I submit that they are two different questions altogether. They are not the same in substance, by reason of the distance separating the two districts. I think this Standing Order was wisely drafted, and the men who drew it up did so to prevent members of this House from submitting questions of the same substance, although they may be in different terms and different words, after the first question was decided. Looking at it from that point of view, which is the rational point of view to take, it will be seen that the amendment of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley is in order.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): Mr. Armstrong, I am sorry that you have given the ruling you have, because it looks as if it is going to lead to a waste of time. I am prepared to vote against your ruling. There are only two objections made to this being in order. The first objection taken to it is that it is the same in substance as the question which was decided yesterday. The second is that the Committee shall consider only such matters as have been referred to it by the House—that is, submitted by the Speaker when he is about to leave the chair for the House to go into Committee. I will take those two points. The resolution which the Minister proposes to-day with reference to the plans of this particular railway is the same in form as the railway resolution he tabled yesterday, but it is not the same in substance, because it applies to a different railway entirely. The motion proposed by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley is the same in form as the one proposed yesterday, but it is different in substance because this is a different railway entirely

to the one we dealt with yesterday. The surroundings and conditions are different in both districts.

The TREASURER: What was the rate of wages proposed in both cases?

Mr. HARDACRE: The rate we propose to-day is the same as that proposed yesterday. But I contend that whilst a man may quite easily vote against a minimum wage of 8s. a day on the railway presented yesterday, he may find the conditions so different as to justify him in voting for the minimum wage for this railway. Suppose this railway was proposed in the Northern part of Queensland, it might be quite justifiable for a member to ask that a minimum wage be fixed there, as the conditions are quite different to those existing in Southern Queensland. Would that be the same in substance as the motion we decided yesterday?

The PREMIER: It is just the same thing.

Mr. HARDACRE: No; it is not. A member might have voted against the minimum wage for the railway proposed yesterday, and yet vote in favour of it for the railway proposed to-day. The Standing Order only applies to resolutions of a general character. If, yesterday, we had tried to move on the railway proposal that a minimum wage be paid in all Government railways, we would be distinctly out of order in trying to get a similar resolution passed in connection with this railway. We only desire to apply it to the particular railway for which it is proposed. I think that settles that matter of the first objection. With regard to the second—that we have no power to submit anything that has not come before the Speaker—we are not doing anything outside of what is consistent with the Standing Orders.

The PREMIER: You might just as well say that the resident engineer should have red hair.

Mr. HARDACRE: We would be entirely in order in saying that we think this railway should be constructed on a 4 feet 6 inches gauge instead of a 3 feet 6 inches gauge. That would be in order to apply to the construction of this railway. And we have also the right to say that this railway shall be constructed within the next six months. In the same way, we have the right to say that we will construct this railway provided a certain rate of wages is paid, otherwise we are opposed it. I maintain that we are entirely right in this matter, and I am sorry that the Chairman has ruled against it, because there was no intention on the part of the Opposition to waste any time, and, when we took a vote on it, we would have let it go.

Mr. LENNON: Mr. Armstrong, whilst I am not going to say that I agree with your ruling, I am going to ask the permission of the Committee to withdraw my motion.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: I had no idea when I moved it that it was likely to provoke a lengthy discussion. As I do not want to delay the business, but am desirous of pushing on the business of the House, I take this opportunity of withdrawing my motion now with the view of bringing the question up again on some future occasion.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): Before the amendment is withdrawn, I would like to know whether it is going to be taken as a precedent or not.

Mr. LESINA: We are always making precedents. We make precedents day by day.

Mr. MANN: Before you put that question to withdraw the amendment of the deputy leader

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of the Opposition, I would like to ask a question on your ruling. Yesterday we decided against putting a minimum wage of 8s. a day on the construction of a railway in Southern Queensland. I would like to know if a railway is being constructed in the district of the hon. member for Clermont, and we are desirous of putting on a minimum wage of 8s. a day, will your ruling and interpretation, in which you are backed up by the hon. member for Clermont, prevent us from moving that 8s. a day be paid in the hon. member for Clermont's district?

Mr. LESINA: Yes.

Mr. MANN: That is the ruling, and therefore when the next railway comes on—which is from Mount Morgan to the Dawson Valley in the Central district—I cannot move for 8s. a day. You can quite understand the lines I go on. If yesterday we asked for 8s. a day in Southern Queensland and were refused, would I be in order in moving to-day, if a line was to be built, say, at Burketown—would I be in order in moving for 8s. a day on that line?

The PREMIER: What you asked yesterday was to fix the wages.

Mr. MANN: On one particular line. I reserve to myself the same right to-day, because I claim this railway is further north, and the cost of living will be appreciably dearer than on the Darling Downs. The Government said distinctly they were not in favour of paying 8s. a day.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no! and interruption.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: The Government members by their votes say that 8s. a day was too much to pay.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS (loudly): No, no!

Mr. MAY: Practically so.

Mr. MANN: Every member who spoke on the Government side gave it as his opinion—that is, everyone who voted with the Government—

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. member is questioning the statements of hon. members in this Chamber. I cannot allow this from either side of the House. It is entirely out of order.

Mr. MANN: I pointed out yesterday that the hon. member for Moreton accused me of voting against the fixed rate of wages ruling in the district, and I denied it, and you did not call him to order.

The PREMIER: I rise to a point of order. Has permission been given to withdraw the motion? Has it been given, and can a member discuss the very question that you have ruled out of order—can he discuss that question now?

The CHAIRMAN: I certainly think the remarks of the hon. member rather wide. At the same time, he rose to object to the withdrawal of the objection to my ruling being made if it was to create a precedent, and for certain other considerations.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: I thank you for the explanation. I wish it to be clearly understood whether, in moving what we did yesterday, we are to be debarred from moving a similar amendment on the next line. You may rule we cannot do it on this line, because it is in the Southern district; but the next line we have to deal with is in the Central district, where the living is higher; and I wish to know if the hon. member for Clermont is correct in giving his definition—that your ruling actually precludes me from moving that a minimum wage of 8s. a day shall be paid on a line in the Central district? If that

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is so, I trust you will consider your ruling well before insisting upon it, because it will be a very serious matter. Even hon. members on the Government side, although they think 8s. a day too much in the Southern division—

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no! No, no!

Hon. R. PHILIP: Not a single member on this side said so.

Mr. WHITE: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member for Cairns is going back to the very same question on which you pulled him up a few moments ago. I think the hon. member for Cairns takes up too much of the time of this House.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the objection to my ruling, raised by the deputy leader of the Opposition, be withdrawn. That question is before the House. I would like to say, in the kindest way possible, that I regret to see he has withdrawn the motion, because, in withdrawing it, the question of the right or wrong of my ruling is not decided. I think I am absolutely right, and I am surrounded by authorities to support me in the ruling I have given, and I should very much rather the Committee had decided as to whether my ruling was right or wrong. As it is, my ruling is not either upheld or otherwise. No precedents can guide us, and as the objection to my ruling has been withdrawn, then my ruling must stand.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): The position is a somewhat peculiar one. You rule, I understand, that because an amendment on a new line of railway was moved yesterday afternoon and decided against the party on this side it cannot be moved again this afternoon or this session.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine himself to the question as to whether the motion moved by the deputy leader of the Opposition be withdrawn or not.

Mr. BARBER: I propose to point this out, that while the House was in session last year, at the time the Hampden-Mount Elliott Railway was before the House, the hon. member for Gregory moved an amendment while the Bill was in Committee. That was on the 15th April.

Mr. WHITE: Order! (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. BARBER: The amendment reads—

Provided that no workman shall be employed at any time upon the construction of the railway at a wage which is less than ten shillings per working day of eight hours.

The PREMIER: I rise to a point of order. I think, as a matter of courtesy to the Chair, leave should be given to withdraw the motion or not, and if they refuse to grant it, then the matter can be discussed. I think leave should be given or refused.

Mr. BARBER: I was just reading the words of the amendment moved at that time. On the following day, the 16th April, the other syndicate railway—that is, the Albert River line—the hon. member for Gregory moved what is practically the same amendment—that no able-bodied workmen shall be employed—

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. member is discussing the amendment which I moved out of order. I cannot allow a discussion of that kind to take place. He must confine himself to the question before the Committee.

Mr. BARBER: I am just stating that practically the same amendment was moved on two consecutive days last year on two different railway Bills, and, I understand, that because the amendment of the hon. member for Fortitude

Valley is practically the same as the amendment moved yesterday on another railway, you refuse to accept it.

Mr. MULCAHY: I regret that our leader has withdrawn the motion he moved.

Mr. LESINA: He asked the permission of the House.

Mr. MULCAHY: I quite realise that no motion can be withdrawn without the permission of the House. I regret that he has asked leave to withdraw the motion, but, owing to party discipline, I shall not oppose him.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that we are not discussing the withdrawal of the motion of the deputy leader of the Opposition, [5 p.m.] the question before the Committee is that my ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. MULCAHY: No; that is not it.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to hon. members that if one member, as the hon. member for Gympie did, rises in his place and objects to a motion being withdrawn, that motion cannot be withdrawn.

Mr. MULCAHY: Who objects to it?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You do.

Mr. MULCAHY: No, no!

The CHAIRMAN: I stand corrected. Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the amendment moved by the deputy leader of the Opposition be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Amendment withdrawn accordingly.

Original question put.

Mr. RYLAND: I would like to ask the Minister if he has any idea of the amount of repurchase money involved in connection with the resumption of private property through which this line is going. It would be interesting to know how much the property owners expect to get for the land resumed. The land will be enormously enhanced in value by the construction of the line, in some cases by, perhaps, £400 or £500.

The HOME SECRETARY: The arbitrators take that into consideration in deciding the claim.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They will probably get £2 or £3 an acre.

Mr. RYLAND: They may ask a large amount for resumption, when at the same time the line will enormously enhance the value of the land. I have recently read a report in the Press that in connection with a proposed railway to go through private land, the owners were offering the land for the railway free, and I think it would be a fair thing if the landowners in this district would do the same thing. I have known properties to be enhanced in value by thousands of pounds by the construction of a line, and the owners have also got thousands of pounds as compensation for the land resumed. They benefited by the enhanced value, and they also got compensation for the land which the Government took to build the line which enhanced the value of their property. It is necessary for the taxpayers of the country to know whether money is going to be given for resumed land in the way I have indicated. There is no justification for a line to be built in this way.

Mr. SOMERSET (*Stanley*): It seems to me that an Eldorado has been discovered in the Southern Burnett district. As a matter of fact, the Southern Burnett district has been just as good as it is now for a great many years, and it deserves a railway. The senior member for Maryborough has pointed out that it is quite unnecessary to give the Southern Burnett a rail-

way directly communicating with the metropolis, which is its natural port. I have risen purposely to say that I consider that the Southern Burnett can be served by a railway *via* Blackbutt to Brisbane even in preference to connecting it with the West by Oakey Creek and Darling Downs. I hope that the Minister, in his projected scheme of railway construction, will take care that the line is carried in the right direction through this particular country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why were you not in the Chamber when I was speaking?

Mr. SOMERSET: I was; but there seems to be some doubt—there is in my mind—as to what direction the railway will take.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I tried to make myself clear.

Mr. SOMERSET: I know the people at Nanango imagine that I have been opposed to Nanango having a railway at all, but that is not the case. I consider that Nanango, as one of the oldest townships in Queensland, and apart from the value of the district surrounding it, deserves a railway. The Royal Commission who examined that country and decided on the extension from Kilkivan, as well as the extension of the Brisbane Valley line, many years ago, decided to extend both lines, the one to Coolabunia Scrub, and the other to Stanley Gates, now known as the town of Moore. The one line was extended to Kingaroy, which is in the vicinity, at all events, of Coolabunia Scrub, while the other line was not extended to Stanley Gates, but only as far as Cressbrook Creek, which is 16 miles away.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is bound to come.

Mr. SOMERSET: It is being extended now, but under the guarantee principle. Many people on that route have been brought under the guarantee principle who would have had the line as far as Stanley Gates free from the rates they have been subjected to under that Act. In their interests I trust that the Southern Burnett will be connected with that line, because I am so confident of the value those lands will be to the railway system that I believe the people in the benefited area will be called upon to contribute very little indeed under the guarantee. I hope a line will either be constructed in the direction of Nanango or Tarong, as experts may decide. Although I do not profess to be a railway expert or to have any engineering training, still I claim to have a pretty good eye for country. I know, at all events, the best way to cut up country, fence it, and so on, to get the best out of it, and I think the same thing applies to a railway. I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the action of the late Mr. Jordan in doing away with the red-tape regulations that then existed in the Lands Department with regard to surveying grazing farms. It took me five years to get those regulations altered, and it was not until Mr. Jordan became Minister that they were altered, and grazing farms are now surveyed according to the features of the country, instead of to cardinal points as formerly.

Mr. LESINA: This has nothing to do with the question before the Committee.

Mr. SOMERSET: I am leading up to the question before the Committee. Between Kilkivan Junction and Kingaroy you have to cross a range, just as you have to cross a range between the Brisbane Valley and Kingaroy or the Southern Burnett. The country is being put to considerable expense in surmounting the difficulties of crossing the range to Blackbutt; but once that pinch or mountain is got over it will be comparatively easy to tap the Southern

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Burnett. I have known the Nanango district and the Southern Burnett since 1872, and I have always been of the opinion that a great deal of the Southern Burnett should be connected with the metropolis *via* the Blackbutt. If such a connection is not made, the people of that district will have to pay for a considerable extra mileage if they have to take their produce *via* Kilkivan or any other route to the metropolis. I am therefore in favour of direct communication *via* the Brisbane Valley.

Mr. HARDACRE: I desire briefly to express my appreciation of the Minister's endeavours to give the Committee all the information at his disposal. Nevertheless, that is not exactly the kind of information that I am desirous of obtaining. The information I would like to see placed before the Committee with regard to railway construction is expert opinion obtained from those who are competent to give the information, not only from the district point of view, but also from the engineering point of view, and so on.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The expert information is all condensed in the Commissioner's report.

Mr. HARDACRE: We have simply got one person's report. I think we ought to have the reports of all the experts submitted to us, together with the Commissioner's report; and I wish to enter my protest against the loose and hazy way in which information is supplied to us. In spite of all that has been said, how many members know anything at all about this railway or about the district? One or two, perhaps, who know the district know something about the railway, but I venture to say that 75 per cent. of the members of the Committee do not know one little bit whether it will be a good railway or a bad railway to construct, or whether it is likely to pay.

Hon. R. PHILP: You are quite wrong.

The HOME SECRETARY: The member to your right (Mr. Maughan) knows the district.

Mr. HARDACRE: I know, but we have no expert information before us except the Commissioner's report.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is based upon the reports of the experts.

Mr. HARDACRE: I think we should have the reports of the experts before us to enable us to judge the merits of the railway. So far as I can see, this is a railway that ought to have been put before a works committee. It appears that there are going to be, sooner or later, half a dozen railways converging on the one centre from half a dozen different points of the compass.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes; one from Dalby, one from Brisbane, one from Maryborough, one from Gympie, and one from somewhere else. All we know in a general way is that this is a rich district, and that a railway by some route is necessary to develop it. The only information I have to justify me in agreeing to the construction of this line is the Commissioner's report. He is more favourable than he is in connection with most railways that he recommends to this House, and for that reason I do not intend to oppose the line.

Hon. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): I think that if the Committee pass this railway it will only be keeping faith with the promise made to the

[*Mr. Somerset.*]

people of Nanango seven or eight years ago. The line was first tabled to go from Kilkivan to Nanango.

Mr. MAUGHAN: No; Coolabunia.

Hon. R. PHILP: No, to Nanango. Unfortunately there was not time to get the survey right through to Nanango. To my mind, the line should never have stopped at Kingaroy. I know the route, and I can say there is no better land in Queensland than along the route this railway will take. A great deal of it is like the Too-woombared soil, and, judging by the accounts we have heard, it has a good rainfall and grows splendid crops, and I am satisfied the line will lead to the settlement of a large number of farmers. That will be a good thing for the country. We cannot build too many railways of this sort, and I cannot understand any hon. member objecting to the construction of this line if he takes the trouble to read the Commissioner's report. He bases his report upon the information supplied to him by experts. There must be 25 per cent. of the members of this Committee who know the country. The first man to bring the necessity for railway construction in this district prominently before this Chamber was Mr. McCord, who was at one time member for Burnett. He assured us that there were millions of acres of Crown lands in the district, and that if railways were built there would be hundreds of thousands of people settled on those lands. This is the beginning of that. I hope the Burnett will be one network of railways some day. It is far better to devote our attention to settling people on good land with a good rainfall than to scatter them all over Queensland as we have been doing hitherto.

Mr. MANN: The Minister would have been well-advised, seeing there has been some discussion regarding rival routes, if he had had a map exhibited on the wall of the Chamber, so that hon. members might see for themselves.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The rival route discussion has died out.

Mr. MANN: I remember when the late hon. member for Warrego introduced a motion for linking up all the railways he had a large map hung on the wall so that hon. members might see for themselves which way the line would run. From what I have been able to gather this afternoon, it seems that this line will clash with a line by some other route.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. MANN: That was what I gathered from the remarks of the hon. member for Stanley. Of course, he spoke in a very low tone of voice, and I could not quite follow him. With regard to the Commissioner's report, if the Minister is desirous of building a railway, and he tells the Commissioner flatly that the railway has to be built, the Commissioner will naturally give as favourable a report as he can. I wish to point out that in the case of another line I know of, owing to the fact that it took the wrong route, I do not believe the line will pay for the next twenty years—in spite of the Commissioner's report. That shows how much value we can put on reports. It is claimed by members who know the country that this line will be a payable one, and that the country passed through is good, though the Commissioner's report says that some of the ground is rather poor. My object in getting up is to move an amendment, because yesterday the senior member for Rockhampton claimed that, in consequence of higher wages being paid in Northern New South Wales, the best men were leaving Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MANN: Perhaps I had better move the amendment, and then speak to it. The amendment I wish to propose is the insertion between paragraphs 1 and 2 of the following:—

And that the rate of pay be on a similar basis to that paid on the railway construction works in Northern New South Wales.

We have the assurance of the senior member for Rockhampton that numbers of our best workmen are leaving the State and going to New South Wales, and as a consequence there is a scarcity of good workmen in Queensland, which is a most serious state of affairs. The Premier said that if that was so, we must pay such a rate as will induce Queensland workmen to stay here to construct our railways. Members opposite would not accept the amendment proposed yesterday, and I wish to see if they have sufficient patriotic feeling to vote for same rate being paid in Queensland as is paid in Northern New South Wales.

The CHAIRMAN: In regard to this amendment I must give the same ruling as I gave in regard to the previous amendment.

Mr. RYLAND: I wish to ask the Minister if he can give us any idea of the amount of money that will have to be paid for the 100 acres of freehold properties to be resumed along the route of this railway. I would like to get this information, because if this route is too expensive, it should be within the jurisdiction of this Committee to look for another route. Seeing that the properties along the route will be enormously increased in value by the construction of the line, I think too big a price should not be expected for the land resumed, especially as I see there is likely to be a deficiency in connection with the line. Another point to be considered is the rate to be paid within the benefited area. A property worth £100 may be enhanced in value £900 by the construction of the line, while another property worth £900, on the verge of the area, may be enhanced in value only £100. Both properties after the construction of the line would be valued at £1,000, and each would have to pay the same rate.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. RYLAND: And the man whose property is enhanced £900 in value will perhaps get £400 or £500 from the Government for the part of his land which is resumed. I do not want to see men suffer injustice; but, when they are benefited by the construction of public works, I don't see why they should receive a great purse from the Government as well. All these expenses go to the capitalisation of the line and make it more expensive to the ratepayers. We have been told that we must not pay too high wages, because it will increase the capitalisation. In this matter of resumption we have an item that adds considerably to the capitalisation, and it is an item that should not come in at all.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Question! question!

Mr. RYLAND: I say that people should not be paid big sums for land resumed for the construction of a railway that enhances their property by thousands of pounds. I hope the Minister will give the Committee some information as to the amount to be paid for the resumption of freehold land along the route of the railway.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I really was not given an opportunity before of replying to the hon. member's question. I do not doubt his sincerity, but I must say there is no foundation for his fears. The hon. member has given a very lurid description of the immense

amount of money paid for resumptions to landowners benefited by railways going through their properties. As a matter of fact, the Railway Department always repurchase the land at as low a rate as possible, and it is always bought under arbitration. If it is decided that the 100 acres required to be resumed in connection with the construction of this railway is worth £3 an acre, then the owners will get £3 an acre. All those wild ideas about people getting £500 for half an acre of land resumed for railway purposes were exploded years ago. With respect to the question as to whether a landowner whose land is immediately adjacent to the line will pay the same rate as the landowner whose land is a number of [5.30 p.m.] miles away and is therefore very much less benefited, the fears of the hon. member are quite groundless, as the rate is struck according to the value of the land and the locality in which it is situated. The Railway Department have not the slightest idea of paying one penny more for the land to be resumed than is absolutely necessary.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked if the values taken were the unimproved values of the land or otherwise?

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I move that the resolution be agreed to.

Mr. LESINA: Under the power conferred upon hon. members by Standing Order 158, I move that the resolutions be amended by the insertion after paragraph (1) of the words—

That the House approves that a minimum wage of eight shillings a day be paid to the adult workers thereon.

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker.—I should like to ask your ruling with regard to the amendment. I am not quite sure whether the decision of a question in Committee yesterday would preclude the moving of the same amendment in the House to-day. The question of fixing the rate of wages to be paid on the railway was discussed in Committee yesterday, and the Committee decided it in the negative. To propose that amendment to-day, with the Speaker in the chair, is merely repeating what was done yesterday, and the motion is simply an obstructive one.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

The PREMIER: I ask your ruling, as to whether the question, having been settled in the negative yesterday, can be moved again with the Speaker in the chair to-day.

The SPEAKER: I accept implicitly the hon. member's information as to what he assures me occurred in Committee. On the other hand, I, as Speaker of the House, have no knowledge of what occurred in Committee other than the report from the Committee. Therefore, if a point of order is taken with regard to the proposal to insert these words, I am bound to say that I cannot see any reason why I should refuse the amendment.

HON. R. PHILP: I certainly think the amendment is not in order. It is quite outside the scope of the message from the Lieutenant-Governor. There is no rate of wages mentioned in that message. It simply recommends the appropriation for the construction of this railway. I take it that this House has no right to interfere in the matter of wages. That is a matter for the Commissioner for Railways.

Hon. R. Philp.]

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Mr. Lesina's amendment*) be so inserted put; and the House divided :—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Lesina
" Barber	" Mann
" Breslin	" Maughan
" Collins	" May
" Corser	" McLachlan
" Coyne	" Mulcahy
" Crawford	" Mullan
" Douglas	" Murphy
" Ferricks	" Nevitt
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryland
" Land	" Theodore
" Lennon	" Winstanley

Tellers : Mr. J. M. Hunter and Mr. Murphy.

NOES, 34.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Keogh
" Appel	" Kidston
" Armstrong	" Macartney
" Barnes, W. H.	" Mackintosh
" Boucharde	" Morgan
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Cottell	" Philp
" Cribb	" Rankin
" Denham	" Somerset
" Forrest	" Stodart
" Forsyth	" Swayne
" Fox	" Thorn
" Grayson	" Tolmie
" Hawthorn	" Walker
" Hodge	" White
" Hunter, D.	" Wienholt

Tellers : Mr. Wienholt and Mr. White.

PAIR.

Aye.—Mr. Bowman. No.—Mr. Roberts.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question put.

Mr. MANN : While we were in Committee, the Chairman refused to accept an amendment which I moved, just the same as he refused to accept the amendment of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McLachlan. I beg to move the insertion of the following words after the first paragraph of the resolution :—

And that the rate of pay be on a similar basis to that paid on the railway construction works in Northern New South Wales.

HON. R. PHILP : I submit that this amendment is entirely outside the scope of the Governor's message. We present the Governor's message to the House estimating what price this railway will cost, and now there is a proposal to fix the wages, and if this is agreed to it might interfere considerably with the message from the Governor. This House has no right to interfere with wages of any kind.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

HON. R. PHILP : We cannot increase the Estimates at all. If this House can regulate the wages of all Government employees, we shall have chaos in a very short time.

Mr. LESINA : Is this a point of order ?

HON. R. PHILP : Yes ; it is outside the scope of the Governor's message.

Mr. LESINA : There is no Governor's message.

The SPEAKER : Do I understand the hon. member for Townsville to raise that point of order ?

HON. R. PHILP : Yes.

[*Mr. Mann.*]

The SPEAKER : Order ! The point of order is taken that the amendment—the words which it is proposed to add to this motion—are out of order. The amendment reads—

That the rate of pay be on a similar basis to that paid for railway construction works in Northern New South Wales.

The point of order stated is that the amendment is irregular, inasmuch as it is outside the Lieutenant-Governor's message. That, I admit, is an intelligible view to take. If regret, however, I cannot see eye to eye with the hon. member on the point. What is the position ? The Committee have considered the question which has been referred to them by the House, as to whether a railway shall be built in a certain locality, and the Committee have reported that they consider it a desirable thing to do. Before the House adopts that report from the Committee, and decides that it will commit itself to the approval of the construction of the line, they desire to put in a qualifying condition—that if the line is to be built, it shall be built on the basis of a certain remuneration to those who are engaged in its construction. In the absence of any strong precedent which can lead me to think that I am wrong, I am bound to say that I think an amendment of that kind is quite within the functions of the House at this stage.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

The PREMIER : I would ask your ruling again on Standing Order No. 71, which reads :—

A question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same in substance as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

I ask your ruling as to whether the amendment now proposed is not the same in substance—the fixing of the wages on this railway by the Committee—as that which has been already settled ? The fixing of wages by the Committee is the substance of both motions, and I ask your ruling whether it is in order in moving that motion.

The SPEAKER : I understand the hon. gentleman's point is : That an amendment in regard to a minimum of 8s. a day has already been before the House, and that this motion conflicts with it. I am prepared to say that there is a similarity—a relationship between the two propositions, but I do not take the view that they are identical, either verbally or in substance.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

The SPEAKER : The original amendment was, that a minimum of 8s. a day should be paid. That has been disposed of, and a proposition now made is, that the rate of remuneration shall be similar—identical with that which is in operation in the Northern districts of New South Wales. I admit that there is a relationship, but I do not think the identity is so close as to bring the amendment into conflict with the Standing Orders.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Amendment (*Mr. Mann's*) put and negatived. Original question put and passed.

MOUNT MORGAN-DAWSON RIVER RAILWAY.

APPROVAL OF PLANS.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions :—

(1.) That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Mount Morgan to the Dawson River, in length 68 miles 51 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, the 3rd November, 1909.

(2.) That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council, for their approval, by message in the usual form.

Mr. RYLAND: I beg to move that we alter the instruction to the Committee by inserting after paragraph 1 the following words:—

That the House approves that a minimum wage of eight shillings and sixpence per day be paid to all adult workers employed thereon.

The SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. member has overlooked the fact that this motion was passed as formal yesterday, and I regret to say there can be no discussion.

COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving the approval of the plans in accordance with the above resolution, said: Originally there were two routes proposed for the [7 p.m.] opening up of the Dawson land.

One projected route was from Westwood on the Central line, running practically south-west to the coalfields, and the other route, the project for which is now before the Committee, is a line running from Mount Morgan, which, as all the members of the Committee are aware, is a centre containing a very large population, and works are also carried on there that require the supply of very large quantities of fuel every year. I noticed previously that one hon. member who is interested in that district—the hon. member for Fitzroy—was desirous of getting some information about the route over which this proposed railway would go, so I took the trouble, in view of this railway coming before the Committee this evening, to look up the difference there would be in the railgale from the Valley of the Dawson, *via* Westwood, than there would be from Mount Morgan, for coal and produce, taking it by the route the surveyors and engineers at present recommend. I find that the railgale distance would be about 49 miles more, and I ran it out in this way, subject to correction by hon. members who are better acquainted with the locality than I am myself: From Westwood to Kabra 20 miles, and to Mount Morgan 30 miles, as shown by the plan on the table of the House—that is a difference in favour of the route of 49 or 50 miles, as against going round on the Central line *via* Westwood, and then going round by Kabra to Mount Morgan. Something has been said, during the discussion on the two previous lines that I had the pleasure of introducing to the Committee, about the opening up of country to precede settlement. Now, part of the railway policy of the Government is to build railways in localities which are suitable for settlement, but upon which there is practically no settlement, and this is the first of these railways. This is the first section of a projected line to connect the Central with the Western route, *via* the Valley of the Dawson, and *via* Taroom, to a point on the Western Railway. It is probable that in the future this Committee will be asked to pass plans of another section—that is, a section from the Western Railway towards Taroom, but at the present moment what we have to consider is what I call the first section of a line to connect the Central Railway with the Western Railway, and a line that is, to precede settlement in a country that is eminently suitable for settlement. I had not the pleasure during the recess of going over the route of this projected line. I very much wished to do so, but I had not the time, but I understand that there are large areas of Crown lands that are fit for close settlement. I am relying upon the reports of the officers of the Lands Department, with which the Railway Department have been working in this direction. The Railway Department is

endeavouring to work with the Lands Department in building railways to precede settlement, and this line, I am happy to say, is one of the first to be submitted to the Committee. Now, what do we find? On the east of the projected route, there are large areas of scrub land, which, after Mount Morgan is left a few miles, will be served not wholly, but to a very great extent, by the present railway. We were not quite satisfied that the route was that which would best serve those lands, so quite recently I had another inspection made, with a view to altering the route of the line somewhat more to the east, so as to get in closer touch or to run through part of these scrub lands, but it was found again that the railway engineer and surveyor had been quite right in the first instance—that there were physical difficulties in the way. The railway itself, on the route that is projected, for the first few miles from Mount Morgan is rather difficult to build, and had we tried to go further to the east, so as to get deeper into these scrub lands that exist there, it was found that the cost of the line would have been practically prohibitive, and for quite a number of miles after you had passed the rough country it would have been necessary to run through flood country. I have in my hand a report, dated 29th October, made by Mr. Swindon, one of our railway surveyors. He says here—

We get into flooded ground, which continues for at least 4 miles, varying in depth from 2 to 10 or 12 feet. There is no mistake about this matter, as the butts of the trees all over the plain are discovered showing a definite flood mark, which can be seen from 15 to 20 chains away.

So you see that every endeavour was made by the Railway Department to get as near to these areas of scrub land as possible. It was not possible to get anything nearer to them than the projected route, which is at that particular place on the western side of the Dee River. As you get nearer to the coalfield this railway will run through quite large areas of scrub land, and when we reach the coalfield the reports at the present moment, I believe, are not too promising, but I am given to understand that the boring shows a central seam of coal at a depth of 140 feet. These borings have been undertaken by the Government in order to locate the right site for a shaft. I am also given to understand that, when the line is built, the Mount Morgan Company are prepared to take something like 25,000 tons of coal per annum from this coalfield for five years. That in itself is a big inducement for the Government to proceed with the construction of the line. But, to my mind, the bigger inducement is that we are taking the railway into country that is fit for close settlement, and to precede that settlement.

Mr. LENNON: Are the boring operations temporarily abandoned by the Government?

The PREMIER: No; they are going on now.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Probably the Premier will be able to give the Committee fuller information on that subject than I, because he knows more about that part of the business. I have no desire to take up the time of the Committee further than to say that the Mount Morgan Company have intimated that when the railway is built they are prepared to take 25,000 tons of coal per annum for five years.

Mr. RYAN: If the coal suits. They do not guarantee to take it absolutely.

The PREMIER: They have decided that point already. They have had a sample of over 100 tons.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know that it is necessary for me to say

Hon. W. T. Paget.]

very much more. I have intimated that this is one of those lines that all hon. members who have spoken desire to see built. We not only desire to see railways built in closely settled localities where the settler has no facilities for carrying his produce by rail, but we desire to see localities given railway communication where the land is suitable for close settlement, and for that communication to precede settlement. The Commissioner goes very fully into the question of route. The total length of the line will be 68 miles 51 chains. It starts at Mount Morgan and ends practically on the coalfield. Regarding the character of the country, Mr. Thallon says—

For 8 miles from Mount Morgan the country is very difficult for railway construction, the mountains coming very close to the river, while the cuttings will be hard. After the vicinity of Mount Morgan is left there is not much settlement other than a few goldfield homestead leases until the dairying country is entered, milk or butter being disposed of in Mount Morgan.

Then he goes on to say that a very large extent of the country has good soil and water-bearing gravel at a depth of 30 feet from the surface, which is an extremely valuable asset. Then he goes on to say that prickly pear has made its appearance on this country, but can now be easily eradicated. That is a further reason why we should build this railway. It is close settlement that will, in my opinion, cope with this great evil.

The PREMIER: And no other thing will cope with it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And no other thing will cope with it. The Commissioner further says—

After passing the Don River (61 miles), a large extent of brigalow scrub is traversed, reaching to within a few miles of the Dawson. The country improves again as the Dawson is approached, there being a considerable extent of open forest, with good soil. Towards the terminus, a brigalow and belah scrub is passed through, with good soil: and this, no doubt, will be quickly taken up and settled when a market is made available by the advent of the railway.

Speaking again as to the wisdom of connecting up the Dawson Valley, *via* Mount Morgan, I would like to point out that by connecting up directly with Mount Morgan not only will the Mount Morgan Company have a chance of getting coal economically, but the people who take up the land along the route will have a very big market practically at their doors in Mount Morgan. Thousands of people are there at the present time who probably draw all their produce from the South. From this country within a few miles of Mount Morgan they will be able to obtain those supplies, provided the district is given railway communication. I hope that I shall not be trenching on the rights of hon. members if I refer to a subject regarding which notice of a question has been given for tomorrow.

Mr. RYAN: I shall be very glad to hear it now.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Technically, I have no right to refer to a question of which notice has been given, but I am really referring to the resolution now before the Committee, and I may be permitted to give hon. members all the information I have been able to get. The question of two different routes was very carefully considered. The original idea was to construct the line from Westwood. Although no estimate of the cost was actually made, it was considered that the cost of a line to the coalfield from Westwood would be about £50,000 less than for the line now projected. When I had to handle the question, perhaps I brought other views to bear upon it, and after very serious consideration it was deemed

advisable to connect up Mount Morgan with this area—to start, in fact, this new scheme of connecting the Central Railway with the Western railways *via* Mount Morgan. The resumption of land, which exercises some hon. members' minds, will be—freehold, 116 acres; goldfields homestead leases and residence areas, 53 acres; but the greater part of the land required is Crown lands held under lease and occupation license. Mr. Thallon, in his report, of course, has to rest his estimate of the revenue very largely upon the problematical coal traffic. He says—

The estimated cost, including telegraph line, rolling-stock, and surveys, is £264,178, or at the rate of £3,849 per mile. These figures do not include land resumptions, the value of which cannot be ascertained until the line is in progress, but the amount will not be large.

REVENUE AND WORKING EXPENSES.—The revenue and expenditure on this line is problematical, and rests to a great extent on the coal traffic, which, so far, has not been fully proved. Assuming that the line obtains a moderate traffic in coal to Mount Morgan and Rockhampton, I estimate the revenue at £13,800, and the expenditure at £7,176, leaving £6,624 to meet the interest on capital, and this result will undoubtedly improve as the country opens up.

That is, of course, as the country becomes more closely settled, and the settlers commence to send large quantities of produce over the railway. The interest at 3 per cent. on the capitalised value will be £8,000 per annum, so the Commissioner's estimate is about 2½ per cent. This is the recommendation of the Commissioner—

In view of the great possibilities of development in coal, and the great areas of Crown lands available for close settlement in the Dawson River district, I strongly recommend the construction of this railway, without which the country could not possibly be opened up.

Then he follows with a description of the railway district. I think the Commissioner puts my views in a very few words in his recommendation.

Mr. LENNON: Will the railway be constructed on the betterment principle?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Mr. FOLEY: Will Mount Morgan be included in the benefited area?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. I would just like to say that I think it would be an admirable thing if we could start this railway and get it built without any great delay, so that we may be able to say to intending settlers, "There is your means of communication. The railway is being built. Settle along the route; and when you get your land cleared and your crops ready, there will be a railway to take away your produce." I have much pleasure in moving the motion.

Mr. LENNON: I think this is a railway that will meet with general acceptance. Unfortunately, it involves a very large outlay; at the same time, if it can be shown that the outlay is justified I do not suppose we will quarrel as to the amount. This railway appeals to me strongly because it is going to develop Crown lands—which is practically a departure from the railway policy adopted hitherto. I would like to see this principle extended, because I consider it is better business to construct railways through Crown lands than to repurchase estates already alienated. I see there is a somewhat sanguine view taken about the earnings of the railway based on the fact that it will probably enjoy considerable coal traffic. It is, perhaps, early in the day to talk about the coal traffic, though no doubt the borings have proved the coal to be there.

Mr. GRANT: They have had shafts down.

[*Hon. W. T. Paget.*]

Mr. LENNON: The shafts have not proved altogether a success.

Mr. GRANT: They have taken hundreds of tons out already.

Mr. LENNON: That is a small matter. It is necessary to take out thousands of tons for the traffic to be worth consideration. I do not want to belittle the Dawson River Coalfield. I want to know if it is the fixed determination of the Government to retain possession of these fields and not allow them to be exploited by speculators or syndicates.

The PREMIER: That is the intention.

Mr. LENNON: I am glad to hear it. In South Australia they have decided to purchase a coalmine in the Maitland district of New South Wales. If Queensland has a coalmine within its own boundaries, it would be a bad thing to part with such a possession, and I am gratified to have the assurance of the Chief Secretary that it is the intention of the Government to retain possession of this coal-bearing area. It is shown that the working expenses will be considerable, and the cost per mile is also considerable. I have had a cursory glance at the plan, from which I notice that the line twists about a good deal, showing that the engineers must have had some difficulty in connection with the route. But you can overcome almost anything with money, and this line is estimated to cost £3,849 a mile. However, if the railway will yield the income it is credited with, and leave a profit of £6,624 to meet interest on capital, that is a sum approaching 3 per cent. on the total cost; and any railway that can reasonably be expected to return 3 per cent. is a very justifiable work to undertake. I trust that the prophecy uttered by a very old member of this House some years ago—"When the hon. member for Rockhampton and the hon. member for Townsville come together, God help Queensland"—I hope that now they have come together nothing terrible will result.

The PREMIER: You hope God will help Queensland.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: God is helping Queensland.

Mr. LENNON: I hope that as the Chief Secretary has come out strongly by proposing to spend a sum exceeding £250,000, which will confer considerable advantages on the city of Rockhampton, of which he is the distinguished representative, I trust that the hon. member for Townsville will also prove that the prophecy uttered in his regard will have no foundation, and that we will see a line from Townsville to Ingham constructed at an early date. As I am anxious to facilitate the despatch of business, I will content myself with expressing the hope that the line will justify all that has been said about it by the Minister. I think the recommendation of the Commissioner is a very strong one indeed. I think the opening up of new country is really of greater importance than the construction of railways in settled districts. While not belittling the necessity for expenditure on railway construction in settled districts, I may be permitted to say that I regard this as a new departure, which I trust will be followed in other directions in the near future.

The PREMIER: I wish hon. members to understand that the object of the Government is to open up the whole of the Dawson Valley by a railway running from the Western line near Dulacca or Chinchilla to Taroom, and by another line running from the Central Railway, where it junctions with the Mount Morgan line. I hope these two lines will be continued, and that the connection will be right through. That is the

central idea with which this line is proposed. The whole of that district, larger in area than Scotland, is practically of no value to us except for grazing purposes, and a great deal of it may be closely settled. The Minister for Lands, in anticipation of the consent of the House to this project, has held back from leasing very considerable areas of Crown lands there.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Many members in the House recognise the need of getting railways ahead of settlement. These two railways—the whole project together—will open up an immense area of land. I cannot give [7.30 p.m.] the area in square miles or acres, but anyone looking at the map will see what a large area there is in the district of the Dawson Valley between the Central Railway and the Western Railway. The main purpose of building these railways is to open up that country. The coal is only an incident in the thing, although a very important incident. I have had a good deal of local trouble over this coal.

Mr. HAMILTON: Do we understand from you that it is the Government proposal to retain the whole of the Dawson coalfield?

The PREMIER: All that is in our hands now. A private company own some land to the north of where the Government property is situated, and we do not propose to take from them what is their own, but we propose to keep the other land.

Mr. HAMILTON: All the coal land.

The PREMIER: All the coal land. The Mount Morgan people made a very exhaustive trial of the coal from the Dawson Valley, and the practical business result was that they gave us an order for 25,000 tons a year, for five years, as soon as we can construct the railway and deliver the coal. That is practical business; that is a practical assurance which justifies the Government in pushing this project ahead. As some hon. members know, this coal is not a bituminous coal, but a species of anthracite coal, and the country is very broken. The coal is more valuable on account of its being anthracite coal, but there are difficulties about mining. Some hon. members may remember that we had a very experienced coalminer in charge of that property when we were taking out coal for sample.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Mr. Rankin?

The PREMIER: Yes, Mr. Rankin.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We have heard about him.

The PREMIER: Whatever you have heard about him, you have never heard any contradiction of this: that he knows something about coal-mining. Mr. Rankin was very anxious that the Government should allow him to take up that land. If he was anxious to take up the land, we thought that if the House determined to go on with this railway it was good enough for the Government to keep it. Hon. members know that in coalmining, as well as in other mining, there are certain difficulties to be encountered, and that you cannot guarantee what is under the surface of the ground. I have followed this matter with a good deal of attention, because I think there is a very great development possible in that district, and I am quite confident that we are doing a wise thing—apart from the agricultural and dairying value of that country—in opening up that coalfield. There has been a good deal of discussion as to the matter of route. The first proposal was to take the line from Herbert's Creek, on the Central line, to the coalfield. That would be the cheapest line, but it would be

Hon. W. Kidston.]

the longest. Then it was proposed to start from Westwood. That would be the second cheapest line, but it would not be the shortest. The Mount Morgan route will be the most costly, but, as hon. members will see, it will be well worth incurring the extra initial cost, because the people who settle in the valley will have the shortest route by which to take their produce to market. The market for the people at the north end of the Dawson Valley must necessarily be Mount Morgan and Rockhampton, and by this route they will be saved some 40 miles of railgauge.

Mr. RYAN: It is not 40 miles shorter to Rockhampton—only to Mount Morgan.

The PREMIER: Which is as good a market as Rockhampton. For coal, Mount Morgan is a better market than Rockhampton, and it is also a better market for produce than Rockhampton. But there is this further advantage in this route: that it will give a kind of opening out of Mount Morgan. Mount Morgan people are shut up there. A young man at Mount Morgan can do nothing but go into the mine or clear out. This railway will open up the country between Mount Morgan and the Dawson. There is the little valley of the Dee, which contains land of excellent quality. The first country going down from Mount Morgan to the Dee level is very broken, and it will be very costly to take the railway down to the Dawson River. Altogether, however, I think the Railway Commissioner is wise in selecting this route in preference to either of the other routes. It will be a more expensive route, but the benefits to be derived from taking the railway that way will amply justify that expense. Moreover, if we can send a large part of the coal trade to Mount Morgan from the West, that will relieve the traffic up the Razorback, where there is a rack railway. On the whole, I have no hesitation in recommending the Committee to approve of these plans, because I think it is eminently desirable that that great stretch of country lying at the back of the coastal range between Miles and the Central Railway should be opened up. Some hon. member spoke about the prickly pear. In the Taroom district it is making very rapid headway, and is getting even beyond Taroom, away down the valley, and there is no other remedy for the pest but settlement. There is a territory there as big as the whole of Scotland awaiting settlement, and the only way to settle the country is to construct a railway through it. Such a railway will open up hundreds of square miles to agriculturists, dairymen, and miners, and I hope the Committee will approve of the plans.

Mr. GRANT (*Rockhampton*): I think I may be permitted to say a word or two in support of this line. I know this country fairly well as I have been pretty well all over it, and the land we have got there is as good as any land there is in Queensland, particularly the prairie land. A lot of that land is held under leasehold, but I think the tenure is fairly short and the leases will soon be up.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There are large areas of vacant Crown land, too.

Mr. GRANT: That is so, but they have been kept back for at least the last three years on account of this railway being projected. If it had not been for that this land would have been settled on by farmers and dairymen by this time. Going down the valleys of the Don and Dee Rivers you cannot get any better land in all Queensland than is to be found there. It is fairly well watered, too. There is a lot of surface water and there are a number of lakes there. They are called lakes because they are essentially lakes, and not merely lagoons. I think that both of the

Ministers who have spoken are quite right in anticipating a large influx of the yeomanry class as soon as this line is built. Besides that there are other mineral deposits besides the coal. It is copper-bearing and gold-bearing country as well. It is copper-bearing country right from Glassford Creek through Kroombit up to Cania and right along to Mount Morgan. One or two attempts have already been made to take up copper leases in that district. Out at the Kroombit there were copper leases worked forty years ago. It was very rich copper, too. Unfortunately, a lot of that land is now held under the Mineral Freeholds Act.

Mr. LENNON: It is a bad Act.

Mr. GRANT: Yes, it is, because there are thousands of acres held up under the Mineral Freehold Act, and not even a Mining on Private Property Act will enable you to touch it. With copper at the price it is at the present time, you want cheap transit for the copper and coal and also for the fluxing material to mix with the copper. I think the House would be wise in adopting the railway after the experience of the last two railways that were passed in the Central Division. Take the Blackall Railway: when that line was proposed members opposite said that it would not pay axle grease, but last year it paid £2 13s. 9d. per cent.

Mr. HAMILTON: Who was in opposition at that time? It was the very men who are now sitting over there. We were supporting the Government then. (Labour laughter.)

Mr. GRANT: No; it was the hon. member for Leichhardt who got up and stonewalled it, and led a strong opposition to the line.

Mr. HAMILTON: It was the hon. member for Townsville who opposed it.

Mr. GRANT: No; it was the hon. member for Leichhardt. He was the man who was most bitterly opposed to it. The other line I referred to was the Yeppoon line, and last year—the opening year—it paid 9½ per cent., although we were told that that line would never pay. Then the Mount Morgan line at the present time is the best paying line in the State. It pays over and above working expenses no less than 18 per cent., and the Yeppoon line paid nearly 10 per cent. last year.

Mr. HAMILTON: What about the Emu Park line?

Mr. GRANT: I am not dealing with that line now. We have to thank the hon. member for Townsville for the Mount Morgan line, I know. You might as well take this line merely as an extension of the Mount Morgan line. Even if this railway does not pay at the opening, considering that it is opening a big extent of country, and seeing that there is a surplus left over the percentage required from the Mount Morgan Railway, it would be only a fair thing to give that surplus percentage to the extension. (Hear, hear!) It might be a fair thing to ask, when an extension to an existing line like this is proposed, if the main line returns a surplus, then that surplus should go towards making up any deficit there might be on the extension.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What if there is a deficit on the main line?

Mr. GRANT: That is quite another story. (Laughter.) The Dawson Valley coal has another value that has not yet been spoken about. I find that it does just as well for suction gas-engines as coke does. At the last Exhibition in Brisbane I interviewed the

representatives of the Hornsby and other suction gas-engines, and I was told that the Dawson coal acted just as well for making power for those engines as coke did.

Mr. HAMILTON: What about the Admiralty test?

Mr. GRANT: I am discussing suction gas just at present. Suction gas is the coming power in the world, and there is no other coal in Australia that can do the work that this Dawson coal can do in that respect.

Mr. LESINA: What about Blair Athol coal?

Mr. GRANT: It is very good coal, but it is not adapted for this particular purpose. The Government will be able to sell that coal cheaper than coke. There will be a big field for this coal in that direction. The hon. member for Herbert asked if the coal had been proved. If he looks up the report of Mr. Dunstan, Government Geologist, on the Dawson Valley—it was made a great many years ago—he will find that Mr. Dunstan estimates that there are 7,000 square miles of coal-bearing country, and 5,000 square miles of it is anthracitic. It extends right from the Dawson Valley to The Bluff and up the Mackenzie Valley. It does not do for the same purposes as the Blair Athol coal, because there is a little clinker in it. In all anthracitic coal there is inclined to be a little clinker, but with a mixture of a little bituminous coal it burns splendidly. They even have to mix The Bluff coal with the Clermont coal to make it burn. I presume that although the Mount Morgan Company will only take 25,000 tons of coal a year from the Dawson Valley, they will have to take some bituminous coal with it to make it burn. This railway is a good proposal for various reasons. We are going to open up new Crown lands that will support a big population. It is also the first extension of the line to join the Central and Southern systems, and it is a good thing for the coal, which without the railway would be no good whatever. I am sure members of the Opposition will vote for it, because the Government owns one coalmine itself. The Government is going to work that mine for itself, and that should induce the Opposition to vote for it.

Mr. HAMILTON: Some of it is held by a company. The Government only hold portion of it.

Mr. GRANT: The Dunstan Company have spent thousands of pounds in trying to develop their mines. The Premier said the Government were going to keep all that they had got, but, as the other mine belonged to a private company, the Government were not going to take it from them. Why should they take it from the private company?

Mr. RYLAND: What company is it?

Mr. GRANT: The Dunstan Coal Mining Company. I am sure that the construction of this railway will become a very profitable undertaking for the Government.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I have already expressed myself very clearly, and I think sufficiently forcibly, in favour of this railway, during the debate on the Address in Reply. I do not wish now to cover the ground which has been so well and so fully covered by the Minister in regard to the details in connection with this railway. After a residence of about three years in Mount Morgan, during which time I heard this railway discussed very frequently by the officials of the company and by the residents of the town, I can come to no other conclusion than that it would be a most pro-

fitable line. I have not been able to go over the route myself. I was not able to get a loan of the Government motor-car to go down in that direction. I know if I had been on the other side of the House I would have been provided with full information in regard to the various matters in connection with this railway. I am quite certain that the railway is one that should commend itself to this House as being one that will be very profitable. Profitable not merely to the localities immediately concerned, but profitable to the whole country. In regard to the route which should be adopted—as to whether it should start from Westwood or Mount Morgan—I am decidedly in favour of the route which has been chosen. I think if any town should have any influence in determining the route of this railway, certainly that town is Mount Morgan. I cannot consider that Rockhampton should have any sort of influence in determining the route to be taken by this railway.

Hon. R. PHILP: What is the consumption of coal at Mount Morgan?

Mr. CRAWFORD: Had I been on that side of the House, I dare say I should have been provided with full figures in regard to the coal consumption by the Mount Morgan Company, but as that company opposed me in every possible way in my endeavours to come to this House, they have not yet got over their bitterness, and do not recognise my being here, sufficiently to acquaint me with those details. I dare say, however, that company, with the consummate wisdom which has always influenced their actions, will come round to regard me as a person of some degree of importance in this House. The Rockhampton *Bulletin* has told me I am a most conceived man, and of course I must act up to that reputation. (Laughter.) The Rockhampton *Bulletin* has never been known to fail in its assertions in regard to any candidate for Parliament. That apart, I am very glad to be in this House at the time this important railway is proposed, and to feel that it is a railway I can support. It is not wholly in my electorate—it passes out after it traverses a few miles. I think the most difficult portion of it goes through my electorate, and then it passes into the Port Curtis electorate. I have not had an opportunity of going over the country through which it will pass, but I am quite certain it will open up very good country. The Mount Morgan Mine has a very flourishing and healthy appetite for timber, and it is already drawing its supplies of timber from many places on the line to Rockhampton; but I believe it would be able to obtain great quantities of the timber which it requires from this line when it is constructed. In that way it will give employment to a large number of people, and in opening up avenues for the employment of people we are always acting wisely. In giving authority for the construction of this line, we are giving authority for the employment of a great number of people—for those immigrants whom the Premier is now bringing to the country by every vessel. There are, as has been pointed out, various mineral areas along the course of this railway, areas which have not been worked owing, I believe, to the fact that it would cost a very great deal to bring the products to a market. These mineral fields will now be opened up because this railway will make it possible for those who are immediately concerned in opening them up to bring their products to the nearest market. Further, I have been informed by those who have gone over every mile of the country—those who know it very intimately—that down at the lower end

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there will be available large areas for closer settlement; and, on the other hand, that there are a great many people just now looking through that part of the country and endeavouring to stake out, if I may say so, suitable areas upon which to settle. In building this railway to that locality we are making it far more easy for those who wish to go there to build up their homes, and, I hope, rear families which will be the backbone of that part of the country. I know from conversations which I have had with various officials of the company in Mount Morgan that they view this line as being one most favourable to themselves, and when I speak of the Mount Morgan Company, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I have not merely the company in view, but a town of something like 16,000 inhabitants. That is a very great and important consideration. I do not think this House will pass the line merely to suit the company, but we must take into consideration the legitimate demands of a great town such as Mount Morgan undoubtedly is—an important and growing town. And let me say this: There are buildings going up in almost every direction in Mount Morgan, and builders are experiencing great difficulty in obtaining suitable supplies of timber, but by opening up this country by a railway, the obtaining of those supplies of timbers will be greatly facilitated, and the cost of building will necessarily become less. I am very much in favour of the policy of connecting all these branch lines of railways. I think it a wrong policy to run a line into a corner and let it stop there. There should be the idea, when we construct railways, of continuing them right through, so that there may be a connection all through the country, instead of having, here and there, mere branch lines ending in a corner, and simply forming a sort of bag in which a great number of people are compelled to reside, and from which there is only one egress. I was very glad also to have the indication from the Ministerial benches that we are going to have that which I advocated in my first speech here—a State coalmine. I am very glad indeed that the Ministry has taken the advice which I gave them, and have taken the necessary steps to establish a State coalmine. I hope they will continue that idea. It is a very good idea, and I believe will turn out most successful. I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee any longer, because I am anxious that a beginning should be made with the construction of this line. There is only one “fly in the ointment,” if I may say so, in regard to the line before the House. Upon that matter I am not allowed to speak at present, and I will conclude my remarks by simply moving that the resolution be amended by adding the words—

That the House approves of a minimum wage of eight shillings and fourpence a day being paid to the adult workers employed thereon.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Committee has seen the amendment proposed by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. In accordance with a ruling I gave this afternoon on a proposed amendment to a previous resolution, I rule that the amendment is one which I cannot put from the Chair. I therefore refuse to submit the proposition to the Committee.

Mr. LENNON: I really feel that I shall have to express a protest against your ruling in this matter, because since your last ruling on a previous amendment we have had [8 p.m.] a ruling from the Speaker's Chair on a somewhat similar amendment, and the Speaker ruled that a motion

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somewhat similar to this was, in his opinion, in order. I hope, Sir, that you have not made up your mind finally upon this matter, or that you intend to adhere to your ruling, and before I move that your ruling be disagreed with I shall be glad if you will express your opinion on the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: The deputy leader of the Opposition having asked me a question, I may say that, as Chairman of this Committee, I think my ruling is in accordance with the Standing Orders of this House. I am supported in my ruling with sufficient authority, and as a natural consequence I intend to adhere to my decision.

The PREMIER: I hope the deputy leader of the Opposition and his friends on the other side will not push this matter. It is substantially moving the same motion as before.

Mr. HAMILTON: Not at all.

The PREMIER: I do not say the same motion, but it is substantially the same motion. We will fix the rate of wages in passing it.

Mr. HAMILTON: We do not fix the rate; we only fix the minimum wage.

The PREMIER: I am quite aware that you want to do that, and we have discussed the matter two days now. If you want to play fair and reasonably, why not get on with the motion? I do not say much about yesterday, because members were perhaps entitled to discuss the matter, although I think they were wrong, but it is a matter for them. Having now had a full discussion, what good purpose is to be served by questioning the ruling of the Chairman or going on with this? It is only wasting time, in my opinion. I do not think you should challenge the Chairman's ruling. It is certainly not desirable in this torrid weather to open the door to such a waste of time.

Mr. LENNON: Although the weather may be getting on to the torrid stage, the Opposition regard your ruling as one that is calculated to tie us up in a very tight manner indeed on all future discussions in this House. We think we shall be practically debarred from the privilege of moving amendments at all, and, with all respect to the Chair—I do not wish to say anything disrespectful—and without wasting any time, I feel called upon to move that your ruling be disagreed to.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is not a very pleasant thing for hon. members to have to move that the ruling of the Speaker or Chairman be disagreed with, but at times it is a duty which we have to perform. If a member feels that the ruling is a wrong one, then he has a right to move that it be disagreed to. While you may be earnest in thinking that you are quite right in your ruling, I am just as equally earnest in my opinion that your ruling is wrong. This is a different question altogether to what was settled yesterday. There are two railways, one in the Southern portion of the State and this is in the Central portion of the State, and they are hundreds of miles apart. The conditions of living are different. I think in every public department of the State it is recognised that the conditions of living vary in different portions of the State, and provision is made for certain allowances to be given. Not only are they two distinct railways, but even the amounts are different. Now, if your ruling is right, then it debars us on all future occasions—even supposing later in the session a railway was brought up for

the Gulf of Carpentaria—from bringing in an amendment or motion of this sort by the ruling which you have just given.

The PREMIER: Yes, but you have discussed the matter the day before.

Mr. HAMILTON: I say we have not discussed the matter. They are two different railways in two different portions of the State. Two different rates of pay are stipulated, and I hold—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! As the question before the Committee is that my ruling be disagreed to, I ask hon. members to confine themselves to discussing whether my ruling is wrong under the Standing Orders of this House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAMILTON: I was endeavouring to show that.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not wish to debate that with the hon. member for Gregory. My ruling is based upon Standing Order 71, and in order to show I am wrong I should like hon. members to discuss it from the point of view of the Standing Orders.

Mr. HAMILTON: I take it that you rule, according to your interpretation of Standing Order 71, that this amendment is of the same substance as the amendment which was moved by the junior member for Gympie yesterday. I am trying to show that they are not quite the same in substance, and that is why I support the motion of the leader of this party that your ruling be disagreed to. I would say they are not the same in substance. If your ruling is upheld by the Committee, then we shall be bound by it on all future occasions. It is only a question of degree. Whether two railways are 200 or 1,000 miles apart, your ruling will hold good.

Mr. MANN: It is a very unpleasant duty for hon. members to be called upon to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Armstrong. If your ruling is sustained by the Committee, it simply means that it will be a dangerous weapon in the hands of an unscrupulous Government. It may be used to prevent any hon. member moving an amendment on any business that comes before this Chamber. Hon. members will have to swallow a Bill holus-bolus, because, if they attempt to move an amendment, your ruling on this occasion will be brought forward as a precedent, and it will be argued that it is competent for a Chairman to refuse to accept any amendment.

The TREASURER: No; a similar amendment.

Mr. MANN: Any amendment. With your knowledge of this country, Mr. Armstrong, you know that a railway on the Downs and a railway in Central Queensland are two entirely different propositions, and that the cost of living is greater in Central Queensland than it is in Southern Queensland. While the Government may have been right in refusing to vote for 8s. a day in Southern Queensland, I claim that we have a perfect right to test the feeling of the Committee again, and see if there is not sufficient humanity in hon. members opposite to induce them to vote for 8s. 4d. a day for the men working on a railway in Central Queensland. I know you have the instincts of a gentleman, and I wish you not to consider this from a mere party point of view, but to consider the honour and dignity of the Chamber, and to realise that for all time your ruling will go down, in my opinion, as a biased

ruling—that it will go down to history that you have allowed yourself to be used by the Government to block the Opposition.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: What do you object to in my speech, Mr. Armstrong?

Hon. R. PHILP: Your honour and dignity.

Mr. MANN: My honour and dignity will compare very favourably with those of the hon. gentleman. I never got any sovereigns from a Chinaman.

Hon. R. PHILP: I say distinctly that I never accepted one shilling from any Chinaman in my life. The hon. member has worked for them, though.

Mr. MANN: It only shows how thin-skinned the hon. member is. I only said that I had never done it, but apparently the cap fitted the hon. member, because he jumped up and said that he had not done it.

Hon. R. PHILP: Tell the truth.

Mr. MANN: As to working for a Chinaman, I never did such a thing, unless that by working for Burns, Philp, and Co. I worked for Chinamen. I was saying, Mr. Armstrong, that your ruling will go down to history as a ruling in support of the Government—not given on the merits of the question, but simply to allow the Government, as the Premier said, to get through their business before the hot weather starts. Now, I claim that every proposition that comes before this Chamber should be discussed in a rational manner, without regard to the weather. It is the duty of this Committee to protect, as far as it can, the interests of the workers on the railways, and, whether the weather is hot or cold, I intend to fight all I can to see that this Chamber is permitted to insert a provision to pay a man a decent wage. It may be argued that, as this railway is to be built by the Government, there is no necessity for such a provision, but past experience has shown us that the Government have not paid the ruling rate of wages on the railways.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, they have.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. MANN: They have not, and for that reason I hope you will allow the amendment to be put so that we may protect the workmen. If you should do that, it will redound to your credit, because, after all, there is something greater than the Government. There are people outside to be considered, and I think it would be wise for you to withdraw your embargo against the amendment and allow the country to see who are the men who are prepared to pay a decent wage, and who are not.

Mr. RYLAND: I regret to have to disagree with your ruling, Mr. Armstrong, because I think that your interpretation of Standing Order No. 71 is strained. The Standing Order reads—

A question or amendment shall not be proposed which is the same in substance as any question which, during the same session, has been resolved in the affirmative or negative.

Supposing that we had carried in the affirmative yesterday the amendment to fix a minimum wage for the railway whose construction was then under consideration, according to your ruling, we should now be precluded from moving a similar minimum wage provision in connection with any other railway proposal. That Standing Order was never intended to

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apply to such a case as that. If I had proposed a resolution for the abolition of the bar in the refreshment-rooms, and that resolution had been defeated on the casting vote of the Speaker, the Standing Order would prevent me introducing a similar motion this session, though I should be at liberty to bring it forward again next session; but the Standing Order was never intended to apply to such a case as that which has now arisen. If your ruling is upheld, it will curtail all the liberties, privileges, and rights of members, and it will also dictate how all the business of the Chamber is to be carried out. We shall simply have to accept everything in the form in which it is submitted to us. I entirely disagree with your ruling, and I hope the Committee will decide that it is not a sound ruling.

Question—That the Chairman's ruling be disagreed with—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYE, 27.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Lesina
„ Barber	„ Mann
„ Breslin	„ May
„ Collins	„ McLauchlan
„ Coyne	„ Mulcahy
„ Crawford	„ Mullan
„ Douglas	„ Murphy
„ Ferricks	„ O'Sullivan
„ Foley	„ Payne
„ Hamilton	„ Ryan
„ Hardacre	„ Ryland
„ Hunter, J. M.	„ Theodore
„ Land	„ Winstanley
„ Lennon	

Tellers: Mr. Coyne and Mr. Ryland.

NOES, 32.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Keogh
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Kidston
„ Booker	„ Macartney
„ Bouchard	„ Mackintosh
„ Brennan	„ Morgan
„ Bridges	„ Paget
„ Cottell	„ Petrie
„ Cribb	„ Philp
„ Denham	„ Rankin
„ Forsyth	„ Somerset
„ Fox	„ Swayne
„ Grant	„ Thorn
„ Grayson	„ Tolmie
„ Gunn	„ Walker
„ Hawthorn	„ White
„ Hunter, D.	„ Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Grayson and Mr. Thorn.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Bowman, Mr. Maughan, Mr. Blair, and Mr. Nevitt.

Noes—Mr. Roberts, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Stodart, and Mr. J. Allan.

The Committee being in division,

Mr. LESINA: I wish to say that I voted under a misapprehension. I paired.

Mr. PETRIE: Mr. Lesina and Mr. Hodge paired from 7 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: "Ayes," 27; "Noes," 32. The question is resolved in the negative.

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not like to oppose this railway, because it will open up extensive coal beds, and we have the promise of the Premier that the Government are going to retain the coalmines in the Dawson Valley. If they are going to start State coalmines, I consider that is a step in the right direction, from our point of view. The principal reason I rose was on account of the statement that this line is to go from the Central Railway to the Dawson Valley, which is also to be connected with the Western Railway by Taroom. In an earlier part of the day, when another line

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was under consideration, we were told it was to be a joint in another line which would give the people in the district Southern markets and Northern markets. I want to point out that it is nearly time a little consideration was given to the people of Northern and Central Queensland. We have been asking years and years for a connection between the Northern and Central Railway systems, and we cannot get that connection; yet we find that railways are to be built in districts which already are connected with the Southern and Central districts. It looks as if what has been done in the past is to be done in the future—that the North is to be excluded in order to build up Southern Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: For some time there has been more railway construction in the North.

Mr. HAMILTON: Little bits of railways in the Mackay district! Deputation after deputation has waited on the Commissioner and the various Secretaries for Railways asking for a survey to junction the Northern system with the Central system. I read a statement in the *Courier* this morning to the effect that the Government have to shift a lot of rolling-stock from Townsville to the Southern part of the State, and that they have to bring it by water.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Six sheep trucks.

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not know how many trucks there are, but I know that at the time of the election teams were coming into Winton with wool, and there were not [8.30 p.m.] sufficient trucks available to take the wool away. While I am willing that these railways should be built, I want to impress upon the Government the urgent necessity there is for connecting the Northern and Central Railways systems, and that it is about time that a survey was made to ascertain whether that connecting line should be taken from Longreach or some other place to Winton. We are threatened with a drought in the North, and we do not want to have a similar experience to that which we had in the last drought. I am quite certain that such a line would pay, and I know that the local authorities at Winton and Longreach are willing to guarantee the railway.

Mr. MULCAHY: I should like to know whether it is the intention of the Government to have this line constructed by day labour or by the contract system?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I can merely give the hon. member the same reply as I gave to another hon. member who asked a similar question with regard to another railway which has been before the Committee, and that is, that it is not the intention of the Government or the department to depart from the existing system, but that it is intended to call for tenders for the construction of one line by contract, in order to check the departmental estimates.

Mr. MULCAHY: This is the line the money will be spent on.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is a matter of indifference to me which line is built by contract, but I think the choosing of the line which is to be built by contract should be left to the departmental experts, who will be able to say which one is the most suitable for checking purposes.

Mr. MULCAHY: I have not got the information that I wished to obtain. There will be an expenditure of £264,000 on this railway,

and if this line were built by contract the experiment would be a rather nice thing for the contractor. I am afraid that the Government may let this line under the contract system. It is a well-recognised thing now that the day-labour system in the construction of railways has been a decided success, and if the Government are going to depart from that system in this instance, then I say the Committee should pause before passing the railway. As a matter of fact, we know that the Premier, at all events, knows whether he is going to let this line by contract.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is mere assertion, not fact.

Mr. MULCAHY: We know that the Premier has made up his mind on that point, and I think the information might be given to the Committee.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): There is one point on which we might be afforded some information, and that is whether the Government have loan money in hand to build these railways or will they have to borrow money? Another point on which I should like some information is, What is the area of the coal country which this line will open up? I was very much interested in the Premier's arguments with reference to the Dawson Valley Coalfield. The hon. gentleman said that if it would be a good thing for a private individual to open up that country and work the coalfields, it would be a good thing for the Government. This party used the same kind of argument with reference to a certain railway some time ago, but the Premier did not see the force of it in that instance. I agree with the hon. member for Gregory that while railways are being constructed in the Southern district the Northern and Central districts are being overlooked, and I claim that they are entitled to some consideration in the matter of connecting the Northern and Central railway systems, a line which is more needed, as far as the Government themselves are concerned, than any railway connection in the State.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I understood the hon. member for Charters Towers to ask for some information respecting the area of Crown lands which would be affected by this line.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: No, the area of coal land.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Probably the area of Crown lands which will be benefited by the construction of this railway is 700,000 acres, of which fully one-half is suitable for close settlement. I am unable to give the exact area of coal land, but there is a very large area of coal-bearing country in the district.

The PREMIER: All the Dawson Coalfield, with the exception of a small area that is owned by a private company.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, nearly all the Dawson coalfield, and that field has been prospected, and the coal tested. The Government are keeping all the coal-bearing area there, with the exception of one small area held by a company. It is advisable that I should say something with respect to the remarks of the hon. member for Gregory as to the claims of the North for railway construction. I would say this: I belong to the North myself. At the present moment we have four railways being constructed in the North.

Mr. LESINA: I rise to a point of order. Is this discussion in order? Is the Minister for

Railways in order in discussing the general railway policy of the Government on this motion?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: If the Minister is in order, then I wish to discuss it also.

The CHAIRMAN: I allowed the hon. member for Gregory to digress a little in that direction, but the Minister will not be in order in pursuing that line of discussion.

Mr. LESINA: I do not know why the time is taken up by members sitting behind the Government, seeing the progress that we have been making with these railways. It appears to me that a number of them are quite glad that so much time has been taken up over these railways which everybody admits are necessary. I never heard one member say anything against this railway proposal except one member who may be, perhaps, considered to have criticised the proposal. We have been over two hours discussing this railway proposal, and there has been no hostility whatever expressed towards it.

Mr. RYLAND: There is £500,000 involved.

Mr. LESINA: I know there is money involved. You cannot build railways without money. "You cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs." (Laughter.) But everybody agrees that the railway should be built, and that the money should be spent; but members on the Government side seem desirous of carrying on an aimless discussion bearing on the general railway policy of the Government, and it is just simply wasting time. (Laughter.) I am here to see the railway policy carried out, but I do not want to be charged in the country again with obstructing public business.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

The PREMIER: Sit down, and we will let it go through.

Mr. LESINA: I will sit down in a moment. I want to say this: We will be charged with wasting the public time because of the long period we have sat here in connection with this particular railway. I think that if the Secretary for Railways himself would set a better example we would get through much quicker. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I sat here for hours and said nothing.

Mr. LESINA: The Secretary for Railways makes longer speeches on these measures than any previous Secretary for Railways ever made. (Laughter.) He goes into a lot of matters which are not necessary at all.

The PREMIER: Is this speech in order, Mr. Armstrong? (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: There is one aspect of the matter which we could discuss and put the Government in a hole if we wished to do so. We are told that there is a probability of some of the railways being built by contract, or at least one of them, and we are told by the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Mulcahy, that he does not know which railway is to be selected as the one to be built by contract. Is it to be a small one, or is it to be this big one, involving the expenditure of £250,000? Now, the policy of the Labour party is opposed altogether to the contract system, and if we do not know which one is to be built under the

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contract system then we are quite justified in voting against them all. Is that not so, Mr. Armstrong?

Hon. R. PHILP: Well, vote against them all.

Mr. LESINA: We are quite justified in opposing this measure and every other railway proposal until we are definitely assured that this one, that that one, and that the other one is not to be selected as the railway which is to be built by contract. Would we not be right in doing that? Would we not be logical in doing it? Otherwise we might as well say to the Government, "You have *carte blanche*. Build them how you like, let them by contract, or however you like, and as expensive as you like."

Mr. MANN: Then it might happen like the Cairns Railway did.

Mr. LESINA: Yes, it might. If the Minister for Railways is looking for lash in connection with the general railway policy of the Government, he can have it. (Laughter.) If he wants some good rational ground in order that we may be charged with delaying measures, that will be a good ground to choose. It is a good one. We want to know if this railway is to be built by contract, and they will not tell us. If the hon. member for Gympie cannot get any information on this matter, how can I expect to get it? (Laughter.) Perhaps the deputy leader of the Opposition might be able to get the information. Does the Minister himself know which particular railway is to be constructed by contract?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. I told you that half a dozen times.

Mr. LESINA: No. Nobody knows. (Laughter.) The Minister does not know, and this House does not know, which railway is to be built by contract, and I suppose with that we will have to be content to let this railway proposal go through. I could disturb the House for fully two hours on this very proposal alone. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: I have no doubt you could.

Mr. LESINA: Do the Government propose to select this railway, costing £260,000, as the one which is to be built by contract, or do they propose to employ an army of workmen and pay them the money as ordinary day labourers' wages? I do not desire to delay the passage of the Bill, and I will not create a disturbance. If the Minister will not give us any information—he cannot give it as he does not know—I suppose we will have to be content with that. Which railway will be selected to be built by contract? Will a little railway 10 miles in length be selected to test the construction by contract, or will it be this railway to the Dawson Valley?

Mr. MURPHY: It will be the big one.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member for Croydon knows no more than the Minister, and he knows nothing. (Laughter.) He admits that he knows nothing.

Mr. LENNON: Perhaps the Chief Secretary will tell you.

Mr. LESINA: I would like to get that information.

The PREMIER: Will you sit down and let me tell what I know.

Mr. LESINA: I will.

The PREMIER: I do not know that it is decided to build any railways by contract. The

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Railway Department are perfectly satisfied, and the Government are perfectly satisfied, with building the railways by day labour.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: And the only railway that I have heard any proposal about being built by contract is the small Maryvale line, which was passed yesterday.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was passed last year, but we are only waiting for the Bill.

The PREMIER: The Commissioner suggested this as a means of checking our system of building by day labour, which the department are perfectly sympathetic with, and have no desire to go back to the contract system—(hear, hear!)—and the fear, or pretended fear, of hon. gentlemen opposite is entirely a groundless fear. It is not desired to do away with the day labour system at all. But it was thought desirable, as a means of checking what we were actually doing, and the congratulations that our officers were making for themselves, and the day labour work, to build some small railway by contract, and the Maryvale line was suggested as a small and inexpensive railway to try the experiment.

Mr. HAMILTON: We did not know that before.

Mr. LENNON: Can we accept your assurance that it will be the Maryvale line that will be constructed by contract?

The PREMIER: It may not be constructed by contract. The other lines are not likely to be constructed by contract either.

Mr. LENNON: Will you assure us that this line will not be constructed by contract?

The PREMIER: No, this one will not be. There is not the remotest likelihood that this one will be constructed by contract.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: That is satisfactory.

Mr. MANN: Put it in the resolution that it will not.

The PREMIER: I am just as desirous of continuing the day-labour system as you are, and, while we may differ in opinion, I tell hon. gentlemen opposite quite frankly that their general conduct in this matter is the very thing that is likely to force a return to the contract system. I do not want that. I think we have officers who are quite competent to carry out the construction of the railways on the day-labour system, and I would rather have the building of our railways supervised by our own officers, who have no profit to make by scamping, than I would have them supervised by men who may make a profit by scamping. There are many difficulties, simply like every other system, that may be unforeseen.

Mr. RYLAND: I am very pleased the Premier has given us the assurance that this particular line is not to be built by contract, because I think it would be a great mistake. I would like the Minister to inform the Committee—there appears to be a private company which owns land there—I have heard the name—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know the company.

Mr. RYLAND: I heard the name was McEachern and Co.

Mr. GRANT: The shareholders are a few people in Rockhampton.

Mr. RYLAND: The name has been mentioned recently—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I cannot allow the hon. member to proceed with that matter. He must confine himself to the question before the House.

Mr. RYLAND: I should like to have some estimate as to the amount to be paid for compensation, and seeing that this line is likely to be extended a good deal farther west, I think the Minister should give more consideration to this Chamber. This line will cost £500,000 to build. I was surprised to see that Rockhampton was not included in the benefited area. I really think Rockhampton is going to receive a large benefit from the building of this line. It will "bring grist to the mill," and will largely enhance the value of private property in Rockhampton. I remember when the line from Hughenden to Cloncurry was being discussed, the hon. member for Townsville pointed out that Townsville would get more benefit from that extension than from any other line. At that particular time Townsville was not included in the benefited area. It appears to me that the benefited area is not composed of those who get the benefit. I know when, in talking of a railway from Gympie, the residents there were quite prepared to allow Gympie to be included in the benefited area, and they are practically in the same position as Rockhampton in regard to this extension to the Dawson River. I think it is a fair thing that Rockhampton should be included in the benefited area; it will enhance the value of private property, and they should be called upon to make up any deficiency in the cost of running the line.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have already given the information to the Committee.

Mr. MANN: Do not get the Minister wild.

Mr. RYLAND: I do not want to be unreasonable. This line involves the expenditure of £264,000, and if we took all night in discussing the matter, I do not think it would be lost time.

Mr. HARDACRE: I am not against a railway being built to the Dawson Valley. I think there is sufficient inducement to warrant a railway line to that locality, but I am opposed a great deal to the route proposed. There has been a discussion outside this House, particularly in the Rockhampton papers, with regard to the rival route, or, properly, the original route:

The PREMIER: There are three routes.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes; and this is a subsequent one that has been adopted. The proposed routes are: One from Herbert's Creek, one from Westwood, and one from Mount Morgan. There is no doubt whatever that this particular route is going to cost a great deal more than either of the other two; besides which, it will involve the taking of the traffic generally—not coal so much—but the general traffic from that locality by way of the Razorback and Mount Morgan to Rockhampton. I admit there is some justification—it is the only justification—in the fact that it will take the Dawson coal direct to Mount Morgan, which will be the principal consumer.

Mr. GRANT: Without going up the rack, which is already over-burdened.

Mr. HARDACRE: To my mind, there are many advantages, and the balance of the advantages lies in the other direction, for this reason: This particular route now proposed will only touch a small portion of the Dawson

Coalfield. The coal area extends not merely within the area shown on the map—it extends right down to the Central line, at any rate, adjacent to the Dawson River. Besides that, there is a large area outside that section of other coal measures from the Dawson up as far as Blackwater, and also a still larger area of coal country on the Mackenzie River.

Mr. GRANT: That is on the other side of the line.

Mr. HARDACRE: Adjacent to the Central line. Recent boring has shown that the coal measures extend over the whole of that immense area. If the railway had commenced somewhere on the Central Railway line, instead of going from Mount Morgan, that railway would have served not merely the Dawson Coalfields, but also other areas on the Mackenzie.

Mr. GRANT: They are not in the same direction.

Mr. HARDACRE: They are not in opposite directions. I am pointing out that the Dawson Coalfield extends right down the Central Railway to the Dawson River.

The PREMIER: And 100 miles over it—a coalfield bigger than England.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is quite so. Therefore, the Central Railway line as far as the Dawson River, if duplicated,

[9 p.m.] would have served not merely the Dawson Coalfield, but at the same time the other extensive area of coalfields north of it.

The PREMIER: It would never affect any coal lands to the north of the Central Railway.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Premier misunderstands me. I say that the Central line, duplicated, would have served not only this coalfield, but those north of the Central line, and coalfields west of the Dawson River. If my information is correct, we are just on the verge of great developments, so far as the Mackenzie Coalfield is concerned, and it would have been of more advantage ultimately, I believe, to have commenced this railway from somewhere nearer Rockhampton. There is another question I wish to refer to. At present we have no report giving us an assurance that the coal on the Dawson Coalfield, in the places where the bores have been put down, is of such a quality that it will be serviceable for export purposes. I hope it will, but the tests so far by the Admiralty are not by any means too satisfactory—in fact, I understand that the last test was so bad that they did not publish the results of the test of the coal from the particular places where the bores have been put down. If that is the case, we should pause before we construct a line on this particular route. We should construct it from a point where the duplication of the line at that part will serve other needs. I am very glad to hear that if the coal is of a satisfactory quality we shall have a State coalmine. I am not too sanguine whether that will happen or not.

HON. R. PHILP: This is a very important railway which we are passing, and we propose to spend £500,000 on it. Personally, I do not know sufficient of the railway to say much about it, but I can say this: that unless the Mount Morgan field and company are behind it I do not think it will be advisable. They are behind it, I understand, and they will have to pay whatever is short, and if they are willing to take the risk I will not object. I am not satisfied that this railway line is so good; we have no evidence

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before the House at all, but simply the assurance of members. I am surprised the hon. member for Fitzroy did not tell us something; he said the people of Mount Morgan wanted it. It is certainly because the Mount Morgan people are behind it that I vote for it. In looking over the map, I see a railway built 20 miles north of it, but I do not know of any agricultural produce growing there at all. Why is the land not cultivated now? I would like very much to have an hour on our railway policy altogether, because I think I could show this House that this £250,000 could be better spent in Northern Queensland than in Central Queensland, but I would not be in order in doing that. I must confess that the Central district has not had much spent in railways for some time past—in fact, it has been neglected by the Premier himself—and because the Mount Morgan line is paying so well, I firmly believe that the Mount Morgan line and this new line should be one line, and if the two lines together should fail to pay the 3 per cent., then they should be asked to pay the difference. I tried hard, when in Opposition, to get that provision put in the Railway Act when it was going through, but the Labour party, almost to a man, opposed my doing it—they said only new lines, but now they are sorry they cannot get it. There is a big population in Mount Morgan; the young people have nowhere else to go, and they go into mining, and if this line will pay and will keep a big population, it will be a good thing. I would ask the Lands Department not to allow this land to be selected now. The land should be kept till the railway is built, and the Government will then get something for the land.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. PHILP: They should not allow it to be taken up at 2s. 6d. an acre as prickly pear land, and then, when we build the line into this locality, find the land in the hands of speculators—perhaps in the hands of members of Parliament. (Hear, hear!) I intend to support this line, and I hope that we shall get an opportunity of talking on the railway policy of the country. I suppose it is out of order to do that now, but you have allowed the hon. member for Gregory to get in his pet line to Longreach. To my mind, that would be no benefit to the country. I would like to see the lines from Charleville, Longreach, and Winton built 200 miles further out West, and then connected. I would like to see a line, too, built from Mackay to Cairns. I believe the large sum of money we are now asking for would almost pay for a line from Mackay to Cairns, and offer good settlement on some of the best land in Queensland for hundreds and thousands of people.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions, which were agreed to.

MCGREGOR CREEK AND CATTLE CREEK TRAMLINES EXTENSIONS.

COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

(1.) That the House approves of the plans, sections, and books of reference to extend the McGregor Creek Tramline by 1½ mile towards Silent Grove, and the Cattle Creek Tramline by 8½ miles towards the Eungella Range, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, 3rd November, 1909.

[*Hon. R. Philp.*

(2.) That the plans, sections, and books of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council for their approval, by message in the usual form—

said: The plans that I am asking the Committee to approve of are for the making of short extensions to two tramlines in the Mackay district. I ask the Committee to approve of the plans contingent upon the passage of a Bill that is now before the House for the taking over of the shire council tramlines. I wish to make it perfectly clear that, although it happens that these short extensions have come before the Chamber before the Bill I refer to has been read a second time, that has just happened in the course of business. I would far rather have seen the Bill passed before these plans came up for consideration, but in the course of business it has happened the other way about. Under the circumstances, I wish to make it perfectly clear that the Committee is asked to approve of the plans contingent on the passage of the Bill.

Mr. LESINA: The assumption is pretty well grounded.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course, I have no reason to assume that hon. members will not do a fair thing by the Mackay district because I happen to be in charge of this motion. I do not believe that these plans are the meed of justice to the North that I would like to see. I would like to bring forward more lines in the North. The taking over of the Mackay tramlines has been requested by the shire council and the people of the district for some three or four years. I have always been strongly in favour of local authorities building what I may term feeders or opening-up lines in agricultural districts, especially where they are districts such as these lines run through. Right from the south to the north of the State, up as far as Port Douglas, local authorities have built such tramlines.

Mr. HAMILTON: The Northern local authorities do it more than those in the South.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; we people in the North practically started the system.

Mr. FOLEY: We have more "go" in us.

The TREASURER: More "owe," you mean.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: These interruptions are extremely unseemly, but I would like to say to the Treasurer that, although there may be more "owe" in the North, we always pay up interest and redemption. (Hear, hear!) I have always been a strong advocate of the building and controlling of such tramlines by the local authorities; but conditions do alter, and conditions have altered in the Mackay district. We borrowed some £21,000 to build these two feeders to the Mackay Railway, and the shire council has always paid the interest and redemption on the loan from the earnings of the two tramways. The Commissioner for Railways has run the traffic on the tramlines in conjunction with the traffic on the Mackay Railway. Under an arrangement with the shire council, he has had the control of the tramways for several years. Right at the end of the Cattle Creek tramline there is a place called Eungella Range.

Mr. LESINA: Who discovered the Range?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was discovered many years ago. "Eungella" is the native name for "The Place of Clouds."

Mr. LESINA: What is your authority for that statement?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: My authority for the statement is that I have been for a great many years resident in the district. The Cattle Creek Tramway Extension now proposed is one of about 6½ miles towards Eungella Range. At the head of Cattle Creek Valley there is a large area of scrub land on the Eungella Tableland, which is about 2,500 feet above sea-level. I think it is quite as suitable for settlement as the famous Atherton Tableland. Out of the public estate improvement fund there was a sum of £9,000 found to make a road up the range. There are 8,000 acres of land surveyed and waiting, after the building of this line to the foot of the range, to be thrown open. This is the extension of the line from Finch Hatton to the foot of the range. The other proposal is to extend the shire council's tramline from Kirkup towards Silent Grove for a distance of 1½ mile. It was not thought advisable to extend it further on account of the difficult nature of the country beyond that distance. It goes over a gap where there is a large area of scrub—Crown lands—which can be made available for cane and other crops. At present there is a large quantity of cane sent over the McGregor Creek tramline, and if it is extended 1½ mile, as proposed, there will, of course, be a great deal more traffic.

Mr. MANN: What are the grades?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am unable to tell. It seems to be a very easy grade, taking it altogether. I would just like to say that when the line is extended up Cattle Creek, 6½ miles, it will make available a very much larger area of land for cane-growing for the Government central mills on the Mackay Railway line. The Commissioner says that on the McGregor tramway extension there is good agricultural land, some of which is now growing cane, but as the terminus is approached the country becomes rather rough. The estimated cost is £5,583, or £4,466 per mile—it is extremely broken country. As to the Cattle Creek Tramway, which is the principal extension, he says the line traverses a fertile valley, the greater part of which is already occupied by farmers, and sugar-cane is being cultivated. He says further that across the Eungella Range are large areas of Crown lands of first-class quality which will be made available for settlement. I may point out, in addition to this, that there is a large area of scrub land on the tableland; and to the west there are large areas of pastoral country. The late Minister for Lands refused to re-lease that land, for the reason that it was opened up practically, and it was better not to let people have it with long leases when it can be more profitably cut up into small grazing farms.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: With respect to mineral areas, some 12 or 15 miles from the top of the range westward is the Eungella Goldfield. I think when we are able to get better communication it will open up large areas of mineral country on the Broken River and other places, some of which have been prospected, but which have been abandoned owing to the excessive cost of carriage. If the country is opened up by means of this extension I see more prosperity in future in connection with these mineral areas than there has been in the past. The estimated cost of the 6½ miles is £24,000, but no more rolling-stock will be required. The Railway Commissioner estimates the revenue at

£1,200, and the expenditure at £800 per annum, leaving £400 a year towards interest on the capital. The recommendation of the Commissioner is this—

The present tramway, owned by the Pioneer Shire Council, has always been a success, but it is rather too short for economical working. If it be decided to purchase the tramline, as is now proposed, and work it as a Government railway in future, I would strongly recommend that it be extended to the foot of the range, as by so doing new country will be opened up and traffic increase, not only upon the tramway extension but upon the present lines.

Mr. HAMILTON: There will be no guarantee.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, there will. I can say that the building of these two tramlines by the [9.30 p.m.] shire council was the means by which the Mackay Railway was enabled to pay interest on the cost of construction, as they brought a vastly increased traffic to the railway. Members may ask, Why does not the shire council borrow money to extend the tramlines further out? In reply, I say the area of the Pioneer Shire Council ends at the foot of the Eungella Range, and it would hardly be fair to ask the council to take a further financial burden upon their shoulders for the purpose of opening up country that is within the boundaries of another shire. With respect to the benefited area, it will be applied not simply to the extensions but also to the existing tramlines, exactly as if they were new lines constructed under the Act of 1906. I have very much pleasure in moving the motion standing in my name.

Mr. LENNON: The project for the extension of these tramways should commend itself to this Committee, as the proposed extension will open up very good country, and the Government have spent £9,000 in constructing a road up the Eungella Range, so that the extension of the existing tramways is a necessary corollary to that road building. The road will not be a success without the railway, nor will the railway be a success without the road. "A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," and I may be permitted to mention that the Mourilyan district is exactly similarly situated, bar the road. They have a tramway there, and when the Government take it over it will prove a profitable investment.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That scheme is in hand now, but is not sufficiently far advanced to bring it before the House.

Mr. LENNON: I am pleased to hear that the scheme to which I have incidentally referred to is in hand, and hope it will shortly become an accomplished fact. Mackay is by this natural barrier of the range practically shut off from the advantage of the inland trade, and the making of the range road and the extension of these tramways will bring that inland trade to the town. These extensions are a very desirable thing for the country, and as far as this party is concerned, I am not aware that they have any objection to the construction of the lines, and I do not anticipate that there will be a long discussion on the proposal. This party is just as anxious as Ministers are to make this a good business session, and to see that good measures are passed, after proper and ample discussion. I hope this proposal will pass without very much discussion.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions, which were agreed to.

Mr. Lennon.]

OAKEY TO COOYAR RAILWAY.

APPROVAL OF PLANS.
COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

(1.) That the House approves of the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed branch railway from Oakey to Cooyar, in length 38 miles 50 chains, as laid upon the table of the House on Wednesday, the 3rd November, 1909.

(2.) That the plan, section, and book of reference be forwarded to the Legislative Council for their approval, by message in the usual form—

said: I come back from the North now to the Darling Downs. The line that I have now to propose will run from Oakey on the Southern and Western Railway to Cooyar, which is in a rich agricultural district, and a district in which there is a vast amount of timber that the selectors on the Darling Downs are practically languishing for. At the present time large quantities of timber are sent from Nanango to Kingaroy by road, and then taken by rail *via* Kilkivan, *via* Brisbane, *via* Ipswich to Toowoomba and back to the Darling Downs, while that timber is grown only from 50 to 60 miles to the north of the Downs. The line that I am proposing that the Committee shall agree to this evening will do away with that disability. It will give the settlers of the Darling Downs cheaper building timber, and it will not only do that, but it will traverse a very rich agricultural district, and it will also be a link in the proposed system that I outlined when introducing the Kingaroy to Nanango extension this afternoon—that is, a section of a line that will run northwards from Oakey to Kingaroy—and thus link up the Darling Downs with the Northern coastal ports. (Hear, hear!) In outlining this scheme I do not wish it to be understood that the whole scheme will be carried out in a year or two.

Mr. COYNE: We are passing these measures too fast.

Mr. LESINA: The civil servants are waiting for their Superannuation Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There will be plenty of time to pass the Superannuation Bill and many other useful measures, but, perhaps, some of the measures will not be as useful as the passing of this measure.

Mr. KEOGH: More railways ought to be passed and nearer home, too. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: What about the Marburg Railway?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was able to personally look at the country that the proposed line will traverse, and, as usual, there were a number of rival routes, and, as usual, when there are rival routes they took an opportunity of placing their views before the Minister for Railways. And, as I usually do when there are rival routes, I went to the district and had a look for myself. After that I had a further examination made of the country, and, after discussing the matter with the experts of the department, we came to the conclusion that the proper and most economical point for this proposed Northern line to start from was from Oakey. I will not enter into details of all the various routes suggested beyond saying that some of the routes suggested were extremely mountainous. It is the level country which tells the tale whether a railway is suitable for railway construction or not. With respect to the route this line

will traverse, I was extremely pleased to find that there was an area of 1,500 acres under cultivation, and quite a number of farmers on this area had their land under the plough for wheat-growing and growing other produce, and I found that some of them were going in extensively for sheep and lamb raising. I also found that the prickly pear was getting a big hold on that district. That is one of the reasons why I think we should build this line as early as possible, to cope with what I said before is a serious evil threatening some of our agricultural lands to the west of the coastal districts in the Southern portion of Queensland. Although the prickly pear is getting a big hold on some of the lands, the settlers on those lands are trying their best to cope with it, and they are doing it under great difficulties. When the railway is built they will be able to do very much better than they can at the present time. The cost of carting from the vicinity of Cooyar to Jondaryan or Oakey, as the case might be, of farm produce, is practically prohibitive. At Cooyar there is a large sawmill, and there are no fewer than eighteen teams carting sawn timber from that mill down to the railway. Cooyar itself is quite a nice township. With respect to the question that the junior member for Gympie usually raises—the question of land resumption—on this proposed line several landowners have offered to give the land free that is necessary for the building of the line. I tried my best to get all the landowners to make a similar promise, but it is exceedingly difficult to get a large number of landowners to join in and give anything free. So resumptions will have to be made, but, as I say, they will be made as cheaply as it is possible to make them, so as not to unduly burden the railway with the cost of the land. There is another reason, and a good reason, why the line should start from Oakey, although we have a line running to Goombungee from Kingsthorpe, which is only 7 or 8 miles away, and that is that eventually the line to open up the Condamine in the direction of Mount Russell and Cecil Plains must go to Oakey. That is the intention of the department. So that the junction will serve two objects. Turning to the Commissioner's report, you will notice that the distance is 38 miles 50 chains, and the Commissioner speaks very highly indeed of the character of the country. From personal observation, I can bear out every word that he says with respect to the class of country that will be traversed by this line. He says—

The principal source of traffic for the first few years will be timber (mostly pine) from the reserves previously mentioned, and with the advent of the line the amount of agricultural freight is sure to rapidly increase.

At the present time the farmers are 20 miles from the line, and they absolutely cannot make a living—that is, a decent living—owing to the cost of carriage of their produce to the railways. Dealing with the resumption of land, he says—

Valuable private property will be traversed for a considerable distance, the total area to be resumed from private owners being about 280 acres. Several owners, however, have offered their land free of charge, as they recognise the great benefit the railway will be to them. This is an example that might well be followed in other districts.

Mr. COYNE: Might I ask was it the large or the small landowners who gave their land free?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I cannot say that. Some few of them offered the land free, and I was in hopes that we would have

got the whole of the land offered free. The estimated cost is £172,077; the net return is estimated at £2,790 per annum against an expenditure on the line of £5,010.

Mr. KEOGH: Are the residents along the line prepared to give a guarantee?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The interest at 3 per cent., which the owners are responsible for, amounts to £5,520, and the Commissioner estimates that at first the net return will be £2,790, but he adds—

In a few years, however, I anticipate that the revenue from this railway will more than cover the whole interest upon capital in addition to working expenses.

RECOMMENDATION.—The proposed line will make available to Toowoomba and the Darling Downs extensive areas of valuable timber, large quantities of which commodity the Crow's Nest line has supplied in previous years, but which has now become comparatively scarce within reasonable distances of that railway. The line to Cooyar will also form an important link in any scheme which may eventually be developed to connect the Nanango district with the Darling Downs. I have no hesitation in recommending the construction of a railway from Oakey to Cooyar.

The benefited area is included in the report, and I also have no hesitation in recommending the proposal to the favourable consideration of the Committee, and in bearing out fully what the Commissioner says, I have very much pleasure in moving the resolution standing in my name.

Mr. COYNE: I am very pleased indeed to hear it is intended to construct a line to Cooyar, but I think the question of rival routes is rather an important one from a national point of view. This proposed line starts from the Western line somewhere about 7 miles from Kingsthorpe, from which point the Goombungee to Doctor's Creek line commences. From Doctor's Creek to a point equidistant to Oakey, the distance between the two lines will be rather less than 8 miles. Here we have two lines between 7 and 8 miles distant running through that very country.

Mr. TOLMIE: For what length?

Mr. COYNE: For about 20 miles. I think myself, from what I have learned about the matter, that we could very well, with justice to the taxpayers of the State and the people within the benefited area on the Kingsthorpe-Goombungee line, continue the line from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar, and serve the same purpose as this line.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Do you know the estimated cost of that line is about £70,000? That is the difficulty.

Mr. COYNE: I quite understand that if you follow the route as made by the surveyors, it would cost that, but you can make a deviation to the east instead of going west from Doctor's Creek, and you could thereby avoid most of the rough country, and then the cost would not be nearly so great as has been estimated by the surveyor.

Mr. TOLMIE: Towards Crow's Nest.

Mr. COYNE: A long way from Crow's Nest.

Mr. THORN: How far from Crow's Nest?

Mr. COYNE: About 12 miles.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Nine miles—that is all.

Mr. COYNE: When I spoke of a deviation to the east, I did not mean to say we should run the line straight east—a slight deviation to the east would avoid most of this rough country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Doctor's Creek to Goombungee line is only 9 miles from Crow's Nest.

Mr. COYNE: Exactly so, but the deviation from there to Cooyar—the trial survey was only for a short distance—may be only for 1 mile or 1½ mile, and then turn again to the north and west in a direct line to Cooyar. From Oakey to the top of the range is somewhere about 28 miles, and all that country is infested with prickly pear—badly infested in many parts, and the Minister will agree with that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not in all parts.

Mr. COYNE: Not in all parts, but in a great many parts it is badly infested with prickly pear, and several places are so badly infested with prickly pear that the Government is offering a bonus of 10s. per acre in order to induce people to take it up. That is the country through which the railway will be built, when the same purpose could be served with a line from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar. The source from which we will get our principal revenue for this line—we will tap that source far better by continuing the line from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar than by going from Oakey to Cooyar. At the present time, there are a number of selections along the proposed Oakey to Cooyar route held by persons who are now called upon by the Land Commissioner at Toowoomba to show cause why their selections should not be forfeited for not complying with the prickly pear conditions. There is another very important phase of this question that might be considered by the Committee. It is this: That the people in the benefited area from Kingsthorpe to Doctor's Creek will now suffer through the source of revenue from that line being taken away if we build this proposed line from Oakey to Cooyar. That is, one line will be robbing the other, and the non-paying Kingsthorpe to Doctor's Creek line will have its revenue reduced by the amount of traffic that will be taken away by the Oakey to Cooyar line. As a matter of fact, some of the residents, with whom I have had conversations, within the benefited area between Kingsthorpe and Cooyar, tell me that if the Oakey to Cooyar line is built it will be ruinous to those persons within the benefited area along the Kingsthorpe line. The principle source of revenue which the Commissioner expects from this line will be the conveyance of timber.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: At first.

Mr. COYNE: Yes, at first. As settlement goes on no doubt we will get a good deal of revenue from agricultural produce. I hope so. There are five sawmills that could be served by the Doctor's Creek to Cooyar line, whereas if you run a line from Oakey to Cooyar we can only serve two of those mills.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The sawmill at Cooyar could eat up all the others.

Mr. COYNE: I hope it will do a great deal towards paying the interest on the cost of construction of this line, but the Commissioner anticipates a loss, that will be a charge on the persons in the benefited area, of £2,730 a year.

Mr. Pechey owns a sawmill 14 [10 p.m.] miles from Crow's Nest, and now conveys the timber by wagon to

Crow's Nest. I am informed that if the line were built from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar it would be sufficiently convenient to his mill to enable him to send his timber in, and he was prepared to guarantee to pay £1,500 a year for freightage on his timber on the line. That is a big item to take into consideration. Of course, we may say we may get the timber all the same on our lines from Crow's Nest, but the people who want this timber have to pay the extra cost of freight. Now, Pechey's Mill, from which we

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would derive a revenue of £1,500 a year, gets no benefit whatever from the proposed Oakey line. The Minister cannot gainsay that.

Mr. TOLMIE: When he works his selections on the other side, he will.

Mr. COYNE: At present he has got a large area of timber untouched, and there he will have to remain until that timber is cut out.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Are you arguing in favour of the monopolist?

Mr. COYNE: No; I am not arguing in favour of monopolists, but I am arguing in favour of common justice to those people. Now, on the route which the line would traverse from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar there is an important outcrop of very good coal at a place called Coal Bank, an outcrop of 5 chains in length. That is a matter which should be taken into consideration by the Committee in passing this measure.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is coal on the other route, too, from Oakey to Cooyar, I have been informed.

Mr. THORN: All coal.

Mr. COYNE: It cannot be all coal, because there is prickly pear there. I say you won't find prickly pear growing on an outcrop of coal. Another important thing in connection with this line is that, by constructing the line from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar, you would save a distance of 9 miles. Another thing—the Minister will tell me whether I am correct or not—I believe it is proposed in a short time to go on still further with building lines from Dalby. It seems that they have not exhausted their powers of building lines at Dalby yet, but there is still to be a further extension of the Dalby line from Kaimkillenbun to Moola.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There are lots of lines proposed all over the State.

Mr. TOLMIE: That is only a 4-mile line.

Mr. COYNE: It is coming in to tap this country and rob this other line. I think I know the country as well as the hon. member for Toowoomba. I may not be quite right in every particular, but I have been over the country, and I know a lot about it. There is no doubt in a short time they will want a line from Jondaryan also.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I told them we would continue it.

Mr. COYNE: I think if this line were continued from Doctor's Creek to Cooyar, and a line was built from Jondaryan, it would serve the people of that particular district far better than the other.

Mr. TOLMIE: Where would the line run through from Jondaryan?

Mr. COYNE: It would go through Lagoon Flats. Now the farmers along this proposed line from Oakey to Cooyar are, I understand, very few in number, with the exception of prickly pear farms.

Mr. THORN: All good agricultural land.

Mr. COYNE: It may be agricultural land, but you cannot deny the fact that a number of persons in that locality at the present time have been asked to show why their selections should not be forfeited because they have not complied with the prickly pear conditions.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Doctor's Creek people have not been able to make out a good case.

Mr. COYNE: I am not as conversant with the country as the people who live there, but I have been over the country and know a good deal more about it than a person who has never been over it at all. That is all I have to say. I

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have given the Committee the benefit of the little knowledge I have of the country, and I ask members to give it consideration in the interests of the people of the State who will be called upon to pay the interest on the money which we will borrow to construct this line. In their interests, and also in the interests of the persons who have plunged their money into sawmills and other industries along this line, and of the consumers of the products of these sawmills, I think these things should be taken into serious consideration before we come to a decision on the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Perhaps I might say, in reply to the hon. member, that he has given the Committee a good deal of information, but I heard most of this evidence the day before yesterday from a somewhat belated deputation which waited upon me from Doctor's Creek. I told the gentlemen who came from Doctor's Creek to advocate this new route from the range to Cooyar that they had waited for twelve months, that it is now twelve months ago since I introduced the Kingsthorpe to Goombungee line from my place in the House, and I then made the statement that it was not the intention of the Government or the department to continue that line on to Cooyar, owing to the fact that the estimate was £70,000 more than the estimated cost of the route from Oakey to Cooyar. Very minute investigations were made, not with any idea on my part of favouring Oakey, because I have no interest in the people of the small towns where they want to pull the railway to. It is the interests of the people on the land that I consider—the interests of those who will have to shoulder the responsibility if the line does not pay 3 per cent. I told the gentlemen who waited on me the day before yesterday that they had waited twelve months until just on the eve of the plans being considered, and that they should have come along twelve months ago. There were other people who came along within twenty-four hours after I announced that it was not the intention of the Government to continue the line from Cooyar over three ranges. Those people, who did not desire to see the line go from Oakey, submitted another route, but it was not the route that was submitted to me this week. I am exceedingly sorry that it should have happened, but I do not think the Committee should consider the desires of those who wait for twelve months, and then practically try to delay the construction of a very much needed line, and a line that I am quite sure the settlers on the Darling Downs and the country will never regret building.

Mr. MURPHY: I think the hon. member for Aubigny should have a few words to say on the subject. I should like to hear him on the subject before recording my vote, otherwise I might have to oppose the resolution. (Laughter.)

Mr. THORN (*Aubigny*): The explanation given by the Minister has been quite sufficient without my saying anything. I might mention that the timber from the Oakey-Cooyar railway will supply not the Darling Downs only, but also the electorate of the hon. member for Warrego, so that that hon. member's electorate is going to be benefited by the railway. I hold in my hand a map giving the whole of the areas that the railway is going through, and they are all small areas. I have the benefited area marked, and I can assure hon. members that the line is going to serve a great deal of agricultural land. There is hardly any prickly pear from Oakey until you get beyond Evergreen, but even there the whole of the land is fit for agriculture. Anybody knows that the only way of coping with prickly pear on good agricultural land is to plough it under. It is no use saying the country is no

good. The map shows that it is all settled by small selectors, and they are quite willing to give a guarantee. The hon. member for Warrego spoke of five mills from which the timber would all go by the Goombungee line, but, as a matter of fact, the timber from two of those lines will go by the Oakey line. I have no wish to do an injustice to the people in any portion of my electorate, but I can say that the engineer told me that there was no hope of getting down that range and coming back again without costing the country and the people who have to guarantee it a very large sum of money. It would be a bigger burden than the people who have given the guarantee could stand. I introduced a deputation to the Minister on the 24th of last month asking for an extension of 12 or 14 miles from Crow's Nest to Emu Creek, to the place where the people who have been pulling the leg of the hon. member for Warrego come from. Two of those people live about 8 and 4 miles respectively from the Oakey-Cooyar railway, and that is not too far to carry produce. We cannot take a railway to the back door of every farmer, and the farmer who has a railway 7, 8, or 9 miles away should be satisfied. I hope the Committee will agree to the resolution.

Mr. MURPHY: After listening to the hon. member for Aubigny I shall withdraw my opposition to the railway. At the same time, I would like to point out that the Secretary for Lands informed the Committee that this route is covered with prickly pear.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The intimation was made by the Secretary for Lands with regard to two selections that have been forfeited.

Mr. MURPHY: I am sorry I misunderstood the hon. gentleman, but the hon. member for Aubigny pointed out that there was a large amount of prickly pear there. He did not refer to two selections.

Mr. THORN: Not until you get beyond Evergreen, about 15 miles along.

Mr. MURPHY: I understood from the hon. member that there was more prickly pear than timber. I am sorry that I misunderstood the hon. member, and I trust the construction of the railway will open up that part of the country and will help the settlers to become better off than they are at the present time.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolutions, which were agreed to.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

Upon the Order of the Day for the consideration of the Legislative Council's message of the 10th instant being read,

The PREMIER said: I beg to move—

That Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cottell, and Mr. May be appointed members of the Joint Library Committee; Mr. Speaker, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. Ryland members of the Joint Committee for the Management of the Refreshment-rooms; and Mr. Speaker, Mr. D. Hunter, and Mr. Payne members of the Joint Committee for the Management and Superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings; and that these appointments be communicated to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form.

Mr. RYLAND: I must protest against being appointed a member of the Refreshment-rooms Committee without being consulted. (Laughter.) It looks something like a plot. I shall have to consider the matter, and probably send in my resignation. (Renewed laughter.)

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House do now adjourn. To-morrow we will first take the formal stages of the Public Service Superannuation Bill, the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Bill, and the Land Acts Amendment Bill. Then we will go on with the Committee stage of the University of Queensland Bill. As to-morrow is Friday, we might perhaps adjourn when we have finished the University of Queensland Bill, so that it may be sent to the other House.

Mr. LENNON: I would like to ask the Hon. the Treasurer if he can give us any definite information in regard to the Estimates. I understood him the other night to say they would be tabled "some time next week." Can he name the day?

The TREASURER: I think I can promise them for Wednesday, or at the latest Thursday.

Mr. HARDACRE: And the Financial Statement?

The TREASURER: The Financial Statement and the Estimates.

Question put and passed.

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